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**Wednesday  
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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
<b>Lord True</b>	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
<b>Earl Howe</b>	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Baroness Barran</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
<b>Lord Bellamy</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
<b>Lord Benyon</b>	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist</b>	Spokesperson, Wales Office, Whip
<b>Lord Caine</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
<b>Earl of Courtown</b>	Deputy Chief Whip
<b>Lord Davies of Gower</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Goldie</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
<b>Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park</b>	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Harlech</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Johnson of Lainston</b>	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Markham</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
<b>Lord Murray of Blidworth</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
<b>Baroness Neville-Rolfe</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Lord Offord of Garvel</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
<b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
<b>Baroness Penn</b>	Parliamentary Secretary, HM Treasury
<b>Baroness Scott of Bybrook</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
<b>Lord Sharpe of Epsom</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
<b>Lord Stewart of Dirlerton</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Chief Whip
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions

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# Written Statements

Wednesday, 1 February 2023

## Myanmar Update

[HLWS529]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** My Honourable Friend, the Minister of State at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (Indo-Pacific) (Anne-Marie Trevelyan), has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Today marks two years since the military seized power from the democratically elected government in Myanmar. The military continues to instigate violence across the country and inflict acute suffering against the people of Myanmar.

The consequences for domestic and regional stability are clear; over 17 million people are now in need of humanitarian assistance - a staggering increase of 16 million in just two years; over 1.5 million people are displaced within Myanmar, with a million more in neighbouring Bangladesh, Thailand and India; illicit economies are thriving; and democratic gains have been reversed. Recent figures indicated Myanmar suffered some of the most intense violence in the world in 2022, with conflict-related deaths second only to Ukraine. There is a clear trajectory of increasing violence, human rights violations and abuses, to which the UK has responded with a range of tools.

Since the coup, we have provided around £100m to support those in need of humanitarian assistance, deliver healthcare and education for the most vulnerable, and protect civic space. We are proud to work with civil society organisations in Myanmar who have access to vulnerable communities in the most remote and hard to reach places, even where others have been unable to do so.

We have led a strong, coordinated international response to the coup, through our G7 Presidency and our leadership role on Myanmar at the UN Security Council (UNSC). On 21 December 2022, the UNSC passed the first ever resolution on the situation in Myanmar, led by the UK. The Resolution demands an end to violence and urges immediate action by the military regime to fully implement the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Five Point Consensus and release all those arbitrarily detained. We have also used our role at the UN Human Rights Council to highlight violations, including gender-based violence.

The UK condemns the brutal actions of the military regime. The military continues to use indiscriminate air attacks on schools, hospitals and places of worship, to suppress, intimidate and demoralise the civilian population. In Myanmar, the security forces are committing atrocities with impunity, including reports of sexual violence, torture and village burnings bearing many of the hallmarks of the atrocities against the Rohingya in 2016

and 2017. In response to this violence, the UK has announced its fourteenth tranche of targeted sanctions, to target companies and individuals who are responsible for supplying aviation fuel to the Myanmar Air Force. We will continue to use all possible measures to target those who seek to facilitate and profit from the military's human rights violations.

We support all those working peacefully to restore democracy in Myanmar. The military must engage in inclusive and meaningful dialogue with the full range of opposition voices, including the National Unity Government (NUG), and respect the democratic aspirations of the people of Myanmar. In 2022, UK Ministers spoke regularly with counterparts in the NUG. We call on the military to immediately end its campaign of violence and release the thousands of people it has detained arbitrarily, including Aung San Suu Kyi. The military must engage in inclusive and meaningful dialogue with the full range of opposition voices in order to respect the federal, democratic aspirations of the people of Myanmar.

The Rohingya in Myanmar continue to suffer systemic discrimination. Sadly, this is leading to desperate attempts to reach third country destinations, often ending in tragedy. We will support all efforts to seek accountability for the atrocities they suffered in 2017. This is why, in August, we announced our intention to intervene in the International Court of Justice case brought by The Gambia.

We remain committed to supporting efforts to hold perpetrators of violence to account. We have provided funding to the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar and established the Myanmar Witness Programme to collect and preserve evidence of serious human rights violations and abuses, including those against women, girls and LGBT+ people.

I reiterate my steadfast support for the people of Myanmar, and my desire to work towards a peaceful, inclusive and democratic future for the country.

## Register of Overseas Entities

[HLWS530]

**Lord Callanan:** The Register of Overseas Entities is a vital new information tool for our law enforcement agencies and is part of the Government's comprehensive and ongoing programme to tackle and prevent economic crime and illicit finance.

The Government legislated for it within weeks of the invasion of Ukraine, and with the assistance of Parliament expedited regulations needed to launch the Register, which opened on 1 August 2022.

Yesterday marked the end of the six-month period for overseas companies and other legal entities in scope to register. By 5pm yesterday, about 19,665 overseas entities were successfully registered and there were approximately 5,054 pending registrations that were submitted before the deadline. As such, the UK now has a

valuable new database for law enforcement and others to access.

Throughout this period Companies House has been working closely with the three UK land registries to ensure overseas entities are aware of and comply with the new requirements. Companies House sent 57,000 notice letters to all entities in scope in August, including duplicate letters to those that had multiple contact addresses recorded at the land registries. In October 2022, HM Land Registry issued a notice letter to the entities registered in England and Wales to alert them that a restriction notice had been placed on their land. In early January 2023 Companies House issued further reminders to those who hadn't yet registered.

Companies House has endeavoured to ensure it has the best possible information about those that have not yet complied, matching registrations against data from the land registries. Whilst some entities may have changed their name, not updated the land registry records or may no longer exist, Companies House continues to research and to work with company registries in those jurisdictions with the highest number of in-scope entities to determine the status of all unregistered entities.

An estimated 7,000 overseas entities have not yet complied with the provisions of the Register. From today, those entities will find that they cannot freely lease, charge or dispose of their land. This is a significant and effective sanction for non-compliance. Data about unregistered entities may also provide valuable information for law enforcement.

Companies House is now assessing and preparing cases for additional enforcement action. These cases will be prioritised using an intelligence-led approach and Companies House will work with those entities making a genuine attempt to comply. Warning letters will shortly be issued to all unregistered overseas entities. Those wilfully failing to comply may find themselves subject to financial penalties or criminal prosecution.

The Government is also announcing that, through an investment of up to £20m of allocated spending on economic crime, new anti-money laundering intelligence teams will be created to tackle the misuse of UK companies, corporate entities and property. Intelligence analysts and data scientists will be recruited over the coming months. They will play a key role in supporting the prevention, detection and disruption of money laundering, terrorist financing and kleptocracy through identifying, analysing and disseminating intelligence about high level threat actors and enablers of those activities, to a wide variety of law enforcement and

regulatory agencies. There will be a strong focus on networks controlled from overseas, for example those operating from former Soviet states. The new functions will be based within Companies House and the Insolvency Service, and will work closely with the National Economic Crime Centre and their private sector partners. The teams will use and support the existing powers of both agencies and new powers being introduced by the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill.

## Transfer of NHS Digital into NHS England

[HLWS531]

**Lord Markham:** Today, NHS Digital legally becomes part of NHS England, to create a single, central authority responsible for all elements of digital technology, data and transformation for the NHS.

Laura Wade-Gery was commissioned by the Government to lead an independent review of how we can ensure digital technology and the effective use of data is at the heart of transforming the NHS.

Her report *Putting data, digital and tech at the heart of transforming the NHS*, published in November 2021, recommended merging the functions of NHS Digital into NHS England, to provide a single statutory body for data, digital and technology to provide the right leadership and support to Integrated Care Systems.

NHS Digital, since its creation as the Health and Social Care Information Centre, has been a powerful force for change in the NHS and guardian of its key data IT and data systems. These will be transferring to NHS England, together with its expert staff.

All the protections of people's data which existed in NHS Digital will apply in NHS England. Rigorous internal controls will continue to ensure that data is used and shared safely, securely and appropriately to deliver high-quality care, understand and protect the health of the population, effectively plan and improve services, and research and develop innovative treatments, vaccines and diagnostics.

This is an important step in bringing together in a single place, the essential systems and programmes to digitally transform the NHS, and to harness the full potential of data. This will enable health and social care services to use digital and data more effectively to deliver improved patient outcomes and address the key challenges we face.

# Written Answers

Wednesday, 1 February 2023

## Affordable Housing: Rural Areas

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to promote affordable housing developments in rural areas. [HL4877]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The National Planning Policy Framework already makes clear that planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances in rural areas. Our Rural Exception Sites policy allows for the development of small affordable housing sites in rural areas, with the majority of housing on these sites being available to local people in perpetuity, and we published planning practice guidance in 2020 to help local authorities and developers bring more of these sites forward.

Our proposals for the National Planning Policy Framework launched for consultation on 22 December 2022. As part of this consultation we are seeking views on how we can strengthen the role of community groups in delivering affordable housing, particularly in rural areas.

## Army: Training

Asked by *Lord Browne of Belmont*

To ask His Majesty's Government what proportion of army recruits who take sick leave return to complete their training. [HL4843]

**Baroness Goldie:** In training year 2021-22, within the Army Recruiting and Initial Training Command, 454 trainees were removed from training due to injury or illness, of which 213 were recorded as having returned to training (47%). Within the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, of the 34 officer cadets who were discharged from the rehabilitation platoon, 21 returned to training (62%).

This information is not held centrally therefore these are estimated figures and will not include short-term illnesses.

## Asylum: Employment

Asked by *Lord Hylton*

To ask His Majesty's Government why asylum applicants are not permitted to apply for permission to work after six months in the UK, given the current labour shortages. [HL4825]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Asylum seekers are allowed to work in the UK if their claim has been outstanding for 12 months or more, through no fault of

their own. Those permitted to work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List.

It is important to distinguish between those who need protection and those seeking to work here who can apply for a work visa under the Immigration Rules. Asylum seekers do not need to make perilous journeys in order to seek employment in the UK. There are various safe and legal routes for those seeking to work in the UK under the Points Based System.

## Biodiversity

Asked by *Lord Foster of Bath*

To ask His Majesty's Government what was the rate of biodiversity decline in England in each year between 2010 and 2022; and what estimate they have made of the rate of biodiversity decline by 2030. [HL4550]

**Lord Benyon:** There is no single way to measure the health of our biodiversity, so we use a number of indicators to pick up changes in the status of species and habitats. Taken together, they provide a more holistic picture of the state of nature. A summary of these indicators is available at <https://oifdata.defra.gov.uk/>, specifically in the wildlife section D. A wider range of biodiversity related indicators is available in the [England Biodiversity Indicators](#) publication.

Defra's range of species indicators track changes in relative distribution and abundance. One of the indicators, which is still in development, measures change in relative abundance of widespread species in England. Analysis of this indicator was presented in [Defra's Biodiversity Targets Evidence Report](#). Based on data for 670 terrestrial animal species in England, analysis indicated a decline in species abundance of 2.8% per year on average between 2012 and 2018.

Whilst we expect some continued decline in species abundance we cannot reliably predict the rate of decline as species will be impacted by changing conditions which we cannot anticipate with any certainty. However, through the Environment Act 2021 we have set world-leading legally binding targets to halt the decline in species abundance by 2030 and then to increase species abundance by at least 10% by 2042, ensuring levels are greater than in 2022.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Biodiversity Indicators Homepage [England Biodiversity Indicators Homepage.pdf]

Evidence Report [Biodiversity terrestrial and freshwater targets - Detailed evidence report.pdf]

Outcome Indicator Framework Homepage [Outcome Indicator Framework Homepage.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-01-09/HL4550>



## Biofuels: Excise Duties

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have made any assessment of (1) the RTFO-type subsidy, and (2) reductions in mineral oil Excise Duty for biofuels, in the Republic of Ireland; and what plans they have, if any, to implement equivalent policies in the UK. [HL4918]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The United Kingdom's Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) scheme, introduced in 2008, is not dissimilar to the Biofuel Obligation Scheme (BOS), introduced in the Republic of Ireland in 2010.

The RTFO scheme has been successful for more than a decade in supporting a market for biofuels and is continuously reviewed to ensure that it delivers cost-effective carbon savings. Biofuel suppliers operate in a global market and the Department considers changes to the RTFO in the context of support schemes offered by the UK'S global partners. As the administrator of the RTFO, the Department also participates in the Renewable Fuels Regulators Club, which includes counterparts in the Republic of Ireland, and facilitates the sharing of best practice.

The tax treatment of fuels will not form part of our post implementation review of the RTFO scheme later this year. As with other taxes, His Majesty's Treasury is responsible for fuel duty, which is kept under review. There are currently no plans to change the tax treatment of biofuels. The Chancellor takes decisions on tax rates at fiscal events.

## Coronavirus: Immunosuppression

Asked by **Lord Mendelsohn**

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Kamall on 12 April 2022 (HL7711), given the data referred to, what update they can provide on (1) evidence of immune response in immunocompromised and immunosuppressed patients, and (2) the size of the cohort of people who do not produce antibodies from vaccines. [HL4939]

**Lord Markham:** The National Health Service estimates approximately 500,000 patients in England are immunosuppressed. A minority of these patients may not respond adequately to vaccines and could potentially benefit from pre-exposure prophylaxis. The OCTAVE study found that 11% of immunocompromised patients fail to generate antibodies following vaccination and 40% mounted a low serological response.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is conducting a Health Technology Evaluation of Evusheld, which will provide guidance on the use of Evusheld within the NHS. Part of this evaluation will

include consideration of the cohorts that could benefit if NICE recommends its use as a pre-exposure prophylactic. This evaluation is in development with publication expected in spring 2023.

## Coronavirus: Medical Treatments

Asked by **Lord Mendelsohn**

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Kamall on 23 June 2022 (HL731), whether they will publish the observational data on treatment outcomes referred to in the Answer. [HL4914]

**Lord Markham:** NHS England continues to work closely with the research community, and relies on the expert and impartial analysis, and publication, of treatment outcome data by specialist study teams who will be better placed to consider potentially confounding factors and draw potential conclusions from the data. It has no plans to undertake its own study to separately analyse and report treatment outcomes data.

The PANORAMIC trial team has published the results of its molnupiravir arm, Molnupiravir plus usual care versus usual care alone as early treatment for adults with COVID-19 at increased risk of adverse outcomes (PANORAMIC): an open-label, platform adaptive randomised controlled trial. A copy of this document is attached.

The trial remains open and is currently studying a second oral antiviral treatment, Paxlovid (nirmatrelvir+ritonavir.), in the same population.

## Customs

Asked by **Viscount Waverley**

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they use customs data to map market changes over time in (1) quantity, (2) pricing, (3) number of suppliers, and (4) number of importers, for each harmonized system code; and whether they use any artificial intelligence-based solution to do so. [HL4899]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** The Department makes use of customs data to monitor and better understand patterns of demand for imports and exports of goods and is continuously looking at ways improve and integrate complex datasets and techniques further.

The Department also uses customs data from HMRC and UN COMTRADE to analyse trade flows in the context of supply chains. This is done to improve the visibility of UK critical supply chains and inform government resilience strategies. The Department also leads a cross-Government project called the 'Global Supply Chains Intelligence Pilot' which aims to combine government and commercial datasets, along with big data analytics, to map global supply chains.

## Department of Health and Social Care: EU Law

*Asked by Lord Weir of Ballyholme*

To ask His Majesty's Government which retained EU laws the Department of Health and Social Care is planning to reform or revoke in the event of a passage into law of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill. [HL5124]

**Lord Markham:** Through the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill, the Government is currently reviewing which retained European Union law should be repealed, reformed or preserved. The Government continues to work with a range of stakeholders to ensure that current standards in patient safety and public health are maintained.

## Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of changing the regulations governing signage on motorways to enable signs to be erected that indicate (1) the distance to, and (2) the location of, the nearest electric vehicle charging point. [HL4870]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** No assessment has been made as regulations already provide for motorway signs to show location and distance to motorway service areas with electric vehicle recharging points.

## Food: Production

*Asked by Baroness Redfern*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they will take to ensure that (1) food production is placed at the heart of wider government policies, and (2) domestic food production does not diminish. [HL4625]

**Lord Benyon:** Food supply is one of the UK's 13 Critical National Infrastructure sectors. Defra and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) are joint Lead Government Departments (LGDs), with Defra leading on supply and the FSA on food safety. As such we work closely with the Cabinet Office and other LGDs ensuring food supply is fully incorporated as part of emergency preparedness, including consideration of dependencies on other sectors.

The Government Food Strategy was published in June 2022 setting out a plan to transform our food system to ensure it is fit for the future. The Food Strategy is a cross-departmental strategy. Therefore, Defra actively collaborated with and engaged with other Government departments in its development.

Responding to recent events, the Food Strategy puts food security at the heart of the government's vision for the food sector. It included a commitment to broadly maintain the current level of food that we produce

domestically and boost production in sectors where there are the biggest opportunities.

Setting this commitment demonstrates that we recognise the critical importance of domestic food production and the role that it plays in our food security. Domestic production figures have been very stable for most of this century. We produce 61% of all the food we need, and 74% of food which we can grow or rear in the UK for all or part of the year, and these figures have changed little over the last 20 years.

Food production is the primary purpose of farming and always will be. Our agricultural reforms in England aim to support a highly productive food producing sector, meeting our commitment to broadly maintain food production, alongside environmental improvements that benefit us all such as improving water quality and species abundance.

Balancing and integrating food production with our environmental land management will support an efficient and sustainable land use without offshoring harms associated with lower production standards. We have a legal duty to assess the impact of all environmental land management schemes, such as Sustainable Farming Incentive and Landscape Recovery, on food production.

## Foreign Investment in UK: China

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the amount of Chinese investment in infrastructure in the UK. [HL4889]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority.

A response to the Hon. Member's Parliamentary Question of 18 January is attached.

Lord Taylor of Warwick House of Lords London SW1A 0PW

26 January 2023

Dear Lord Taylor of Warwick,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question asking what assessment has been made of the amount of Chinese investment in infrastructure in the UK (HL4889).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces foreign direct investment (FDI) statistics which include international investment positions, that is the value of the stock of investments held at a point in time. Statistics are presented for both UK-based companies that have a foreign parent company (inward) and for UK companies that control affiliates abroad (outward). Our latest FDI statistics for China are available up to 2021, with figures in the table below extracted from our Foreign direct investment involving UK companies (directional): inward[1] publication.

'Infrastructure' is not an identifiable category in FDI statistics. Therefore, we have included all industrial activity categories in Table 1 to enable you to consider the relevant components.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessinnovation/datasets/foreigndirectinvestmentinvolvingukcompanies2013inwardtables>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UKSA Response [PQHL4889 (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-01-18/HL4889>

### Gambling: Medical Treatments

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the efficacy of medication, such as paroxetine, for the treatment of problem gambling. [HL5035]

**Lord Markham:** Whilst no specific assessment has been made, the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence is developing a clinical guideline for the treatment of harmful gambling. This will cover psychological and psychosocial interventions as well as pharmacological treatments, with publication expected in early 2024.

### Genito-urinary Medicine: Staff

*Asked by Baroness Barker*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce a multi-disciplinary workforce in Sexual Health Services. [HL5009]

*Asked by Baroness Barker*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase the size of the workforce providing prevention services within Sexual Health Services. [HL5010]

**Lord Markham:** We are considering actions to ensure that the sexual health workforce has the required capacity and skills to meet the sexual and reproductive health needs of the population in multiple settings. Further information will be available in due course.

Local authorities in England are responsible for commissioning comprehensive, open access sexual health services, and it is for them to decide on commissioning arrangements, including workforce skills mix and size, based on an assessment of local need for sexual and reproductive health services.

### Health Services

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of London*

To ask His Majesty's Government what the consultation process will be in the development of their Major Conditions Strategy. [HL5142]

**Lord Markham:** Through the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill, the Government is currently reviewing which retained European Union law should be repealed, reformed or preserved. The Government continues to work with a range of stakeholders to ensure that current standards in patient safety and public health are maintained.

### HMS Prince of Wales: Repairs and Maintenance

*Asked by Lord Lee of Trafford*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they expect HMS Prince of Wales to return to active service; and who will bear the costs of the necessary repairs. [HL4865]

**Baroness Goldie:** HMS PRINCE OF WALES is expected to commence her operational programme, as planned, in Autumn 2023. However, an issue has also been identified with her port shaft and to prevent a similar defect occurring, rectification of this issue is expected to be completed prior to her planned departure.

The defects with HMS PRINCE OF WALES shafts are not believed to be a Class issue and HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH continues to undertake Strike Carrier duties until 2024 when HMS PRINCE OF WALES will take over as Very High Readiness Strike Carrier.

The cost of repairs and responsibility for payment has not yet been established and therefore it would be inappropriate to comment further while investigations are ongoing.

### House of Lords: Security

*Asked by Lord Forsyth of Drumlean*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what is the (1) current, and (2) planned, expenditure on security for the House of Lords; and what is the governance process to ensure value for the taxpayer. [HL4934]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** Costs for security are split between the House of Commons and House of Lords in accordance with an agreed ratio of 70:30. However, physical and operational security measures across Parliament benefit all users of the estate regardless of which House they are based in, so it would not be possible to determine the cost of security by House.

The House of Lords' portion of security operating costs is published in the House of Lords Annual Report and



Accounts; in 2021-22 this amounted to £18.26m. For security reasons the Houses do not publish capital expenditure on security mitigating projects as providing this level of detail could enable an individual to infer the extent and nature of the works, and thus the vulnerabilities which they were intended to mitigate.

The governance process for expenditure on security includes regular reports to the Finance Committees of both Houses, and oversight by the Clerks and Finance Directors of both Houses.

*Asked by Viscount Trenchard*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what assessment has been made of the proportionality of the cost of replacing the revolving door at Peers' Entrance, given the plans for further related security works within the next three years. [HL5048]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The proportionality of the costs of the works at Peers' Entrance, and the security benefits arising, have been the subject of rigorous internal assessment through the usual business case process. The plans have also been validated by external experts.

### **Immunosuppression: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Kamall on 7 June 2022 (HL500), what work was undertaken by NHS Digital in June 2022 (1) to improve the access to relevant data which identifies those who are immunocompromised, and (2) to build a technical platform to identify such patients for different interventions, such as treatments and vaccines. [HL4911]

**Lord Markham:** In June 2022, NHS Digital were in the process of improving the COVID-19 General Practice Extraction Service to ensure it could be used to identify and extract data on those patients considered at risk for COVID-19 and potentially eligible for specific interventions, such as therapeutics and vaccinations. This has now been developed and delivered by General Practice Information Technology systems, and now informs the identification of 'at risk' patients for support.

Strategic work to build a platform to assist with identification of patients for different interventions such as treatments and vaccines was fully underway in June 2022. The platform is called 'cohorting as a service' and pulls together available data sources to enable patients to be repeatedly identified. This service securely identifies groups of people with shared characteristics from national health data, enabling tailored direct care to be delivered to improve health and social care outcomes.

### **Influenza**

*Asked by Lord Birt*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have identified the virus which has been responsible for the

highest incidence of influenza in Autumn/Winter 2022/2023; and whether they have assessed the effectiveness of the influenza vaccine deployed over the same period in countering that virus. [HL5013]

**Lord Markham:** The most prevalent influenza virus this season in England is of the A/H3N2 subtype, with smaller numbers of A/H1N1 detected and fewer still influenza type B. UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is currently analysing vaccine effectiveness against influenza requiring healthcare, including the different types and will be contributing this to the World Health Organization 2023/24 vaccine strain selection meeting taking place in February of this year.

More detailed genomic description of the influenza strains analysed by the UKHSA national Respiratory Virus Unit are available in the weekly surveillance report. UKHSA's assessment of relative prevalence of influenza viruses is based on detections in the UKHSA Royal College of General Practitioners primary care sentinel virological surveillance system and detections in the UKHSA Respiratory DataMart sentinel laboratory surveillance system.

### **Levelling Up Fund: Rural Areas**

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that rural areas are able to bid successfully to the Levelling Up Fund. [HL4878]

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the division of Levelling Up funding between (1) rural, and (2) urban, areas. [HL4879]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** I refer the noble Lord to the answer given by my Hon Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Levelling Up (Dehenna Davison) to Question UIN 129836 on 26 January 2023.

We recognise that economic differences remain between different parts of the UK including in rural areas. That's why the Levelling Up Fund is open to all local authorities across Great Britain to apply. We recognise that what constitutes priority investment will vary across local authorities and geographies, including in rural areas of the UK. That is why applicants have the flexibility to prepare proposals against one of the three investment themes, focusing on high priority and high impact projects that will make a visible positive difference to the context of their local area.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UIN 129836 [129836- Written questions and answers - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

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## Maintained Schools: Rural Areas

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many local authority maintained schools designated as rural were shut down in (1) 2019, (2) 2020, and (3) 2021. [HL4880]

**Baroness Barran:** The table below shows the number of mainstream local authority maintained primary schools that are designated by order as rural as part of the Rural Primary Schools Designation and have closed in the years stated in the question. This data has been taken from Get Information About Schools, the department's register of schools. Schools are identified as rural via the Office of National Statistics Rural Urban Classification. The data excludes closures of schools which are not local authority maintained primary schools as set out in Section 15 (4) of Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Calendar Year	Number of rural schools closed
2019	7
2020	7
2021	3

The presumption against the closure of rural schools means that when considering proposals to close a rural local authority maintained primary school, decision makers must refer to the list of rural designated schools. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but that the case for closure should be strong and clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area. The bodies listed under Section 16 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 are also required to be consulted when proposing the closure of a rural local authority maintained primary school, and other alternatives to closure must have been considered.

## Myanmar: Arms Trade

Asked by *Lord Hain*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have had any discussions with the governments of (1) the US, (2) Germany, (3) Japan, and (4) other relevant countries, about companies in those countries supplying arms materials to the government of Myanmar for the construction of its weapons. [HL4855]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Since the coup in Myanmar, the UK has led global efforts to reduce the flow of weapons to Myanmar through coordinating multilateral statements. The UK has kept the Myanmar issue on the G7 agenda, securing strong public commitments from G7 member states to tackle the flow of arms and equipment to Myanmar. We have also spearheaded efforts to impose sanctions on arms dealers and the military's own domestic production, in close coordination with the US, EU and Canada. We will continue to engage with our partners on how we can

target the military's access to arms and to take coordinated action where appropriate.

Asked by *Lord Hain*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether any British companies are supplying arms materials to the government of Myanmar for the construction of its weapons. [HL4856]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK has had a comprehensive arms embargo on Myanmar since 2013, which prohibits the supply of dual-use items, including technology and manufacturing equipment, to the Myanmar military. We take a rigorous approach to due diligence in relation to our arms embargo, including enhanced military end-use controls for items destined for the military and security forces. We have also established the Myanmar Witness programme, which monitors weapons exports to Myanmar using open-source intelligence. We have found no evidence of British companies selling weapons or dual use goods to Myanmar. We will continue to take coordinated action to halt the military's access to arms and lobby countries who sell weapons to the military.

## NHS: Databases

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Kamall on 2 August 2022 (HL1602), whether they will (1) publish, or (2) place in the Library of the House, a copy of the form(s) for NHS England staff to request access to data in Palantir Foundry software and any associated training materials about making such requests. [HL4713]

**Lord Markham:** There are 4 steps to register access to the NHS National Data Platform (Foundry).

1. Register for an Okta account - Okta is a cloud-based identity management service.
2. Submit a Foundry Access Request Form – used to record contact details, purpose of the request, required products/tools, and information governance compliance.
3. Download and register two factor authentication - to ensure that only the applicant can use the account. It will also ensure the security of the data within the Foundry platform.
4. Launch the Foundry platform.

A copy is attached of the Foundry System Access Form.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Foundry System Access Form [Attachment HL4713 - Foundry System Access - Form A \_2\_.docx]

Foundry System Onboarding Guide [Attachment HL4713 - NHS National Data Platform \_Foundry\_ Onboarding Guide\_Final v3 (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-01-12/HL4713>

## NHS: Finance

*Asked by Lord Kilclooney*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the annual budget for the NHS; and what proportion of the NHS budget is estimated to be allocated as a result of Irish citizens within Great Britain as part of the Common Travel Area. [HL5081]

**Lord Markham:** National Health Service funding in the United Kingdom is devolved so figures have been given for England, Wales and Scotland separately. The categories within these budgets may not align perfectly in terms of what is considered NHS spending and what is considered wider health and social care spending.

The official NHS England website confirms the budget for 2022/23 is £152.6 billion. Figures from the 2022/23 Supplementary Welsh Government Budget show that the budget for NHS Wales is £10.3 billion. The 2022/23 budget published on 9 December 2021 for NHS Scotland is £12.9 billion.

We do not hold data on and are unable to provide estimated figures on the budgetary impact of any given nationality in the UK, as healthcare spending is allocated based on residency rather than the nationality of the individual receiving healthcare.

## Oak National Academy: Finance

*Asked by Lord German*

To ask His Majesty's Government what recent assessment they have made of the funding Oak National Academy will require (1) in the period from September 2022 until September 2025, and (2) thereafter on an annual basis. [HL4969]

**Baroness Barran:** The Government has set aside up to £43 million over the period from 2022/23 to 2024/25 to support Oak National Academy. Funding beyond April 2025 for departments and their Arm's Length Bodies will be determined at the next Spending Review, which is expected to conclude in late 2024.

## Oaths and Affirmations: Republic of Ireland

*Asked by Lord Kilclooney*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the provisions of the Common Travel Area, whether Irish residents in Great Britain can (1) benefit from the NHS, and (2) join the UK armed forces without taking an Oath of Allegiance; and whether UK residents in the Republic of Ireland can (3) benefit from its health service, and (4) join the Irish armed forces without taking an Oath of Allegiance. [HL5083]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** As part of the Common Travel (CTA) arrangements, Irish citizens in the UK continue to have access to their CTA rights, including access to healthcare.

Irish citizens who join the UK Armed Forces are not required to swear an Oath of Allegiance to the Sovereign but must make an affirmation to the same effect. This requirement to swear an Oath or make an affirmation applies to all individuals who are eligible to serve in the UK Armed Forces.

Whether UK residents in Ireland can benefit from its health service or join Irish Armed Forces without taking an Oath of Allegiance is a matter for the Irish government.

## Palace of Westminster: Repairs and Maintenance

*Asked by Lord Forsyth of Drumlean*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what recent estimate he has made of the cost of replacing the door at Peers Entrance; and how this differs from the original estimate. [HL4851]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The cost of works to replace the door at Peers' Entrance has increased due to delays caused by issues unearthed during initial surveys and other works taking place in the nearby area. Increases were also caused by inflation, which meant tender returns came back higher than estimated.

For security reasons, the Houses do not publish capital expenditure on security mitigating projects as providing this level of detail could enable an individual to infer the extent and nature of the works, and thus the vulnerabilities which they were intended to mitigate.

## Passports: Republic of Ireland

*Asked by Lord Hay of Ballyore*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to provide an automatic right to a British passport for those born in the Republic of Ireland but who are UK (1) residents, (2) voters, and (3) taxpayers in Northern Ireland. [HL4861]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** British citizenship is acquired automatically by those with a close and continuing connection with the UK, such as through birth here, or by descent. Many Irish nationals with a historical connection with the UK may already have British nationality and would be eligible for a British passport.

Irish nationals living in the UK who were born in the Republic of Ireland after 1 January 1949, and are not otherwise British, must apply to naturalise, based on a period of residence in the UK, should they wish to become British citizens. In this respect Irish nationals are not treated any differently to other foreign nationals.

We have no plans to change this.

## Pharmacy: Pollution

Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report in the Lancet First, do no harm: time for a systems approach to address the problem of health-care-derived pharmaceutical pollution, published in December 2022; and what steps, if any, they plan to take regarding its recommendations. [HL4839]

**Lord Benyon:** Defra and its agencies, including the Environment Agency, have not yet considered the report in full detail but will do so in due course. We will consider the recommendations in conjunction with officials in the Department for Health and Social Care. Defra has already noted that some of the suggested interventions in the Lancet paper may be relevant to veterinary medicines. The Veterinary Medicines Directorate within Defra is actively considering issues around pharmaceuticals in the environment, and conducts environmental risk assessments for all new veterinary medicines.

## Prisoners' Release

Asked by **Lord Bradley**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people serving a sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection had their first parole hearing (1) on, or (2) after, tariff expiry and were either (a) directed, or (b) not directed, for release, following their hearing in each year since 2009. [HL4840]

**Lord Bellamy:** By law any prisoner serving an Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentence who has completed the minimum term (tariff) set by the Court at the point of sentence is eligible to be considered for release. However, the Parole Board will direct the prisoner's release where it concludes that it is no longer necessary on the grounds of public protection for the prisoner to remain confined.

The Secretary of State must refer a prisoner's case to the Parole Board at the end of their minimum tariff period and, if release is not directed, at least every two years thereafter. The Parole Board is responsible for the listing of cases referred to it. Ministers or officials may not intervene in this process.

The total number of prisoners serving an IPP sentence that had their first parole hearing after 2009 and were either (a) directed for release, or (b) not directed for release, following the hearing, is shown in the following table:

Hearing/Outcome Year	Release	Not directed for Release (including open condition decisions)
2009	(Note 3 below refers)	
2010	39	1,033

Hearing/Outcome Year	Release	Not directed for Release (including open condition decisions)
2011	90	1,207
2012	69	658
2013	70	618
2014	49	344
2015	59	366
2016	64	246
2017	54	205
2018	48	127
2019	29	74
2020	18	46

Notes:

- i) Cases not directed for release include open condition decisions.
- ii) Providing the data as asked is not possible due to a number of process and system related issues that form part of the normal generic parole process.
- iii) 'Hearing/outcome year' refers to the date of the hearing or, in instances where the date of the hearing is not recorded, the outcome date.
- iv) Records prior to 2010 could not be located using administrative systems. The data provided only accounts for cases where the parole eligibility date starts from 2009. The first parole hearing data in the database is from 2010, so this restriction is necessary to improve identification of first parole hearings. It is likely that some cases with a parole eligibility date in 2009 or 2010 had a parole date hearing in 2009; these would not be captured in the table.
- v) Some hearings in recent years may be yet to conclude.
- vi) This data does not account for deferrals or adjournments of parole hearings. Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that this data has been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by HM Prison & Probation Service. Consequently, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

Asked by **Lord Bradley**

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bellamy on 30 November 2022 (HL3458), how many of those people were serving an extended determinate sentence with a custodial tariff of (1) six months or less, (2) more than six months but less than 12 months, (3) more than 12 months but less than two years, (4) more than two years but less than four years, (5) more than four years but



less than six years, (6) more than six years but less than 10 years, and (7) more than 10 years. [HL4841]

**Lord Bellamy:** The table below sets out the minimum terms of imprisonment (custodial tariffs) of prisoners serving an extended determinate sentence (EDS) who are eligible for release via parole as part of their EDS, who were released after their first parole review in each of the last five years in which full data is available.

Sentence length	Release year				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Six months or less	0	0	*	*	*
More than six months to less than twelve months	0	0	*	0	*
From twelve months to less than two years	4	*	8	*	6
From two years to less than four years	38	31	38	59	43
From four years to less than six years	72	137	166	208	192
From six years to less than ten years	26	59	118	197	232
Ten years or more	3	*	20	31	58

#### Data sources and quality:

1. Some prisoners were released without accessing the parole process because they were deported or, exceptionally, left prison following early release on compassionate grounds.

2. Some parole hearings were not completed as a result of the prisoner receiving a new sentence or being transferred to secure hospital under the Mental Health Act 1983.

3. Total figures in the table do not match published total releases for EDS offenders, as some EDS offenders are not eligible for release via parole as part of their EDS.

4. The figures in this table have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large-scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

5. Disclosure control: An asterisk (\*) has been used to suppress values of one or two. This is to prevent the disclosure of individual information. Further suppression may be applied where needed.

## Refugees: Afghanistan

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to develop, in conjunction with (1) the Refugee Council, and (2) Safe Passage, a system for reuniting Afghan families, as was done for Ukrainian families; and if not, why not. [HL4824]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** In line with our existing policy, those resettled under Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and relocated under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) may be able to be accompanied by their immediate family members.

The government remains committed to providing protection for vulnerable people fleeing Afghanistan. However, the situation is very complex and presents significant challenges, including how those who are eligible for resettlement in the UK can leave the country. This includes the eligible family members of those being resettled under the ACRS. For those evacuated from Afghanistan under the ACRS without their immediate family members, further information will be made available in due course about options for reuniting with them.

Those referred by UNHCR under the ACRS will have refugee status and will therefore be able to access the refugee family reunion route.

Those without refugee status wishing to bring family members would need to apply through the regular family visa route under Appendix FM of the Immigration Rules.

## Roads: Freight

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the relative potential for (1) Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) biofuel, and (2) electric vehicles, to decarbonise road transport, as compared to diesel in each of the next three years. [HL4916]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Government has not produced specific estimates of the potential CO<sub>2</sub> savings for Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) biofuel or electric vehicles to decarbonise road transport, as compared to diesel in each of the next three years.

## Smuggling: Shipping

Asked by **Viscount Waverley**

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they take to catch smugglers who alter bills of lading at sea; and how many such cases they have identified in the last two years. [HL4898]

**Baroness Penn:** HMG has robust anti-smuggling controls and dynamic intelligence capabilities which prevent, deter, and detect illegal movements of goods and



enable us to enforce criminal and civil sanctions against those responsible for those movements.

HMRC also conducts post-clearance customs audits and other compliance interventions, including measures against serious non-compliance and fraud, including high-risk trader monitoring; disruption activity; and criminal investigations when appropriate.

When goods are imported or exported a customs declaration is required which is submitted electronically into HMRC systems and constitutes the legal declaration of the goods to HMRC as the UK's customs authority. Bills of lading are commercial documents, although HMRC may ask for them as supporting evidence as part of a wider inspection of goods. HMRC does not hold information on the number of bills of lading which have been altered.

### Syphilis

*Asked by Baroness Barker*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether their sexual health strategy will set aspirations to (1) reduce the R-rate of, and (2) set reduction plans for, syphilis. [HL5005]

*Asked by Baroness Barker*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they will publish their Sexual Health Action Plan. [HL5007]

*Asked by Baroness Barker*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they will publish their Syphilis Action Plan. [HL5008]

**Lord Markham:** We remain committed to improving sexual and reproductive health, including reducing rates of syphilis, in England and are considering the need for further government plans. In 2021, we published our policy paper *Towards Zero - An action plan towards ending HIV transmission, AIDS and HIV-related deaths in England - 2022 to 2025*, available in an online-only format, which sets out the actions that we are taking to move towards ending HIV transmissions and HIV and AIDS related deaths within England by 2030. In August 2022 we also published the *Women's Health Strategy for England* which sets out our 10-year ambitions and actions we are taking to improve health for women and girls including reproductive health.

### Ukraine: Defence Equipment

*Asked by The Earl of Dundee*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, together with other countries, to arrange a (1) more timely delivery of military equipment to Ukraine, and (2) more focused assessment of changing needs of that country from month to month. [HL4849]

**Baroness Goldie:** By bringing together allies and partners, we are ensuring the surge of global military support is as strategic and coordinated as possible.

Most recently, on 19 January 2023, the Defence Secretary co-hosted a meeting of international defence ministers and partners in Estonia, where the UK reaffirmed our latest package of support and joined eight allies and partners committing to deliver to Ukraine an unprecedented set of capabilities including main battle tanks, heavy artillery, air defence, ammunition, and infantry fighting vehicles.

We work closely with Ukraine and the International Donation Coordination Centre to ensure the UK's military aid, and that of the wider international community is targeted and coordinated to deliver the capabilities most urgently required by the Ukrainian Armed Forces, taking account of the latest information from the battlefield.

*Asked by The Earl of Dundee*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they will take, together with other countries, to provide a supply of (1) military equipment, and (2) other necessary equipment, to Ukraine. [HL4850]

**Baroness Goldie:** The UK and our allies and partners are responding decisively to provide military and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine.

On 16 January 2023 the Secretary of State for Defence announced to Parliament the UK's most significant package of military support for Ukraine to-date. The UK has led the world with the gifting of modern main battle tanks in addition to heavy artillery, air defence, ammunition, and infantry fighting vehicles to Ukraine's defence. This substantial assistance to Ukraine comes from our own national stocks, and resources illustrating the mutual understanding of the severity of the situation and our commitment to urgently increase and accelerate support for Ukraine.

In addition to military equipment we have delivered a range of other assistance to Ukraine, including 25,000 sets of extreme cold winter clothing, 20,000 sleeping bags and 150 insulated tents. We have also provided bilateral assistance direct to the government of Ukraine, including food, medical supplies, 75 ambulances and over 800 generators.

### Windrush Compensation Scheme

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much total compensation they have paid out so far to those affected by the Windrush scandal. [HL4863]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** As at the end of November 2022, the total amount paid or offered to claimants through the Windrush Compensation Scheme had increased to over £62.42 million. Of this total, £52.76 million had been paid across 1,377 claims and a further £9.66 million had been offered, awaiting acceptance, or pending review.

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