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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, Whip
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
<b>Earl of Courtown</b>	Deputy Chief Whip
<b>Lord Davies of Gower</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Evans of Rainow</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 Business and 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 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 Dirleton</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 Camrose</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions

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# Written Statements

Wednesday, 22 March 2023

## Cyber-security Strategy

[HLWS649]

**Lord Markham:** I am pleased to announce the publication of the Cyber Security Strategy for Health and Adult Social Care to 2030. The strategy sets out a vision to 2030 for a health and social care sector that is resilient to cyber attack. It establishes cyber security as a foundational business need to ensuring patient and service user safety. Improved cyber resilience will assure availability of services, protect valuable data, enable quicker response and recovery when attacks do occur, and increase public trust.

The health and social care sector has made good progress in recent years, by making use of the increasing cyber defence and response mechanisms at its disposal, with the sector now much better protected from untargeted attack than it was at the time of the WannaCry cyber attack in 2017. However, we still have further to go. This strategy will shape a common purpose and an approach that will be applicable across health and social care systems including for adult social care, primary care, and our critical supply chain as well as for secondary care.

Digital transformation offers huge opportunities for the sector and building cyber security into our design will be essential as we put the right technology and controls in place to realise those benefits. The five pillars in our strategy, developed collaboratively across the health and care sector, focus our approach on the most important risks to our most critical systems, while growing our cyber workforce so that we can better tackle threats in the long-term. The strategy will be supported by a national implementation plan in Summer 2023 which will detail activities and define metrics to build and measure resilience over the next two to three years.

## Digital Economy Act 2017 Debt and Fraud Powers: Consultation on Effectiveness

[HLWS648]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** Minister Burghart and I are pleased to announce the launch of a consultation on the effectiveness of the Digital Economy Act 2017 Debt and Fraud Powers.

The Debt and Fraud Powers, as contained in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of the Digital Economy Act 2017 respectively, allow specified public authorities to disclose information for the purpose of managing and reducing debt owed to a public authority or to the Crown and combating fraud against the Public Sector.

These Powers must be reviewed, three years after their operation, for the purpose of deciding whether they should be retained, amended or repealed. As part of this

Review, I am required to consult certain persons and publish a report on the Review's outcomes.

As part of this consultation, I shall engage with:

- the Information Commissioner,
- the Scottish Ministers,
- the Welsh Ministers,
- the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland,
- members of the Home Affairs Committee,
- bodies which have used the Debt and Fraud Powers of the Digital Economy Act 2017 and
- members of the Digital Economy Act Debt and Fraud Information Sharing Review Board.

The Consultation is now open and will last for a period of six weeks ending on 27th April 2023.

## Energy Efficiency Update

[HLWS651]

**Lord Callanan:** Today the Government is announcing £1.8bn of funding to cut the emissions and boost the energy efficiency of homes and public buildings across England.

The investment will further reduce energy bills for householders and businesses, as part of the Prime Minister's pledge to halve inflation and ease the cost of living. Altogether, 115,000 homes will benefit from energy efficiency and low carbon heating upgrades, along with 144 public sector organisations responsible for hospitals, schools, leisure centres, museums, universities and other buildings.

It is being delivered through the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG), Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) and Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS).

In 2019, the UK became the first major economy in the world to legally commit to end our contribution to global warming by 2050. This is a huge challenge. But it is also an unprecedented opportunity.

The UK has already shown that environmental action can go hand-in-hand with economic success, having grown our economy by more than three-quarters while cutting emissions by over 40% since 1990.

The effort will be shared across many sectors, and decarbonising the energy used in buildings, and increasing energy efficiency will be a vital component.

The UK is home to around 30 million buildings which are responsible for 31% of UK emissions. We have some of the oldest housing stock in Europe, over 80% of buildings still rely on high carbon fossil fuels for heating and have low levels of thermal efficiency.

To reach our net zero target by 2050 we need to decarbonise the way we heat and cool our homes and workplaces, and to ensure that in the near term we meet our fuel poverty targets and emissions reduction targets.

This £1.8bn investment will be critical in supporting our commitment made in 2022 to reduce the UK's final

energy consumption from buildings and industry by 15% by 2030 against 2021 levels.

*The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and Home Upgrade Grant*

Through the SHDF Wave 2.1 and HUG 2 the Government are awarding a significant injection of funding worth £1.4 billion to local authorities and providers of social housing.

An additional £1.1 billion in match funding for social housing is being provided by local authorities and providers of social housing, bringing the total investment to £2.5 billion to upgrade social and private homes in England.

The grant funding will be invested from April 2023 to March 2025, although delivery on the SHDF can continue with the use of match funding until September 2025.

The money will go towards improvements to social households and private, low income, off-gas grid households with an EPC rating of D or below and could save homes occupants between £220 and £400 a year on energy bills.

Energy cutting and cost saving measures provided through the schemes include external wall insulation, cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, new windows and doors and draft proofing measures, as well as heat pumps and solar panel installation.

These schemes will also support around 20,000 jobs in the construction and home retrofit sectors, helping to deliver on our promise to grow the economy and create better paid jobs, whilst supporting families across the country.

The funding awarded through these schemes continues the investment through “Help to Heat” Schemes which has already seen:

- Over £240 million already awarded to the SHDF Demonstrator and SHFD Wave 1 projects, indicating the Governments continued support to the £3.8 billion manifesto commitment between now and 2030 to deliver energy efficiency improvements in social housing.
- Over 37,000 households have seen energy efficiency upgrades as part of the first two phases of the Local Authority Delivery scheme, with a further 20,000-28,000 homes expected as part of the Sustainable Warmth Competition.

In addition to the SHDF and HUG, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero will also use ECO4 and ECO+ to accelerate our efforts to improve homes to meet fuel poverty targets and the Government has committed to a four-year, £4 billion extension and expansion of ECO with ECO4. We have announced a further £1 billion extension of the scheme through ECO+ to start in Spring 2023.

*Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme*

Over £409 million of grant funding has also been awarded through the Government’s Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. This Phase 3b of the scheme

will support 144 public sector organisations across 171 projects to undertake low carbon heating and energy efficiency measures across hundreds of buildings.

These projects will not only help reduce the carbon emissions of these public buildings but save them money on their energy bills and ultimately, save the taxpayer hundreds of millions of pounds in the long-term.

Hospitals, schools, leisure centres, universities and other vital public service buildings across England are set to benefit from the scheme.

£2 billion has now been awarded across over 900 projects to decarbonise the public sector across all phases of the scheme to date, and even more funding through Phase 3b is to come as applications are assessed and approved.

Today’s £409 million is part of the wider £2.5 billion package that this government has committed to spending on upgrading public sector buildings between 2020 and 2025, supporting this government’s commitment to reducing carbon emissions from public sector buildings by 75% by 2037.

*Funding through the schemes will be allocated across England based on the following allocations:*

<i>Region</i>	<i>PSDS</i>	<i>HUG</i>	<i>SHDF</i>
East Midlands	£18,112,366	£3,291,300**	£ 74,715,671
East of England	£14,677,719	£23,577,300	£83,628,477
London	£44,280,137	£12,006,000	£131,724,938
North East	£7,636,389	£28,576,000	£29,355,551
North West	£44,555,899	£83,885,000	£105,371,309
South East	£108,324,556	£161,237,898	£128,906,218
South West	£33,450,968	£77,514,032	£ 80,236,981
West Midlands	£88,371,731	£152,745,310	£93,593,216
Yorkshire and the Humber	£21,737,561	£41,144,920	£ 50,053,929
Across regions	£26,688,898	-	-
Scotland*	£1,221,871	-	-

\* The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme was open to applications from public sector bodies in England and areas of reserved public services across the UK.

\*\* Further funding is available to the region via the Midlands Net Zero Hub which represents £138m of grant funding across the Midlands.

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has also partnered with the Energy Systems Catapult to launch a freely accessible suite of tools, templates, and guidance to support the public sector in further decarbonising their sites.

This support will help public sector bodies through the entire decarbonisation lifecycle, from the first stages of developing a strategy, through funding, installation, and

completion, to help make achieving net zero sites and energy savings simpler.

#### *Energy Efficiency Taskforce*

The Government has launched an Energy Efficiency Taskforce to support a step change in the reduction of energy demand through accelerated delivery of energy efficiency across the economy. It will help to support the Government's ambition to reduce total UK energy demand by 15% from 2021 levels by 2030 across domestic and commercial buildings and industrial processes.

#### *Future Funding*

£6 billion of new Government funding will be made available from 2025 to 2028, in addition to the £6.6 billion allocated in this Parliament. This provides long-term funding certainty, supporting the growth of supply chains, and ensuring we can scale up our delivery over time.

## **UK-Gulf Co-operation Council Free Trade Agreement**

[HLWS650]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** My Hon Friend the Minister for International Trade (Nigel Huddleston MP) has today made the following statement:

The third round of negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA) between the UK and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) took place between 12 and 16 March.

The round was hosted by GCC in Riyadh and held in a hybrid fashion. A number of UK negotiators from across the Government travelled to Riyadh for in-person discussions and others attended virtually.

Draft treaty text was advanced across the majority of chapters. Technical discussions were held across 13 policy areas over 30 sessions. Good progress was made and both sides remain committed to securing an ambitious, comprehensive and modern agreement fit for the 21st century.

An FTA will be a substantial economic opportunity and a significant moment in the UK-GCC relationship. Government analysis shows that, in the long run, a deal with the GCC is expected to increase trade by at least 16%, add at least £1.6 billion a year to the UK economy and contribute an additional £600 million or more to UK.

The fourth round of negotiations is expected to be hosted by the UK later this year.

His Majesty's Government remains clear that any deal we sign will be in the best interests of the British people and the United Kingdom economy. We will not compromise on our high environmental, public health, animal welfare and food standards, and we will maintain our right to regulate in the public interest. We are also clear that during these negotiations, the National Health Service and the services it provides is not on the table.

## **UK's International Technology Strategy**

[HLWS647]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (James Cleverly), has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

This is a joint statement with the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology.

Today we have laid before the House the UK's International Technology Strategy. Technological advances bring huge opportunities for our economies and societies and how we collaborate internationally will be critical to realising the benefits of these.

The competition between authoritarian and liberal values will define how technologies shape our future. The [Integrated Review Refresh 2023](#) reiterated the central role of technology in driving growth and ensuring the security of the British people. This strategy sets out how we will work internationally to increase the UK's strategic advantage in technology, using that advantage to drive economic growth, protect our citizens' security and ensure our values of freedom and democracy thrive.

The International Technology Strategy is a cross-government strategy. It underpins how we deliver internationally the vision set out in the [UK Science and Technology Framework](#).

The strategy defines a set of principles to shape our engagement on technologies internationally - open, responsible, secure, and resilient. It sets out a framework for delivering an ambitious vision and championing our principles on the international stage. Our approach will be guided by six strategic priorities:

- i) Priority technologies and data: artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, engineering biology, semiconductors, and telecommunications, alongside data as a key underpinning enabler of all technologies. We will build strategic advantage in these areas to ensure the UK is world-leading and that they develop in line with our values.
- ii) International partnerships for global leadership: working closely with governments, academia, and industry to support our shared growth and address global challenges.
- iii) Values-based governance and regulation: promoting our principles and vision for a future technology order that benefits all by working with partners and through international fora to shape technology governance.
- iv) Technology investment and expertise for the developing world: building capacity to bridge the technology divide and support partners to make informed choices.
- v) Technology to drive the UK economy: continuing to drive UK technology exports and promote the UK as the best place for technology companies to raise capital and attract foreign direct investment.

vi) Protecting our security interests: ensuring sensitive technology does not fall into hostile hands and that we retain critical technology capabilities in the UK.

To realise the ambition of this strategy, we will bolster our capabilities across the UK's overseas network so the right skills and expertise can be deployed. This will

include increasing the number of Tech Envoys, increasing technology expertise across our global network, and uplifting the capability of our diplomats through training, secondments, and recruitment.

A copy of the Strategy has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and is available on gov.uk.

# Written Answers

Wednesday, 22 March 2023

## Asylum: Deportation

Asked by *Lord Blunkett*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many asylum-seekers, except for those from Albania, who failed to establish the right to remain in the UK were removed to either (1) their country of origin, or (2) a third safe country, in the year to 31 December 2022. [HL6233]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The Home Office publishes data on asylum-related returns in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release' on gov.uk.

Data on asylum-related returns for the top ten nationalities are published in table Ret\_05 of the 'Returns summary datasets'. Data on returns by nationality and return destination group are provided in Ret\_D01 of the 'Returns detailed datasets', though these are for all returns cases and not just asylum-related.

The latest data relates to September 2022. Data up to December 2022 will be available in the May 2023 release. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

table Ret\_05 [returns-summary-dec-2021-tables - table Ret\_05.xlsx]

table Ret\_D01 [returns-datasets-dec-2022 - Ret\_D01 .xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-08/HL6233>

## Asylum: Housing

Asked by *Lord Field of Birkenhead*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the total cost of housing failed asylum seekers, broken down by the cost of (1) the border force, (2) hotels and other accommodation, and (3) any other costs. [HL6240]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Costs are subject to change depending on numbers being accommodated within the asylum system. Accommodation costs are considered to be commercially confidential, therefore the Home Office does not publish this information.

However, total expenditure on asylum is published in the Home Office Annual Report and Accounts, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ho-annual-reports-and-accounts>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HO-annual-reports-and-accounts [Home\_Office\_ARA\_21-22\_Final\_-\_Gov.uk.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-08/HL6240>

## Asylum: Rwanda

Asked by *Lord Sikka*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many asylum-seekers have been relocated to Rwanda to date; and what payments they have made to the government of Rwanda to accept asylum-seekers from the UK. [HL6274]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** There have not been any relocation flights operated from the UK to Rwanda to date due to ongoing legal challenges.

The UK has provided Rwanda with an initial investment of £120m as part of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership.

The UK has also made a £20m upfront payment to the Government of Rwanda to support initial set up costs.

## Avian Influenza: Compensation

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Benyon on 8 March (HL5863), how much they paid to farmers in 2022 as part of the Avian Influenza Compensation scheme. [HL6582]

**Lord Benyon:** In 2022, a total of £41.0 million was paid in compensation to bird keepers whose flocks were culled for avian influenza disease control purposes.

## Batley Grammar School: Harassment

Asked by *Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 27 July 2021 (HL1972), whether the Batley Grammar School teacher and his family are still receiving police protection following him showing a picture of the Prophet Mohammed to a class of school children; if so, how much longer they expect to need to provide that protection; how many arrests have been made in connection with the threats received by that individual and his family; and what were the consequences of those arrests. [HL6266]

**Lord Sharpe of Epsom:** The Government remains steadfast in our commitment to tackling those who spread views that promote violence and hatred against individuals and communities in our society and must always stand up to those who seek to undermine our fundamental values.

The Home Office does not hold information on police protection, or number of arrests made by West Yorkshire Police in relation to this case. This is a matter for West Yorkshire Police, which is operationally independent of Government.

## Countryside: Rights of Way

Asked by *Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to implement the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to record all rights of way on a definitive map; and what proportion of applications for new public rights of way are outstanding. [HL6527]

**Lord Benyon:** Local Authorities are responsible for implementing the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for the recording of rights of ways on the definitive map and statement for the area they are responsible for. The Government is committed to taking forward a number of reforms which will streamline the process for the recording of all rights of way. Details on outstanding applications are not held centrally.

In addition, the Government has tabled an amendment to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to amend the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to undertake a review of open access land mapping before 1 January 2031 so that as many people as possible can enjoy more of England's mountains, moor, heath, down and registered common land.

## Cycling and Pedestrians: Accidents

Asked by *Lord Hogan-Howe*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many injuries have been caused to pedestrians by cyclists over the last five years; and what percentage of those injuries have been classified as (1) serious, or (2) slight. [HL6253]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The number of pedestrian casualties in Great Britain injured in a collision with a pedal cyclist which was reported by police using the STATS19 system in each of the last 5 years for which data are available is shown in the table. Note however it is known that a majority of non-fatal collisions are not reported to police.

Year	Total injured casualties	Percentage with serious injury	Percentage with slight injury
2017	528	26%	74%
2018	481	32%	68%
2019	402	34%	66%
2020	304	35%	65%
2021	436	32%	68%

## Doctors: Migrant Workers

Asked by *Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts*

To ask His Majesty's Government how they reconcile their obligations under the WHO and NHS Employers codes of practice, which discourage recruitment of doctors from countries with critical shortages of health workers, with reports that 54 per cent of newly-trained

doctors in 2022 were recruited from such countries. [HL6245]

**Lord Markham:** International recruitment of doctors is guided by the Code of Practice for International Recruitment, which guarantees the most stringent ethical standards when recruiting health and social care staff from overseas. The code aligns with latest advice from the World Health Organization, ensuring that an individual's right to migrate is upheld. As such, individuals from these countries are able to apply for vacancies independently in the United Kingdom, and, if they do, they must be treated fairly and not be discriminated against based on their nationality.

## Duty Free Allowances: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Baroness Hoey*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether Northern Ireland will be the only part of the UK from which passengers travelling to the EU will not be eligible for duty free allowances under the Windsor Framework; and if so, what assessment they have made of the appropriateness of this situation. [HL6248]

Asked by *Baroness Hoey*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Penn on 7 March (HL5751), as duty free shopping exists for passengers travelling between the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain, what assessment they have made of facilitating duty free shopping for passengers travelling between Northern Ireland and Great Britain. [HL6249]

Asked by *Baroness Hoey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they will take to protect traders in Northern Ireland from the advantage that traders in the Republic of Ireland will have through the latter's ability to import duty-free goods from Great Britain. [HL6250]

**Baroness Penn:** The government's duty-free policy remains unchanged after the agreement of the Windsor Framework. Northern Ireland enjoys frictionless trade with both the rest of the United Kingdom and the EU – the government is committed to ensuring that remains the case. Duty free shopping is only ever available for goods purchased by individuals for personal consumption. Any goods purchased for commercial use are ineligible for this relief.

## Electricity: Meters

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to protect Economy 7 energy customers from the high cost of energy they are now experiencing. [HL6231]

**Lord Callanan:** As with energy consumers on other tariff types, Economy 7 customers have been supported



by, and continue to be helped by the Energy Price Guarantee (EPG), which limits the unit rate of energy. The average GB domestic consumer has saved £900 through the EPG.

The EPG provides the same unit discount across all domestic consumers regardless of region and payment method. This means that the underlying differences in the cost to serve different payment types and regions that underpins the Ofgem price cap is maintained.

### Energy: Public Houses and Social Clubs

*Asked by Lord Smith of Hindhead*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they will know what support could be provided to (1) social clubs, and (2) pubs, which continue to struggle with energy costs when the Energy Bill Relief Scheme ends. [HL6280]

**Lord Callanan:** The Energy Bill Relief Scheme provides a discount on the wholesale element of gas and electricity bills to ensure that all eligible businesses, including the hospitality and leisure sector, are protected from high energy costs this winter period. Following an HMT-led review, the new Energy Bill Discount Scheme will run from April until March 2024, and continue to provide a discount to eligible non-domestic customers, including social clubs and pubs. The new scheme strikes a balance between supporting businesses and other non-domestic customers over the next 12 months and limiting taxpayer's exposure to volatile energy markets.

### Energy: Taxation

*Asked by Lord Sikka*

To ask His Majesty's Government what additional tax revenues they have collected since the implementation of the Energy (Oil and Gas) Profits Levy Act 2022. [HL6277]

**Baroness Penn:** Monthly Energy Profits Levy receipts are published on GOV.UK in HMRC tax receipts and National Insurance contributions for the UK <sup>[1]</sup>.

[1] [here](#).

### Farmers: Personal Income

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what was the average income of farmers in the UK in (1) 2022, (2) 2021, (3) 2020, and (4) 2019. [HL6583]

**Lord Benyon:** The average Farm Business Income for farms in the UK are as follows:

2019/20 £39,000.

2020/21 £46,500.

2021/22 not yet available.

These have been taken from <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads>

[ds/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1088561/AUK-Chapter3-14jul22.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1088561/AUK-Chapter3-14jul22.ods) and have been compiled from the 4 devolved Farm Business Surveys. Defra are only responsible for the English data.

The average Farm Business Income for farms in England only, from the Defra Farm Business Survey are as follows:

2019/20 £46,000.

2020/21 £51,900.

2021/22 £86,100.

2022/23 to be published Nov 2023.

Taken from [Farm Business Income by type of farm in England 2021/22 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farm-business-income-by-type-of-farm-in-england-2021-22).

Data are reported on a March – February year, so 2021/22 year includes the 2021 harvest and BPS payments (March 21 – Feb 22)

### Fisheries

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is their latest assessment of the health of the fishing industry in England. [HL6328]

**Lord Benyon:** Data from the Seafish annual fleet economic survey shows that in 2021 there were 2,017 fishing vessels in England. This figure is stable year-on-year but represents a 10% decrease on pre-Covid levels (2015-2019 average). The top three species landed, by value, by these vessels were crab, lobster and mackerel with an average Gross Value Added (GVA) of £66,000 per vessel in 2021 (2021 prices). Average GVA contributions per vessel in 2021 differ between vessels which are under 10m (£20,000) and over 10m (£237,000). Around 77% of the English fishing fleet are under 10m.

The average GVA per English vessel was stable year-on-year but saw a 12% real terms reduction compared to pre-Covid levels. This decline was driven by a 19% real terms reduction in average GVA per vessel for the English over 10m fleet, while the under 10m fleet experienced an 7% increase. In 2021, there were 2,683 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) crew members on English fishing vessels. Like the number of vessels in the English fleet, this figure is stable year-on-year but represents a 13% decline on pre-Covid levels. This decline is more significant in the under 10m fleet than the over 10m fleet who saw a reduction in FTE crew members of 32% and 6% respectively.

### Gender Dysphoria: Health Services

*Asked by Lord Jackson of Peterborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Interim report of the Independent Review of Gender Identity Services for Children and Young People, published in February 2022, and guidance produced by NHS England, what powers ministers have to compel the Gender Identity Development Service, under the

auspices of the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, to cease operations immediately. [HL6255]

**Lord Markham:** The process of closure of the current Gender Identity Development Service contract with the Tavistock is underway. A national transformation programme has been established to oversee the transition of patients from the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Gender Identity Development Service into the new Phase 1 services, led by specialist children's hospitals through an integrated multi-disciplinary team, and in line with the recommendations made by the independent Cass Review.

### HIV Infection: Health Services

*Asked by Baroness Barker*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to achieve gender parity in their HIV response, to ensure there is equitable (1) investment, (2) priority, and (3) attention, to women in HIV (a) prevention, (b) research, (c) data, and (d) services, in the UK. [HL6509]

**Lord Markham:** Ensuring everyone benefits equally from HIV developments is the cornerstone of our approach in England to achieve our ambitions to end new HIV transmissions, AIDS- and HIV-related deaths by 2030, as set out in our HIV Action Plan, available in an online-only format.

As part of the Plan, NHS England is investing £20 million from 2022-2025 to support the expansion of opt-out HIV testing in emergency departments in local authority areas with extremely high prevalence of HIV. We are also investing more than £3.5 million from 2021-2024 to deliver the National HIV Prevention Programme which supports communities who are disproportionately affected by HIV, including black African heterosexual women.

The UK Health Security Agency published a HIV Action Plan monitoring and evaluation report in 2022, which tracks progress across priority actions and identifies further efforts needed across the system to improve equitable access to HIV services for key population groups, including women. We continue working together with our delivery partners to ensure equity in prevention, treatment, and HIV care, and we are developing a plan to improve equitable access to the HIV prevention drug PrEP for key groups, including women.

Local authorities in England are responsible for commissioning comprehensive open access to most sexual and reproductive health services, including HIV prevention, testing and access to PrEP, through the Public Health Grant, funded at £3.5 billion in 2023-24. It is for individual local authorities to decide their spending priorities based on an assessment of local need and to commission the service lines that best suit their population.

The Department also funds research through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), which recently published an equality, diversity and inclusion strategy, setting out how NIHR will become a more inclusive funder of research and widen access to participation, including for women.

### HIV Infection: Menopause

*Asked by Baroness Barker*

To ask His Majesty's Government what research they are undertaking into women who are living with HIV and are experiencing the menopause. [HL6507]

**Lord Markham:** The Department funds research through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). NIHR funded the Menopoz Study which completed in 2018 and aimed to explore the impact of the menopause on HIV-positive women's wellbeing and engagement with HIV care in the UK.

NIHR does not currently fund any specific research into women who are living with HIV and are experiencing the menopause but welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health. Applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made based on the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

### HIV Infection: Research

*Asked by Baroness Barker*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that HIV research (1) addresses specific knowledge gaps around HIV and women, and (2) supports the full participation and meaningful involvement of women. [HL6510]

**Lord Markham:** The Department funds research through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). Since 2017/18, NIHR has spent £35,679,615 on HIV research and support thereof. There are no current plans to assess the HIV portfolio specifically, but NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including HIV.

NIHR actively and openly support patient and public involvement and engagement in research. Applicants are required to provide additional guidance to ensure that there is an explanation of the relevance and importance of the study from the patient/public perspective. In Autumn 2022, the NIHR published the EDI Strategy 2022-2027, available in an online-only format, which sets out how NIHR will become a more inclusive funder of research and widen access to participation. The strategy refers to guidance produced from the NIHR INCLUDE project, also available in an online-only format, which aims to improve the inclusion of under-served groups, for example those with lower representation in research and clinical trials than would be expected, such as women.

## Industrial Disputes

Asked by *Baroness O'Grady of Upper Holloway*

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of days lost in strike action per 1,000 workers in each of the last five years in (1) the UK, (2) France, (3) Spain, and (4) Italy; and what assessment they have made of the comparison between the UK and those countries in respect of those figures. [[HL6055](#)]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** The latest figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for the UK show that in the 7 months to December 2022, there were 2,472,000 working days lost from striking workers. This is the highest for a seven-month period since June to December 1990 (when 3,837,000 working days were lost).

The Government does not believe that direct comparisons with other European countries are particularly helpful because of the different administrative and legal frameworks governing industrial action. It remains the case that, while the exact arrangements vary, the other countries mentioned in the question have had minimum service levels in place for a variety of services for many years.

## Leisure and Service Industries: Government Assistance

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what support they are providing to (1) retail, (2) hospitality, and (3) leisure, businesses. [[HL6062](#)]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** The Spring Budget 2023 announced a £63m fund for public swimming pool providers to help with immediate cost pressures and make facilities more energy efficient. It has also been announced that there will be an increase in Draught Relief from 1 August to 9.2% to freeze the duty charged on a typical pint of beer in the pub and ensure this will always be lower than in the supermarket.

The Autumn Statement 2022 announced a package of changes to business rates worth £13.6bn over the next 5 years in lower bills. This includes a freeze to the multiplier, scrapping the downward revaluation cap and extending and increasing the generosity of the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief from 50% to 75% in 2023-24, up to £110,000 per business.

This is in addition to the Energy Bills Relief Scheme, which discounts businesses' energy bills until 31 March 2023; the new Energy Bills Discount Scheme; the increased Employment Allowance of £5,000, which takes the smallest 40% of businesses out of paying any National Insurance at all; and setting the Annual Investment Allowance at £1 million permanently.

## Liverpool Strategic Futures Advisory Panel

Asked by *Lord Storey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the total cost to date of the commissioners sent to Liverpool to set up the Strategic Futures Panel; and who is responsible for that cost. [[HL6323](#)]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** As is standard, members of the Liverpool Strategic Futures Advisory Panel will be remunerated by the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities.

There is no cost to date.

## Livestock: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Lord Morrow*

To ask His Majesty's Government how the (1) rules, and (2) processes, for transport of livestock to and from Great Britain will differ under the Windsor Framework from the position prior to 2019; in particular, the length of time that cattle are sent to an approved test centre before being sent to Northern Ireland. [[HL6262](#)]

**Lord Benyon:** The Windsor Framework respects that for decades the island of Ireland has been treated as a single epidemiological unit, meaning that there have been additional requirements for the movement of livestock. In 2021 technical easements were agreed with the EU to simplify the movements of livestock moving from Northern Ireland (NI) to Great Britain (GB) and back. Cattle moving directly from GB to NI do not need to be sent to an approved test centre before moving to NI, but need to arrive into NI through a Point of Entry for relevant sanitary and phytosanitary checks, as they did pre-EU exit. We are working closely with the livestock sector in GB and NI to ensure movements can continue with as little friction as possible.

## Medicine: Training

Asked by *Lord Rose of Monewden*

To ask His Majesty's Government, given the opening of the University of Chester medical school, and the forthcoming opening of a new medical school at the University of Surrey, what plans they have to increase the current cap of 7,500 funded medical places in England; and if they have any such plans, by how many they will increase the cap. [[HL6318](#)]

**Lord Markham:** The Government is committed to ensuring that the number of medical school places is in line with England's workforce requirements.

NHS England has been commissioned to produce a long-term workforce plan, which will include projections for the number of doctors, nurses and other professionals needed in five, 10 and 15 years' time, taking full account

of improvements in retention and productivity. The workforce plan is for the whole of the National Health Service workforce, and will be published this year.

The Government has funded an additional 1,500 undergraduate medical school places per year for domestic students in England, a 25% increase, taking the total number of medical school training places in England to 7,500 each year. This expansion was completed in September 2020 and has delivered five new medical schools in England.

### **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: Medical Treatments**

*Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick***

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they plan to seek clarification from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) on how the non-reference case discount rate should be used in its assessments of Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMPs). [[HL6216](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick***

To ask His Majesty's Government which medicinal products evaluated by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in each of the past five years have (1) been considered (a) to treat a life threatening or severe limiting disease, (b) to restore patients to full or near full health, and (c) likely to sustain their benefits over a very long period of time, and (2) not been considered to meet the above criteria, in cases where a request was made to be considered as such by the applicant company. [[HL6217](#)]

**Lord Markham:** The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) concluded a comprehensive review of the methods and processes it uses for health technology assessment with the publication of its updated health technology evaluation manual on 31 January 2022. The review was carried out through extensive engagement with interested parties. As part of the review, NICE considered the circumstances in which it was appropriate to apply a non-reference case discount rate.

The updated manual states that NICE's committee can consider using a non-reference case discount rate of 1.5% per year for both costs and health effects if the technology is for people who would otherwise die or have a very severely impaired life, if it is likely to restore them to full or near-full health, if the benefits are likely to be sustained over a very long period, and if the committee is confident that there is a highly plausible case for the maintenance of benefits over time and is satisfied that any irrecoverable costs associated with the technology have been appropriately captured or mitigated. The decision on whether a non-reference case discount rate is applied is taken by NICE's health technology evaluation committees. There are no plans to seek any further clarification from NICE.

The non-reference case discount rate has been considered in several technology appraisals and highly specialised technologies evaluations, when considered appropriate by the committee. This includes both advanced therapeutic medicinal products (ATMPs), for example the evaluations of onasemnogene abeparvovec for spinal muscular atrophy and Strimvelis for adenosine deaminase-deficient severe combined immunodeficiency, and non-ATMPs, for example the evaluation of dinutuximab beta for neuroblastoma.

The full list of products that have or have not been considered to treat a life threatening or severely limiting disease, to restore patients to full or near full health, and that are likely to sustain their benefits over a very long period of time, could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

### **Orthopaedics: Surgery**

*Asked by **Baroness Merron***

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the merits of using training provided by the independent sector for trainee NHS trauma and orthopaedic surgeons. [[HL6261](#)]

**Lord Markham:** In delivering its responsibilities for education and training, Health Education England makes a thorough assessment of training possibilities in the independent sector for medical specialities, including for trauma and orthopaedic surgery.

### **Plants: Biodiversity**

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans***

To ask His Majesty's Government what resources they are making available to implement their Plant biosecurity strategy for Great Britain (2023 to 2028), published on 9 January. [[HL6473](#)]

**Lord Benyon:** Plant health is a devolved matter. The Plant Biosecurity Strategy for Great Britain (2023-2028) sets out the joint approach that Defra, the Scottish and Welsh Governments and the Forestry Commission will take to plant biosecurity for the next five years.

Financial information is not held centrally. Collation of this information across the different government bodies which deliver plant health services (for example, Defra, the Animal and Plant Health Agency, Forestry Commission and RBG Kew) in Great Britain was not possible within the timeframe.

Defra's annual accounts report a spend of over £330 million on animal and plant health in 2021/22. It has not been possible to provide a breakdown of this spend within the timeframe.

As part of the new plant biosecurity strategy for GB, Defra is investing in a range of new initiatives, including:

- Over £10 million on new information technology to transform the work of the plant health service.
- Over £4.5 million on a new Centre for Forest Protection at Forest Research and RBG Kew.
- Defra has increased the number of plant health inspectors to meet demand since January 2021, when checks of high priority plants from the EU began, ensuring minimal disruption to trade. This includes recruiting 137 new plant health inspectors to perform import checks. New inspectors will also undertake work in the APHA expanded Internet Trading Unit, to step up monitoring of online retailers and social media sites for the trade of high-risk plant products.
- Since 2020, we have also doubled the workforce at Border Control Posts, an essential component of the UK's biosecurity regime.
- To ensure that we effectively protect UK biosecurity, the UK Government will continue to monitor plant health inspector resource against the demand for checks and emerging risks of pests and disease that our imports pose. We will be publishing more details on our new risk-based approach very soon in the upcoming border Target Operating Model.

### Plants: Disease Control

*Asked by Baroness Foakes*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether there are health checks in place for plants from outside the UK available for purchase on outlets such as eBay; and if not, what plans they have to avoid the spread of dangerous pests and diseases as a result of such purchases. [HL6309]

**Lord Benyon:** All regulated plants entering Great Britain must meet our risk based import requirements. This includes being accompanied by a Phytosanitary Certificate and being subject to risk based physical inspections. These requirements apply to goods purchased through online sites.

The plant health inspectorate has an Internet Trading Unit which conducts regular checks on this pathway. Online trading will continue to feature as a significant means of selling plants and we are working with relevant organisations to raise awareness with sellers and customers of the legal requirements and the need for increased biosecurity.

Since Brexit we have identified consignments arriving from the EU that don't comply with our biosecurity requirements – the number of interceptions is steadily rising – ballpark figures are around the 1000 mark for interceptions, this figure is expected to continue to rise as our intelligence and data gathering becomes increasingly extensive and sophisticated, e.g., by employing web-scraping tools.

In the new Plant Biosecurity Strategy for Great Britain, we have announced plans to enhance APHA's Internet

Trading Unit to increase monitoring of internet trading and social media sites and raise awareness of biosecurity requirements on these platforms. This will continue to focus on commodities which are prohibited entry into the UK, and consignments that are considered of particular high risk.

Additionally, the unit has a programme of engagement with other government agencies and the public, in order to inform people of UK biosecurity requirements and handle queries relating to online and distance sales from businesses and the public.

### Prisoners: Women

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Derby*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to improve the opportunities for sport and physical activity for women and girls in the criminal justice system. [HL6295]

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Derby*

To ask His Majesty's Government what progress they have made in improving the availability of sport and physical activity for women and girls in the criminal justice system; and what plans they have to expand provision. [HL6342]

**Lord Bellamy:** Encouraging engagement in sport and exercise amongst women and girls in contact with the criminal justice system can have a significant impact on reducing reoffending through both early intervention and diversionary activities, as well as rehabilitation for those sentenced.

The Youth Justice Sport Fund is therefore funding over 200 voluntary and community sector organisations to carry out targeted work supporting children vulnerable to crime, using sport to address problem behaviour. We anticipate that 21-40% of the children being supported by the fund will be girls, which is lower than the national population but higher than the percentage of the offending population who are female (15%). While girls can access nearly all these services, a small number of these organisations specifically focus on girls as the primary cohort for early intervention. The evaluation report for the Fund will examine how future funding in sport can best engage and support girls at risk of entering the youth justice system.

We are continually improving our sport and Physical Education (PE) offer to all prisons, in particular by strengthening specific provision in the Women's estate. Activities such as trauma-informed Yoga training as well as pre- and post-natal instructor qualifications can improve wellbeing and prevent reoffending, especially in a prison setting. Through initiatives such as Parkrun and the Twinning Project (which connects prisons to local football clubs so prisoners can access coaching and develop new skills), we are also increasing access to activities that support resettlement both in prison and back into the community.

## Railways: Carbon Emissions and Electrification

Asked by *Lord Bradshaw*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT)'s Freight Electrification Map Commentary, published on 2 March, which found that "electrifying [these] 'infill' sections, which total less than 60 miles, would allow around 2 million train miles a year to be decarbonised"; and what plans they have to adopt that recommendation. [HL6236]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** We are in the process of reviewing the report and its findings. It is too early to say whether we have any plans to adopt the recommendations.

## Refugees: Resettlement

Asked by *Lord German*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many persons identified by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as needing resettlement in the UK have been so resettled in each of the last 10 years. [HL6242]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Between 2013 and 2022, 30,055 people have been resettled to the UK through UNHCR resettlement routes. The UK ranks 3rd highest of European countries over this period.

Between 2013 and 2022, people were offered safe and legal routes into the UK via the following:

- 153,708 BN(O) Hong Kong Visas.
- 233,770 visas granted under Ukraine Visa and Extension Schemes.
- 53,230 family reunion visas.
- 51,420 resettled or relocated. 30,055 resettled through UNHCR resettlement routes and 21,365 through non-UNHCR routes (i.e. Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme Pathway 1 and Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy).

Asked by *Lord German*

To ask His Majesty's Government what quotas they place on the numbers of persons to be resettled on the recommendation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). [HL6243]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The UK does not set a quota on the overall number of persons to be resettled on the recommendation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Asked by *Lord German*

To ask His Majesty's Government what criteria they apply when considering applications for resettlement from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). [HL6244]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is uniquely placed to help identify and refer the most vulnerable individuals for resettlement in accordance with their standard resettlement submission categories. These are based on people's needs and vulnerabilities.

We do not seek to intervene in or influence UNHCR's selection processes.

The seven resettlement submission categories used by UNHCR are set out here:

<https://www.unhcr.org/46f7c0ee2.pdf>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UNHCR Resettlement Handbook [46f7c0ee2.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-08/HL6244>

## Reoffenders

Asked by *The Earl of Dundee*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of measures used by other Council of Europe states whose levels of recidivism are lower than those of the UK. [HL6300]

**Lord Bellamy:** Reducing the rate of reoffending is a key aim of this Government.

As set out in the Prisons Strategy White Paper, we are driving down reoffending through investing in getting offenders into skills training, work and stable accommodation. Our approach is informed by a wide range of data and evidence, including international best practice. We regularly engage with other Council of Europe states, including information sharing on recidivism through the European Organisation of Prison and Correctional Services and the Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics programme.

It is important to note, however, that care should be taken when comparing reoffending rates internationally as means of calculation between countries can vary and therefore data is not directly comparable.

## Research, Information and Communications Unit

Asked by *Lord Dobbs*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by on 7 March (HL5790), whether they will now publish the full analysis prepared by Prevent's Research Information and Communication Unit (RICU) that reportedly identified books, poetry, TV shows, and films, including 'Yes, Minister', 'Great British Railway Journeys', 'House of Cards', '1984', and 'Beowulf', as being 'far-right' and 'white supremacist'. [HL6239]

**Lord Sharpe of Epsom:** The Research, Information and Communications Unit (RICU) was established in 2007 under the Prevent strand of HMG's CONTEST

strategy, to understand and counter terrorist and extremist ideologies to reduce the risk to the UK, its citizens, and its interests overseas.

RICU provides analysis on terrorist use of propaganda and exploitation of the internet to inform the UK's counter-terrorism system. To support this crucial objective RICU undertakes open-source monitoring to better understand the media, online and communications environment as it relates to terrorism and extremism. This open-source monitoring identifies a range of material that is shared and discussed within these spaces, including topics or media that terrorist and extremist groups are seeking to exploit.

All RICU data collection and analysis complies with relevant legislation. Ministers have authorised RICU's work since it was established in 2007, and through subsequent updates to the CONTEST strategy (in 2011 and 2018) and regularly receive RICU outputs.

RICU activity is underpinned and directed by sensitive information pertaining to terrorism threats and the identification of at-risk audiences. The books and television shows referenced in these products were not identified as 'far-right' and 'white-supremacist'. The inclusion of these items of media was an illustration of the types of mainstream content shared in online spaces that are known to be frequented by terrorist and extremist influencers and susceptible audiences. Publishing RICU analysis risks revealing insights into HMG capabilities and undermining the effectiveness of RICU's monitoring and analysis.

The work of RICU has been crucial to the delivery of Prevent and has helped to position the UK at the forefront of the battle against terrorist propaganda, particularly online terrorist content.

Prevent remains a vital tool to divert people from dangerous and poisonous ideologies. We are now implementing all recommendations from the recent Independent Review of Prevent, paving the way for a more transparent, efficient and sustainable programme. This will include resetting thresholds to ensure proportionality across ideologies and ensuring that analytical products more clearly state the purpose of the reporting and the nature of any links identified between mainstream media items and terrorism.

### Schools: Koran

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they will take to protect pupils who drop or deface a copy of the Koran, and the families of those pupils. [HL6264]

**Baroness Barran:** The safety of children is the utmost priority for the department, and it is never acceptable to threaten or intimidate pupils and their families under any circumstances. Schools and colleges have a critical role to play in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Keeping Children Safe in Education is statutory

safeguarding guidance which all schools and colleges must consider, to ensure the safety of children at school.

A vital part of schools meeting their duties includes creating a safe, calm, and supportive environment for all pupils. Head teachers play an important role in preventing bullying, harassment and discrimination in their schools, and they should ensure that they consider the needs of all pupils and staff when developing the school's approach to its behaviour policy, which all schools are required to have in place.

In response to recent incidents, the government has been repeatedly clear that there is no blasphemy law in Great Britain. There is a range of existing guidance to help schools make decisions on how to meet the needs of their pupils, and to manage and resolve concerns and complaints. The department trusts school leaders to work with pupils, parents, and where necessary the local community and the police to manage the responses to these incidents locally.

However, we recognise that where these issues arise, they are often sensitive and complex, involving a range of local partners such as the police and local authorities. The Home Office is drafting guidance around blasphemy incidents, which the department will support with as needed.

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the statement by the spokesperson for the Department for Education on 2 March in respect of the suspension of four school children at Kettlethorpe High School for dropping a copy of the Koran that "the school followed standard disciplinary procedures in response to this incident" and that the Department "backs headteachers to take the appropriate action", what are the standard disciplinary procedures for such an incident; whether they consider the suspension of the children in this case to be an "appropriate action"; and if not, what plans they have to withdraw that statement. [HL6267]

**Baroness Barran:** The government's priority remains the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The department trusts head teachers to work with pupils, parents and, where necessary, the local community and the police to manage the responses to these incidents locally.

All schools are required by law to have a behaviour policy which outlines effective strategies that will encourage good behaviour and the sanctions that will be imposed for misbehaviour. The department trusts head teachers to develop behaviour policies which reflect their school's individual contexts and needs. The department also supports head teachers in using suspension as a sanction when warranted as part of creating calm, safe and supportive environments where both pupils and staff can work in safety and are respected.

All decisions to suspend a pupil must be lawful, proportionate, and reasonable. Within these requirements, schools need to be able to set and enforce behaviour

policies that reflect their ethos and the specific challenges they face. Decisions also need to be based on the particular facts of a case. For this reason, the statutory Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance does not prescribe the behaviours that should or should not lead to a suspension.

If parents feel that disciplinary action is unreasonable, they have the right to make representations to the school's governing board.

## Seas and Oceans: Carbon Capture and Storage

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the role that (1) sea kelp, and (2) sea grasses, can play in capturing carbon and meeting the UK's net zero targets; and what steps they are taking to identify and preserve these marine sites for the future. [HL6525]

**Lord Benyon:** The UK Net Zero Strategy recognised that protecting, restoring, and sustainably managing blue carbon habitats like saltmarsh and seagrass can provide benefits for biodiversity and climate adaptation, as well as for carbon sequestration. However, the potential contribution of coastal blue carbon habitats to total annual UK emissions reductions is modest due to their relatively small area.

The marine arm of the Government's Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment programme is supporting the UK's commitments towards net zero through monitoring and mapping carbon storage and cycling capacity across England's coastal and marine ecosystems, such as saltmarshes, kelp forests and the seabed. This will inform better management of our natural carbon sources and sinks, including the protection of key habitats for carbon storage. Furthermore, through the UK Blue Carbon Evidence Partnership, Defra is working with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, alongside other UK Administrations, to address key research questions relating to blue carbon.

We are also working to protect these habitats, including through the Marine Protected Areas network, which already contains the majority of saltmarsh and seagrass habitats in the UK. A number of estuarine and coastal habitat restoration initiatives are also underway including the Environment Agency's Restoring Meadow, Marsh and Reef (ReMeMaRe) initiative, which aims to reverse centuries of coastal habitat decline by restoring seagrass meadows and saltmarsh.

## Senior Civil Servants

*Asked by Lord Norton of Louth*

To ask His Majesty's Government who in the Home Office is responsible for ensuring senior civil servants in the Department comply with section 3(6) of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010, as

embodied in the Civil Service Code; and what steps they have taken in the past two years to monitor and ensure compliance with the provision. [HL6263]

**Lord Sharpe of Epsom:** All civil servants are expected to observe the principles of the Civil Service Code as well as relevant departmental rules, policies and procedures relating to conduct, standards and service.

Annual assurance activity takes place to ensure compliance, including a self-assessment assurance framework completed by all Directors overseen by the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC). This is designed as an evidence-based exercise and undergoes moderation by subject matter experts and a central team.

There are also regular communications on this topic to all staff from the Permanent Secretary and official routes are available to raise concerns in the Home Office.

## Social Services: Living Wage

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they will take to help the care sector pay their employees the Living Wage. [HL6009]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** All businesses – irrespective of their size or business sector – are responsible for paying the correct National Living Wage (NLW) /National Minimum Wage (NMW) to their staff. The Government is making available up to £7.5 billion in additional funding over two years to support adult social care and discharge - with up to £2.8 billion available in 2023/24 and £4.7 billion in 2024/25. This funding boost will put the adult social care system on a stronger financial footing and help Local Authorities address waiting lists, low fee rates, and workforce pressures in the sector.

If any care worker is concerned that they are being underpaid, we strongly urge them to call the Acas helpline (0300 123 1100) for free, impartial and confidential advice about their rights and entitlements. Acas officers will pass on cases to HM Revenue and Customs for further consideration where appropriate.

## State Retirement Pensions: Expenditure

*Asked by Lord Sikka*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the annual cost of aligning the women's pre-2016 and post-2016 state pension with the amounts paid out to men. [HL6276]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The way that the National Insurance system and the State Pension systems interact means that it would not be possible align payments in the way the question suggests. The amount of State Pension paid to individuals is dependent on their National Insurance contributions. State Pensions are paid in accordance with the rules in place at the point the person reaches State Pension age. This means that



outcomes are calculated on an individual basis and reflect a person's National Insurance history throughout their careers, in line with the contributory principle.

The latest figures (August 2022) for new State Pension show that on average, women receiving the new State Pension receive £18.40 per week more than women under the pre 2016 system. It also shows that the gap between women and men has narrowed from £26.48 pw to £5.32 pw. This puts women at receiving 85% of the rate received by men under the pre 2016 system and 97% under the new State Pension. The table below shows the average amounts in payment in August 2022. The design of the new State Pension means that the gap between men and women's outcomes is likely to continue to diminish, with outcomes being equalised in the future.

*Average State Pension amounts in payment (August 2022).*

	Male	Female	Total
Pre-2016 State Pension (basic State Pension, plus Additional Pension) (for those reaching State Pension age before 6.4.16)	£ 178.60	£ 152.12	£ 163.17
New State Pension (for those reaching State Pension age from 6.4.16 onwards)	£ 175.84	£ 170.52	£ 173.71

For people with lower amounts, Pension Credit provides a safety net for those most in need. Pension Credit provides a top up for people of State Pension age with a weekly income below £182.60 (for single people) or £278.70 (for couples). Information about Pension Credit is available from the Gov.uk website.

## UK Border Force: Operating Costs

*Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead*

To ask His Majesty's Government what was the cost of running the UK's border policy for each of the last 10 years. [HL6241]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Border Force does not hold the cost of running the UK's border policy for each of the last 10 years in an easily accessible format.

However, I enclose the Home Office annual reports and accounts link below:

Home Office annual report and accounts, 2012 to 2013 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Home Office annual report and accounts: 2014 to 2015 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Home Office annual report and accounts: 2017 to 2018 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Home Office annual report and accounts: 2018 to 2019 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Home Office annual report and accounts: 2019 to 2020 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Home Office annual report and accounts: 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Home Office annual report & accounts: 2021 to 2022 [Home Office Annual Report and Accounts 2021 - 2022.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-08/HL6241>

## Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access

*Asked by Lord Warner*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Markham on 6 February (HL5236), when they will publish their final impact assessment on changes to the Statutory Scheme for Branded Medicines. [HL6284]

**Lord Markham:** The Government published its final impact assessment of updates to the statutory scheme on 2 March 2023. A copy of the impact assessment is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Impact assessment copy attached. [statutory-scheme-update-2023-impact\_assessment.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-08/HL6284>

## Warships: Military Aircraft

*Asked by Lord West of Spithead*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 6 March (HL5734), on which ships of the Littoral Response Groups the (1) Merlin Mk4, and (2) Wildcat, helicopters of the Commando Helicopter Force will be embarked. [HL6288]

**Baroness Goldie:** Both the Merlin MK4 and Wildcat Mk 1 helicopters will embark on the Landing Platform Dock, Landing Ship Dock (Amphibious) and RFA ARGUS (as an Amphibious Support Ship) as necessary for Littoral Response Group operations.

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