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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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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

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

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Written Statements

Friday, 24 March 2023

Building Safety: Responsible Actors Scheme and Developer Remediation Contract

[HLWS656]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations (The Rt Hon. Michael Gove MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

On 14 March, I announced that 39 developers had signed the developer remediation contract. By signing the contract, they made binding commitments to fix or pay to fix life-critical fire safety defects in all buildings in England over 11 metres that they had a role in developing or refurbishing over the past 30 years. This amounts to an irreversible commitment to making safe at least 1,100 buildings at a cost of over £2 billion.

Update on Responsible Actors Scheme

Last week, I also told the House that there will be consequences for companies that do not sign the contract. I warned that they will be prohibited from commencing developments in England or gaining building control sign-off on their developments, unless they sign and adhere to the contract. I said that we will lay regulations this Spring to establish a Responsible Actors Scheme. The regulations will recognise the positive action of responsible developers and will make sure that eligible developers who do not sign and comply with the contract will be unable to be members of the Scheme, and therefore be subject to prohibitions. I will lay regulations that will, with Parliament's consent, bring the Scheme into operation before the Summer Recess.

Today, I am publishing the key features of the Responsible Actors Scheme on GOV.UK and placing a copy of the information in the libraries of both Houses. The key features document sets out how the Scheme will work, the likely eligibility criteria and membership conditions for the first phase of the Scheme, how developers will apply to join the Scheme and the prohibitions that will be imposed on eligible developers that fail to sign the contract and comply with its terms.

Developers who want to be part of the Scheme will need to sign the developer remediation contract and comply with its terms. In its first phase, the Scheme will focus on larger residential property developers and developers who developed multiple tall residential buildings known to have life-critical fire safety defects. Over time, I intend to expand the Scheme to cover even more of those who developed unsafe 11m+ residential buildings and should pay to fix them.

Eligible developers will be invited to join the Scheme by a statutory deadline or provide evidence that they do not in fact meet the eligibility criteria. Any eligible developer who chooses not to join the Scheme, or who is

expelled from the Scheme as a result of a material or persistent breach of its conditions, will be added to a list of developers who will not be permitted to carry out major development or secure building control sign-offs.

The message to those developers who have yet to sign the contract, their shareholders and investors could not be clearer. The Responsible Actors Scheme is coming. Only developers who behave responsibly will be trusted to build the homes of the future. Any eligible developers who fail to do the right thing will need to find a new line of work.

Update on signatories to the developer remediation contract

At the time of my statement of 14 March, 11 developers had yet to sign. I named those companies and called on their directors to reflect on their future and do the right thing. Today, I can confirm that 4 of those 11 companies have since signed the contract: Ballymore, Lendlease, London Square and Telford Homes. The 7 developers who have yet to sign the contract are: Abbey Developments, Avant, Dandara, Emerson Group (Jones Homes), Galliard Homes, Inland Homes and Rydon Homes. Some of those companies have told us that they remain committed to protecting leaseholders and taxpayers from having to pay, and claim that they will sign the contract in coming days.

As I made plain last week, I will write to local authorities and building inspectors to explain the consequences for those companies that remain non-signatories at the point that the regulations creating the Responsible Actors Scheme come into force. I will suggest action that local authorities may want to take to be prepared for implementation of the scheme, to ensure that any companies that do not wish to act responsibly do not profit from that behaviour – and that the public is protected as a result.

Given possible market sensitivities, I notified the London Stock Exchange about the key features document

Trade and Cooperation Agreement Partnership Council

[HLWS657]

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:

The Trade and Cooperation Agreement Partnership Council met today, 24 March 2023, in London, with delegates attending in person and by video conference.

The meeting was co-chaired by the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, the Rt Hon James Cleverly MP and European Commission Vice President, Maroš Šefčovič. Representatives from the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive attended, as did representatives from the Crown Dependencies of the Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey. 27 EU Member State

representatives also attended. A Joint Statement was agreed and published on GOV.UK.

The Partnership Council discussed implementation of the TCA and cooperation in a range of areas including energy, regulation, security and Union Programmes.

The Partnership Council supervises the operation of the TCA, providing strategic direction to the work of the Trade Partnership Committee and 18 Specialised Committees.

The UK restated its commitment to cooperating with the EU through the Trade and Cooperation Agreement Partnership Council.

Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee

[HLWS658]

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:

The Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee met today, 24 March 2023, in London with delegates attending in person and by video conference. The meeting was co-chaired by the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, the Rt Hon James Cleverly MP and European Commission Vice President, Maroš Šefčovič. A Joint Statement was agreed and published on GOV.UK.

The Committee welcomed the agreement of the Windsor Framework and adopted the new arrangements set out within the Framework. The adoption of this agreement restores the free-flow of trade from Great Britain to Northern Ireland through a new green lane; it gives the elected representatives of Northern Ireland a veto over new laws that apply there; and protects Northern Ireland's place in our Union through fixing practical problems including on pets, parcels and medicines and ensuring that UK decisions on tax and spend benefit people and businesses in Northern Ireland as they do in Great Britain.

The Committee addressed other important issues including the rights of UK nationals in the EU and EU citizens in the UK. Both sides agreed on the importance of continuing to support these citizens and welcomed the efforts made over the past year to do so, including additional funding provided by both sides to external organisations.

The Committee also received an update on the work of the Withdrawal Agreement Specialised Committees since the last meeting on 21 February 2022 and adopted the Withdrawal Agreement Annual Report for the year 2021 pursuant to Article 164(6) of the Withdrawal Agreement.

The Committee adopted one Decision laying down arrangements relating to the Windsor Framework.

The Committee also adopted two Recommendations:

- on market surveillance and enforcement.
- on Article 13(3a) of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland.

Both the UK and EU made five Joint Declarations relating to the Windsor Framework:

- Joint Declaration No 1/2023.
- Joint Declaration on the application of Article 10(1) of the Windsor Framework.
- Joint Declaration on Article 13(3a) of the Windsor Framework.
- Joint Declaration No 2/2023.
- Joint Declaration on the VAT regime for goods not being at risk for the Union's internal market and on the VAT arrangements for cross border refunds.

The UK made five Unilateral Declarations and the EU made Unilateral Declarations noting these:

- Unilateral Declaration by the United Kingdom Involvement of the institutions of the 1998 Agreement (Annex I to the Decision No 1/2023 laying down arrangements relating to the Windsor Framework).
- Unilateral Declaration by the United Kingdom on market surveillance and enforcement - noted by the Unilateral Declaration by the Union.
- Unilateral Declaration by the United Kingdom on export procedures for goods moving from Northern Ireland to other parts of the United Kingdom - noted by the Unilateral Declaration by the Union.
- Unilateral Declaration by the United Kingdom on the democratic consent mechanism in Article 18 of the Windsor Framework - noted by the Unilateral Declaration by the Union.

Unilateral Declaration by the United Kingdom on strengthening enforcement action for goods moved in parcels from another part of the United Kingdom to Northern Ireland - noted by the Unilateral Declaration by the Union.

Written Answers

Friday, 24 March 2023

Apprentices: Finance

Asked by *Lord Godson*

To ask His Majesty's Government what was the total apprenticeship budget allocated by HM Treasury to the Department for Education in each of the financial years (1) 2016–17, (2) 2017–18, (3) 2018–19, (4) 2019–20, (5) 2020–21, and (6) 2021–22. [HL6344]

Asked by *Lord Godson*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much they spent on apprenticeships in total in each of the financial years (1) 2016–17, (2) 2017–18, (3) 2018–19, (4) 2019–20, (5) 2020–21, and (6) 2021–22. [HL6345]

Baroness Barran: The apprenticeships budget is used to fund training and assessment for new apprenticeship starts for all employers in England, to cover the ongoing costs of apprentices already in training and any additional payments made to employers, providers, and apprentices.

The annual apprenticeship budget is set by HM Treasury (HMT). The table below shows the department's ring-fenced apprenticeships budget, and the total apprenticeships spend in England from the 2016/17 financial year to the 2021/22 financial year. This reflects the impact of the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in April 2017 on increasing investment in apprenticeships and shows that in the 2021/22 financial year, 99.6% of the budget in England was spent, with only £11 million unspent. Apprenticeships are an employer-led programme, and as is usual practice, any underspends in overall departmental budgets by the end of the financial year are first returned to HMT, as per the Consolidated Budgeting Guidance.

The Department's ring-fenced apprenticeships budget and total apprenticeships spend for the 2016/17 to 2021/22 financial years:

Year	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22
Department's ring-fenced apprenticeships budget (£million)	1,808	2,010	2,231	2,469	2,467	2,466
Total ring-fenced apprenticeships spend (£million)	1,649	1,586	1,738	1,919	1,863	2,455

Asylum

Asked by *The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the compliance of the Illegal

Migration Bill with the UN 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. [HL6366]

Lord Murray of Blidworth: Those who come to the UK illegally who cannot be returned home will be relocated to a safe third country such as Rwanda, where they will have the opportunity to claim asylum and rebuild their lives.

In December, the High Court ruled that the Government's Migration Partnership with Rwanda is lawful and that it complies with the Refugee Convention.

We are satisfied that the provisions of the Illegal Migration Bill are compatible with the UK's international obligations.

Asylum: Applications

Asked by *Lord Scriven*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have signed agreements with any countries, other than Rwanda, to remove those seeking asylum in the UK and to process their asylum applications; and if so, what are those countries. [HL6373]

Lord Murray of Blidworth: We are unable to comment on discussions that may be being held with other countries. We are, however, committed to working closely with international partners as we act on fixing our broken asylum system.

This ground-breaking Partnership is a model that could be replicated elsewhere, and we are always willing to work with partners around the world to tackle this joint challenge.

Asylum: Children

Asked by *Lord Scriven*

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Greater Manchester Police concerning any evidence of instances of unaccompanied children seeking asylum who have gone missing while staying in hotels, and who may have been taken by gangs involved in crime. [HL6372]

Lord Murray of Blidworth: We have no unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) hotels in Greater Manchester. The Home Office can confirm that those responsible for the care of UASC in temporary accommodation have not had discussions with Greater Manchester Police.

The Home Office takes the wellbeing, welfare and security of children and minors in our care extremely seriously. Robust safeguarding procedures are in place to ensure all children and minors are safe and supported as we seek urgent placements with local authorities.

When a young person who has previously gone missing from an emergency interim UASC Hotel is encountered or located, the Police force where the young person is missing from should be notified. If the young person was located by another Police force in a different area then the

force dealing with the missing persons case will liaise with them regarding the circumstances of the encounter and how they came to locate the young person. This will assist both forces with identifying whether there are any concerns regarding possible trafficking; exploitation or other potential criminal activities that may require investigation.

The Department for Education's statutory guidance on any children who run away or go missing from home or care home, states that young people who go missing should be offered a Return Home Interview. This can help understand why the young person went missing as well as identify any harm that may have occurred to them as well as possible risks that might need to be addressed.

Asylum: Rwanda

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask His Majesty's Government how many individuals seeking asylum in the UK the government of Rwanda have agreed to receive and process in (1) 2023, (2) 2024, and (3) 2025. [HL6374]

Lord Murray of Blidworth: We have been discussing a range of scenarios with the Government of Rwanda around volumes of relocations. The current planning envisages several thousand people being relocated to Rwanda each year.

It should be noted that the arrangement is uncapped, and Rwanda has plans in place to scale up their ability to support more relocations if needed.

BBC: Music

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have had any discussions with (1) the Musicians' Union, or (2) the BBC, in regard to the BBC's new strategy for classical music announced on 7 March, which included a reduction of roles in the BBC's Symphony, Concert and Philharmonic orchestras and the closure of the BBC Singers. [HL6364]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Operational and editorial decisions are independent of Government and are a matter for the BBC.

DCMS Ministers met the BBC on 22 March to discuss a range of issues, including latest developments regarding the BBC's classical music strategy, announced on 7 March.

The BBC has today announced that it will suspend the proposal to close the BBC Singers, and will continue to engage with the Musicians' Union and the other BBC Unions about its proposals regarding the BBC's English Orchestras.

Broadband: Rural Areas

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Exeter

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to use 4G coverage, which covers 99 per cent of the country, as an alternative to fibre to provide access to broadband in remote rural areas. [HL6620]

Viscount Camrose: Project Gigabit is the Government's £5 billion mission to deliver fast, reliable broadband across the UK. Over 74% of UK premises can now access a gigabit-capable broadband connection, up from just 6% in January 2019. As part of Project Gigabit, we are targeting a minimum of 85% gigabit-capable coverage by 2025, and then seek to get as close to 100% as possible.

Project Gigabit is technology neutral and therefore can use a Fixed Wireless Access solution such as 4G subject to the relevant eligibility criteria and performance requirements being met.

Ofcom estimates that at least 95% of premises are already able to access a 4G Fixed Wireless Access solution from a commercial provider, with some wireless technologies already able to offer an ultrafast, or gigabit-capable, connection that offers substantial capacity and low latency. Ofcom also assesses with high confidence that 5G data services from at least one provider are available to at least 77% of UK premises.

The government believes that a small proportion of premises, likely less than 100,000, may require an alternative solution to gigabit-capable connectivity and are therefore considered 'Very Hard to Reach'.

The government is therefore exploring with industry all possible options for improving broadband connectivity in remote rural areas and is considering all available technology types, including 4G and 5G Fixed Wireless Access solutions, to address premises in these areas.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Exeter

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to offer financial incentives to enable the use of 4G coverage to provide access to broadband in remote rural areas. [HL6621]

Viscount Camrose: Project Gigabit is the Government's £5 billion mission to deliver fast, reliable broadband across the UK. Over 74% of UK premises can now access a gigabit-capable broadband connection, up from just 6% in January 2019. As part of Project Gigabit, we are targeting a minimum of 85% gigabit-capable coverage by 2025, and then seek to get as close to 100% as possible.

Project Gigabit is technology neutral and therefore can use a Fixed Wireless Access solution, including those based on 4G or 5G, subject to the relevant eligibility criteria and performance requirements being met.

Support is also available for homes and businesses in rural areas through the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme. The scheme provides a subsidy of up to £4,500 for residents and businesses towards the cost of installing gigabit-capable broadband. To date, almost 84,000 vouchers have been used to connect premises to gigabit-capable broadband. Vouchers can be used for projects incorporating a wireless element, subject to them meeting the defined performance criteria.

The broadband Universal Service Obligation (USO) is also technology neutral so BT and KCOM, as the Universal Service Providers, can offer customers who are eligible for the USO a 4G or 5G Fixed Wireless Access solution if one is presently available.

Broadband: Standards

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Exeter

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that the 500,000 properties currently unable to access a broadband service running at a minimum of 10Mbps via a fixed line will be able to access broadband. [HL6618]

Viscount Camrose: The Government has set out its plan to deliver Project Gigabit, our £5 billion mission to deliver fast, reliable broadband across the UK, and we are making good progress. Our target is for 85% of UK premises to have access to gigabit-capable broadband by 2025, and over 99% by 2030. This will include some premises currently unable to access more than 10Mbps.

More than £1 billion of public subsidy has been made available to broadband suppliers to extend their gigabit-capable networks to rural and hard to reach parts of the country. To date, we have awarded six contracts in locations from Cornwall to Cumbria, and we have launched a further 15 procurements, which combined will deliver fast, reliable broadband to up to 748,000 premises that would have otherwise missed out.

Furthermore, while approximately 500,000 premises do not currently have access to a decent broadband connection of 10Mbps download and 1Mbps upload, of these approximately 420,000 have access to a Fixed Wireless Access connection offering at least this level of connectivity. A further 15,000 of the remaining 80,000 premises are due to receive an upgrade within the next 12 months from a government funded rollout.

For the remaining 65,000 premises, the broadband Universal Service Obligation, which came into effect on 20 March 2020, provides consumers with a right to request a decent broadband service, where they cannot access a service of at least 10 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload via either a fixed line or fixed wireless access connection. As of September 2022, BT has built USO connections to over 5,900 premises, with more than 2,000 further builds in progress.

For the small number of premises that will not receive a gigabit-capable connection and are considered Very Hard

to Reach, the government is assessing alternative ways to improve their broadband connection and help address the challenges that these areas face in their broadband connectivity.

In December 2022 we announced the first four locations in our Alpha Trial programme to test the technical capability of, and user response to, new low-latency Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites in some of the hardest to reach locations in the UK and we are working to finalise further locations soon.

Broadband: Universal Service Obligation

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Exeter

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the £3,400 limit per property to install broadband as set out in the Universal Service Obligation for Broadband, launched in March 2020, given the widening digital divide. [HL6619]

Viscount Camrose: The technical specifications and cost thresholds of the broadband Universal Service Obligation (USO) aim to ensure that it remains relevant over time to meet the rising needs of consumers' expectations and demands, providing them with a safety net of provision to ensure effective participation in society and the economy.

The Communications Act 2003 includes an automatic request for the Secretary of State to give direction to Ofcom to review the USO once at least 75% of premises in the UK subscribe to a broadband service that provides download speeds of at least 30 Mbps. As of September 2022, Ofcom reports that 70% of premises are subscribed to such a service. We continue to liaise with Ofcom on uptake relative to the trigger, and on the broadband USO.

Under S72A Communication Act 2003, it is the responsibility of Ofcom, upon such direction, to 'review and report...on any provision made, or that may be made, by the universal service order' including the cost of a broadband connection.

Dredging: Environment Protection

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to carry out independent environmental impact studies in advance of significant dredging work in England. [HL6605]

Lord Benyon: Dredging and disposal of dredge material in the UK marine licensing area (as per Section 66 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) require a marine licence, unless exempt under Section 75 of the MCAA. Before a licence is granted for dredging or disposal, an assessment of the potential impact on the environment must be undertaken. The MMO, as the licensing authority for English (and Northern Irish offshore) marine waters, are responsible for issuing marine licences.

Elections: Proof of Identity

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people in England had applied for the Voter Authority Certificate by 1 March; how many applications had been rejected; how many Voter Authority Certificates had been issued; what estimate they have made of the number of voters that will need a Voter Authority Certificate; and what estimate they have made of the number of people who will apply for a Voter Authority Certificate. [HL6445]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: I refer the noble Lady to the answer given to Question UIN 165271 (attached) on 20 March 2023.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UIN 165271 [165271.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-14/HL6445>

EU Law: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Lord Weir of Ballyholme*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of how the three per cent of EU laws proposed to still be applicable to Northern Ireland compares as a percentage of EU laws applicable to Northern Ireland prior to the Windsor Framework. [HL6498]

Asked by *Lord Weir of Ballyholme*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they will list (1) the areas of law, and (2) the specific EU laws or regulations, from the 1,700 pages of EU law proposed to be disapplied to Northern Ireland through the Windsor Framework. [HL6499]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Windsor Agreement disapplies swathes of EU rules to support internal UK trade. It completely carves out whole areas of EU law on issues such as VAT, medicines and food, in a way that the EU has never done before. By the EU's own calculations, less than 3 percent of EU rules apply - with those that remain only applying to secure Northern Irish access to the EU market. It should also be recognised that this is not a straightforward list, as some of those rules will be applied in part for the red lane but not applied in the green lane, for example. But the legal texts making up the Framework set out how EU rules are disapplied in the relevant area, such as the Sanitary and Phytosanitary text which lists the 67 rules on food and drink safety that do not apply in the green lane.

European Court of Justice: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Lord Empey*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether the European Court of Justice will remain the final arbiter of EU law as it applies in Northern Ireland in the event that the Windsor Framework is implemented. [HL6399]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government has acknowledged, as the Prime Minister did in his statement of 27 February, that the European Court of Justice (ECJ) is the final arbiter on matters of EU law. But by the EU's own calculations, less than 3 percent of EU rules with ECJ oversight apply under the Windsor Framework, with those that remain only applying to maintain maximum free trade and market access for NI firms. And the Windsor Framework narrows the application of EU rules in Northern Ireland, removing 1,700 pages of EU law, and takes with it any European Court of Justice interpretation and oversight in those areas. The agreement also introduces the Stormont Brake, which would enable a sovereign UK Government decision to veto the application of new EU laws and accompanying ECJ oversight within Northern Ireland. This safeguard in the treaty itself is not subject to ECJ oversight, and any dispute on this issue would be resolved through subsequent independent arbitration according to international, not EU law.

Hospices: Finance

Asked by *Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the findings in the report *The Lasting Impact of COVID-19 on Death, Dying and Bereavement* by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Hospice and End of Life Care, published on 1 March, what plans they have to conduct a review of hospice funding in England. [HL6521]

Lord Markham: There are no current plans by NHS England to conduct a review of hospice funding. Integrated care boards have a legal duty to consider the commissioning of palliative and end of life care services that meet the needs of their population.

Hospital Wards: Gender

Asked by *Lord Clement-Jones*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the current status of their review of Annex B to their *Delivering same-sex accommodation guidance*. [HL6514]

Lord Markham: NHS England is in the process of reviewing its guidance on the provision of same-sex hospital accommodation. Revised guidance will be published in due course.

Human Trafficking

Asked by *Lord McColl of Dulwich*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the average wait for a person entering the National Referral Mechanism to receive a reasonable grounds decision (1) before the updated statutory guidance came into effect on 30 January, and (2) since the introduction of that updated guidance. [HL6367]

Lord Murray of Blidworth: Reasonable Grounds decisions will be made as soon as possible following referral. Statistics on the timescales of Reasonable Grounds decisions for victims of modern slavery are not currently published.

Asked by *Lord McColl of Dulwich*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many individuals arrived in the UK across the English channel in small boats and entered the National Referral Mechanism between 2018 and 2022; and what was the breakdown of these individuals by (1) gender, (2) age, (3) nationality, and (4) location of claimed exploitation, where such a claim was made. [HL6368]

Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Home Office publishes statistics on small boat arrivals to the UK in the 'Irregular Migration to the UK statistics' report on GOV.uk. Data on NRM referrals from small boat arrivals are published in the 'Potential victims of modern slavery' section of the 'Irregular migration to the UK' publication. The latest data relates to the end of December 2022. Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar' on GOV.uk.

The Home Office does not publish data on NRM referrals from small boat arrivals by gender, age, nationality, or location of claimed exploitation. Official statistics published by the Home Office are kept under review in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics, taking into account a number of factors including user needs, as well as quality and availability of data.

Landlords: Databases

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many landlords are on the rogue landlords database. [HL6355]

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they will allow the public access to the rogue landlords database. [HL6357]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: Local authorities are responsible for uploading records on the existing Database and removing entries when they have expired. The Database does not distinguish between landlord and property agents' entries. There are currently 56 entries.

The Government will bring forward legislation to reform the private rented sector, this will include – as set out in the Government's white paper – a Rented Property Portal which will make certain details relating to landlord offences viewable to tenants and prospective tenants.

Leasehold: Reform

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce a bill to reform or abolish leasehold as a residential tenure in the next session of parliament. [HL6359]

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure freeholders and managing agents of residential property are transparent with leaseholders on the makeup of fees and charges they levy. [HL6360]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: Announcements of future legislation and policy will be made in the usual way.

I refer the noble Lord to the Secretary of State's comments on leasehold reform (attached) [here](#).

The Answer includes the following attached material:

SoS comments on leasehold [SoS comments on Leasehold.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-10/HL6359>

Leisure and Sports: Energy

Asked by *Lord Moynihan*

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of how many sport and recreation (1) facilities, and (2) clubs, are at risk of (a) permanent closure, or (b) reduced services, as a result of sustained high energy bills. [HL6370]

Lord Callanan: The Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS) provides a discount on the wholesale element of gas and electricity bills to ensure all eligible businesses and non-domestic customers, including the leisure sector, who receive their energy from licensed suppliers, are protected from excessively high energy costs over the winter period.

The EBRS discount is applied directly to the energy bills of eligible businesses by their energy providers and therefore we do not have a breakdown of support received by sectors. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has not made an assessment of how many sports and recreation facilities are at risk of closure.

Leisure and Swimming Pools: Energy

Asked by *Lord Moynihan*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they will take to support (1) swimming pools, (2) leisure centres, (3) community facilities, and (4) gyms, after

the energy costs relief scheme ends on 31 March. [HL6369]

Lord Callanan: The Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS) provides a discount on the wholesale element of gas and electricity bills to ensure that all eligible businesses, including leisure sector and community facilities, 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 will continue to provide a discount to eligible non-domestic customers, including the leisure sector and community facilities.

The Government will also provide over £60 million of new funding for public swimming pools in England for 2023/24.

Medical Treatments: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Dodds of Duncairn

To ask His Majesty's Government, following the Spring Budget of 15 March commitment that the Medicine and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency will explore partnerships with trusted international agencies to provide rapid approvals for medicines and technologies that have received their approval from 2024, whether such approvals will apply in Northern Ireland; if so under what legal provisions; and how this complies with the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland. [HL6565]

Lord Markham: Under the Windsor Framework, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's international recognition framework, alongside wider regulatory processes for novel medicines, will apply across the United Kingdom. For the transitional period until then, novel medicines will continue to be supplied to Northern Ireland under existing arrangements. Medical technologies will continue to be supplied to Northern Ireland as they are now.

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

Asked by Lord Lee of Trafford

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they will list the bodies who are supportive of the planned siting of the Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens. [HL6409]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre at Victoria Tower Gardens has cross-party support and the endorsement of every living Prime Minister.

As an indication of wider support 31 oral representations were made in favour of the proposal at the 2020 public inquiry, including from Holocaust survivors and their families, Rt Hon David Cameron, Rt Hon Gordon Brown, the Chief Rabbi, the President of the

Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Archbishop of Canterbury, academics, educators and others. A full list of witnesses is available from the Planning Inspector's Report on the Gov.UK website. More than 3,000 individuals expressed their support through the local community engagement exercise run by the Big Ideas community interest company.

Palliative Care: Drugs

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Hospice and End of Life Care *The Lasting Impact of COVID-19 on Death, Dying and Bereavement*, published on 1 March, what assessment they have made of innovations in the administration of palliative care medication that were developed during the COVID-19 pandemic; and what plans they have to roll out any of these innovations more widely. [HL6338]

Lord Markham: While no specific assessment of the innovations in the administration of palliative care medication has been made, the Government and NHS England both recognise the importance of timely access to palliative and end of life care medicines for patients and those important to them. Clinicians should provide details of who can administer the medicine, ensuring they follow local guidance and consider national best practice.

Plants and Seeds: Imports

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Benyon on 10 March (HL6037 and HL6038), what steps they will take to enable individuals to send plants and seeds from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, given that the current arrangements impose bureaucratic hurdles that make this impractical. [HL6408]

Lord Benyon: As we put the new Windsor Framework arrangements into practice, we will work closely with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure gardeners, farmers and growers can access plants and seeds from a wide variety of sources. Defra will work with industry in the coming months to ensure that plant and seed movement schemes are as beneficial as possible.

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on 18 October 2022 (PBC Deb 18 October 2022 col 789) where he stated that "the Government and I will engage in discussion with RICS about this in the coming weeks before further stages of the Bill", how many meetings have taken place between

ministers and the Royal Institute for Chartered Surveyors (RICS); what subjects were discussed at those meetings; and what steps they took as a result of those discussions. [[HL6405](#)]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: Details of ministerial meetings are set out quarterly on gov.uk.

Further to those publications, senior officials and I met with the Earl of Lytton, the Chief Executive and the Chair of RICS on 7 February 2023 to discuss RICS' concerns regarding the clause.

Subsequently senior officials have met with RICS to discuss this further.

The Secretary of State also met with the CEO of RICS on 23 November 2022 as part of a wider meeting which included mortgage lenders. This meeting related to opening up the mortgage market for property affected by building safety.

I am happy to meet with the noble Baroness to discuss this further.

Social Services: Finance

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask His Majesty's Government whether budgets for adult social care for 2023–23 and 2023–24 were adjusted to take account of (1) increased energy and fuel costs, and (2) the need to make greater use of agency staff due to high vacancy rates. [[HL6434](#)]

Lord Markham: Local authorities are responsible for setting budgets for adult social care. They are best placed to assess local resources and need. The funding we have made available gives them the flexibility to do so in their local budgets.

Social Services: Pay

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that staff in the adult social care sector (1) are all paid at above the legal minimum wage, and (2) have their pay brought in line with staff undertaking similar roles in the NHS. [[HL6435](#)]

Lord Markham: All businesses irrespective of their size or business sector are responsible for paying the correct National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage to their staff.

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

The Department has no plans to align the pay progression of adult social care workers to National Health Service pay scales.

Social Services: Vacancies

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce the number of vacant posts in the adult social care sector from their current high level. [[HL6433](#)]

Lord Markham: We are running a national recruitment campaign until 31 March 2023 to encourage more people to consider a rewarding role in care. In February 2022, we made care workers eligible for the Health and Care Visa and added them to the Shortage Occupation list.

We are making available £15 million in 2023/24 to help local areas establish support arrangements for international recruitment and improve workforce capacity in adult social care. In addition, the £500 million adult social care discharge fund announced last September can be used by local authorities for the recruitment and retention of the social care workforce.

Theatres: Tax Allowances

Asked by Baroness Bull

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Baroness Penn on 9 March (HL Deb col 886), whether they will include 50 per cent of marketing spend in the qualifying expenditure for Theatre Tax Relief to match the level of the equivalent scheme in the United States of America. [[HL6339](#)]

Baroness Penn: Whilst the Government keeps all tax reliefs under review, the Government is not planning to expand the scope of Theatre Tax Relief (TTR) to include 50 per cent of marketing spend. The objective of theatre tax relief is to support and incentivise production and that is why eligible expenditure is focussed on the costs that are incurred producing and closing the theatrical production, rather than marketing.

The Government assesses that the equivalent scheme in New York is less generous overall than the UK relief: the amount of relief a production can receive is capped at \$3 million and there are additional eligibility criteria and a more limited scope (for example, ballet and opera will not qualify). Whilst the UK scheme excludes marketing, it is uncapped and more generous in scope.

At Spring Budget 2023, the Government went further to support theatres by extending the 45 per cent (for non-touring productions) and 50 per cent (for touring productions) rates of TTR for a further 2 years. The rates will taper to 30 per cent /35 per cent on 1 April 2025 and return to 20 per cent /25 per cent on 1 April 2026.

The extension will continue to offset ongoing pressures and boost investment in our cultural sectors.

Turkey: Earthquakes

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on 13 March (HL5891), whether they have assessed the effectiveness of the global humanitarian response following the recent earthquake in Turkey. [HL6449]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government's priority was to provide life-saving support to those in need in Turkey and Syria. The Government is committed to learning from its own experience and that of others as part of its constant review of global humanitarian responses. The Government looks forward to hearing the needs assessment of the UN, World Bank and other partners at the 20 March International Donors' Conference.

Vagrancy Act 1824

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they plan to repeal the Vagrancy Act 1824; and if so, when. [HL6356]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Government does agree that the Vagrancy Act is antiquated and not fit for purpose, and therefore we have committed to repealing it. We made that commitment during the passage of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act. Our commitment to repealing it has always been dependent on introducing modern replacement legislation to ensure that police and other agencies continue to have the powers that they need to keep communities safe and protect vulnerable individuals.

I cannot give a specific date when we will bring the legislation in. We will bring forward suitable replacement legislation in a future legislative vehicle.

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