

**Session 2022-23  
No. 137**



**Tuesday  
28 March 2023**

**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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<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
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<b>Lord Evans of Rainow</b>	Whip
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<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>Earl of Minto</b>	Minister of State, Department for Business and Trade
<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
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<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

*Tuesday, 28 March 2023*

## Correction to Written Statement HLWS648

[HLWS665]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** In order to take account of the Easter recess and the bank holiday for the celebration of the Coronation, the period of the consultation on the effectiveness of the Digital Economy Act 2017 Debt and Fraud Powers has been extended. It will now run until 11 May 2023.

Further to this change, the following text outlines the Government's approach, updating the approach outlined in the written statement that I made on 22 March 2023:

I am 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 end on 11th May 2023.

## Crypto Assets: Codes of Practice Consultation

[HLWS669]

**Lord Sharpe of Epsom:** My right hon Friend the Minister of State for Security (Tom Tugendhat) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) contains a comprehensive package of measures designed to make the recovery of unlawfully held assets more effective. The operation of certain powers within POCA are subject to guidance in various Codes of Practice issued by the Home

Secretary, the Attorney General and the Advocate General for Northern Ireland, the Department of Justice Northern Ireland and Scottish Ministers.

Three existing Codes of Practice need to be updated and one new Code of Practice made, to reflect possible changes made to POCA by the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency (ECCT) Bill, which subject to being passed by Parliament and receiving Royal Assent will amend and insert new civil forfeiture powers into POCA, to increase the recovery of crypto assets.

It is intended that the new civil forfeiture crypto asset powers will be replicated in Schedule 1 to the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 (ATCSA) and Schedule 6 to the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT). The equivalent Code of Practice also needs to be updated.

POCA and TACT provide that before a Code of Practice is issued, I must consider any representations made, modify the Codes as appropriate, and subsequently lay the Codes before Parliament for approval.

I intend to consult on changes to the following Codes of Practice:

- Code of Practice issued under Section 47S of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 – Search, Seizure and Detention of Property (England and Wales)
- Code of Practice issued under Section 195S of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 – Search, Seizure and Detention of Property (Northern Ireland)
- Code of Practice issued under the proposed Section 303Z25 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (as inserted by Schedule 7 of the ECCT Bill) – Recovery of Crypto assets and Related Items: Search Powers (NEW CODE)
- Code of Practice issued under Section 377 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 – Investigations
- Code of Practice for Officers acting under Schedule 1 to the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (amended through powers under Schedule 14 to TACT)

In tandem the Attorney General's Office will also launch a consultation on their equivalent Code of Practice.

I will arrange for a copy of the consultation document and the five draft codes to be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

Following this consultation, I intend to lay a statutory instrument to issue these updated Codes of Practice under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) to reflect changes as a result of both the Economic Crime, Transparency and Enforcement Act, and the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill.

## Further Education Colleges

[HLWS667]

**Baroness Barran:** Today my Right Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Skills, Apprenticeships, and Higher Education (Robert Halfon), made the following statement:

I am today announcing a further investment of £286 million of capital funding in condition improvement of the FE College estate. An allocation of £286 million will be provided in financial years 2023-24 and 2024-25 to eligible FE colleges and designated institutions, as part of the FE Capital Transformation Programme which seeks to upgrade the FE college estate.

The allocation has been developed to prioritise and support FE colleges and designated institutions which have poor condition remaining, taking into account investment FE colleges have secured through previous rounds of the programme. This will allow these colleges to invest in the condition improvement priorities across their estates.

The allocation is part of the FE Capital Transformation Programme which delivers the government's £1.5 billion commitment to upgrade FE college estate in England, promoting parity of esteem between FE and other routes. Improving the condition of FE colleges is important in ensuring students have the opportunity to develop their skills in high quality buildings and facilities, in order to meet skills gaps in local economies.

Through the FE Capital Transformation Programme we have already agreed approximately £1.2 billion of investment in FE colleges and designated institutions. All colleges received a share of an initial £200 million allocation provided September 2020 to undertake immediate condition improvement works and at the same time providing a boost to the economy. We have awarded funding for 74 condition improvement projects through a competitive bidding round, with colleges now delivering these projects in their localities. DfE are working in partnership with a further 16 colleges to address some of the worst condition college sites in England.

This funding is part of the Government's investment of over £2.8 billion of capital investment in skills over this spending review period ensuring our skills system can deliver the skills that the economy needs.

This investment is a key part of our skills reforms, which is providing a ladder of opportunity that enables young people and adults to get good jobs and progress in their careers. This begins with the opportunities and social justice needed to access excellent education and skills training which lead to positive work outcomes.

Ultimately, we will help more people to achieve secure, sustained, and well-paid employment and provide opportunities for individuals to progress in their careers. This will help build the skilled workforce that businesses need, boost productivity and our economy, seize the opportunities of technological change and our net zero agenda, and level up across the country.

## Northern Ireland Security

[HLWS668]

**Lord Caine:** My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Chris Heaton-Harris) has today made the following statement:

The threat level to Northern Ireland from Northern Ireland Related Terrorism is constantly monitored and is subject to a regular formal review. This is a systematic, comprehensive and rigorous process, based on the very latest intelligence and analysis of factors which drive the threat. The threat level review takes into account a range of factors and analysis of recent incidents.

The decision to change the threat level is taken by MI5, independently of Ministers.

MI5 has increased the threat to Northern Ireland from Northern Ireland Related Terrorism from 'SUBSTANTIAL' (an attack is likely) to 'SEVERE' (an attack is highly likely).

The public should remain vigilant, but not be alarmed, and continue to report any concerns they have to the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Over the last 25 years, Northern Ireland has transformed into a peaceful society. The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement demonstrates how peaceful and democratic politics improve society. However, a small number of people remain determined to cause harm to our communities through acts of politically motivated violence.

In recent months, we have seen an increase in levels of activity relating to Northern Ireland Related Terrorism, which has targeted police officers serving their communities and also put at risk the lives of children and other members of the public. These attacks have no support, as demonstrated by the reaction to the abhorrent attempted murder of DCI Caldwell.

I pay tribute to the tremendous efforts of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and security partners, and the determination and resilience of the Northern Ireland people, who are making Northern Ireland a safer place to live and work. The political future of Northern Ireland rests with the democratic will of the people and not the violent actions of the few. Together we will ensure there is no return to the violence of the past.

## Schools: Capital Funding

[HLWS666]

**Baroness Barran:** Today, I am announcing capital funding to support the creation of new school places and improve the condition of the school estate. This investment will support the Government's priority to ensure that every child has the opportunity of a place at a good school.

I am announcing £1.8 billion of capital funding for the 2023-24 financial year to improve school buildings. This will support local authorities, academy trusts and other bodies responsible for school buildings, to ensure the estate is safe and well-maintained. This includes:

- £1.1 billion in School Condition Allocations (SCA) for local authorities, large multi-academy trusts and large voluntary-aided school bodies (such as dioceses) to invest in improving the condition of their schools.

- £0.5 billion for the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) programme. This is an annual bidding round for essential maintenance projects at schools in small and stand-alone academy trusts, small voluntary-aided bodies and sixth form colleges. Outcomes of the 2023-24 bidding round will be announced in due course.
- £0.2 billion of Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) funding allocated directly for schools to spend on their capital priorities.

This funding is part of the total £19.4 billion of capital funding announced at the 2021 Spending Review to support the education sector between 2022-23 and 2024-25.

I am also announcing £487 million for the 2025-26 financial year to fund local authorities to create school places needed for September 2026.

These funding allocations will allow local authorities and other responsible bodies to plan ahead with confidence, to invest strategically to ensure they deliver good school places for every child who needs one, and to maintain and improve the condition of the school estate to support effective education.

Full details have been published on the Department for Education section on the GOV.UK website.

## Universal Credit

[HLWS664]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** My honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Employment (Guy Opperman MP) has made the following Written Statement:

Since its introduction in 2013, Universal Credit has protected the most vulnerable in society, supported households through periods of financial uncertainty, helped people progress in work and move into better paid jobs. A dynamic benefit that reflects people's needs from month to month, Universal Credit successfully supports millions of people, and ensures that individuals are provided with the support they need to increase their earnings and move into better paid quality jobs.

In April 2022, the Government set out its plan to complete the move to Universal Credit, and published '[Completing the move to Universal Credit](#)', learning from the pilot that was paused in 2020.

In May 2022, we commenced our Discovery phase. Initially, we issued 500 Migration Notices to households in Bolton and Medway. This notification letter sets out the requirement to make a claim to Universal Credit, to continue to receive financial support from the

Government. It advises that they have a minimum of three months to make their claim and provides details of the support available.

Following these initial notifications, we expanded the Discovery phase to Truro and Falmouth in July 2022, Harrow in August 2022, Northumberland in September 2022 and more recently all postcodes in Cornwall during February 2023.

In January 2023, we published our learning from the [Earliest Testable Service](#), which set out our initial learnings from the Discovery phase. It also set out the Department's plans for Move to Universal Credit in 2023/24 and 2024/25.

We are now preparing to increase the numbers of Migration Notices issued and will expand into additional areas, bringing in the whole of Great Britain during 2023/24. Social security is a transferred matter in Northern Ireland.

Through 2023/24, our focus will be on notifying households that receive tax credits only, increasing volumes incrementally each month. As we move into 2024/25, all cases with tax credits (including those on both Employment Support Allowance and tax credits), all cases on Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance (Income Based) and all Housing Benefit cases (including combinations of these benefits) will be required to move to Universal Credit.

At the point of moving over to Universal Credit (for those claimants moving through the managed migration process), legacy benefit claimants will be assessed for transitional protection and paid where appropriate. The aim of this temporary payment is to maintain benefit entitlement at the point of transition so that claimants will have time to adjust to the new benefit system.

In line with the 2022 Autumn statement, the Government is delaying the managed migration of claimants on income-related Employment Support Allowance (except for those receiving Child Tax Credit) to Universal Credit. Employment Support Allowance claimants are still however able to make a claim for Universal Credit if they believe that they will be better off.

This Government remains committed to making this a smooth and safe transition. As we move to the next phase of Move to Universal Credit, we will continue to build on our learning to ensure the service continues to meet the needs of those required to make the move to Universal Credit.



# Written Answers

Tuesday, 28 March 2023

## Animal Experiments

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to end the use of animals to test products including (1) vaccines, and (2) pharmaceutical products for bacterial contamination, and to use biochemical methods instead for these processes. [HL6448]

**Lord Markham:** The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is committed to the principles of the three Rs: replacement, refinement and reduction, developed by the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals (NC3Rs). This commitment extends to both the research undertaken at their laboratories at South Mimms, and through their interactions with stakeholders. Where Marketing Authorisation Holders propose to use animals in tests required for ensuring the safety of medicines, the MHRA requests that non-animal alternatives are investigated and adopted where appropriate for patient safety.

The MHRA is also contributor to a revision of the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines for Biologicals and Vaccines under the leadership of the NC3Rs. These revisions propose that the WHO guidelines adopt the principles of the three Rs and include a general chapter on how regulators and Marketing Authorisation Holders can end the use of animal testing for biological medicines including pharmaceutical products for bacterial contamination and vaccines. These revised guidelines will be presented to the Autumn 2023 summit of the WHO for the consideration by committee and WHO members.

## Asylum

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people came to the UK seeking asylum for each year from 2002 to 2022; and of those, how many were granted asylum. [HL6475]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The Home Office publishes data on asylum in the 'Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release' on GOV.uk. Data on outcomes of asylum applications raised in specific years can be found in table Asy\_D04 of the 'asylum and resettlement detailed datasets' on GOV.uk. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbooks.

The latest data relate to 2021 and are accurate as of June 2022. An update to this table will be published in August 2023, which will include data for 2022. Information on future Home Office statistical release

dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar' on GOV.uk.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

table Asy\_D04 [outcome-analysis-asylum-applications-datasets-jun-2022 (3).xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-14/HL6475>

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask His Majesty's Government which countries they have had discussions with over the last three years about receiving people who have arrived in the UK wishing to seek asylum; and which of those countries stated that they do not wish to receive and process such individuals from the UK. [HL6478]

**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.

## Asylum: Legal Aid Scheme

*Asked by Lord Tyrie*

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the value of legal aid expenditure available to support asylum applications from individuals from (1) Hong Kong, (2) Ukraine, and (3) Afghanistan, over the past 12 months. [HL6491]

**Lord Bellamy:** Funding for legal aid is on a demand led basis, the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) does not have a specific budget allocation for delivery of legal aid services in relation to specific categories of law.

Statistical data is not centrally held regarding legal expenditure provided to individuals from the specified countries.

## BBC Persian Service: Finance

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have made to use part of the £20 million of additional funding they have made available to the BBC for World Service broadcasts to prevent the imminent closure of the BBC Persian Radio Service. [HL6441]

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of how much funding would be required to prevent the imminent closure of the BBC Persian Radio Service. [HL6442]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** As an outcome of the Integrated Review, the Government will provide an additional £20 million to the BBC World Service over the next two years to protect all 42 language services it

provides, support English language broadcasting and counter disinformation, allowing the BBC World Service to maintain its unrivalled status as the world's largest international broadcaster.

The previously announced changes to the Persian radio service are part of the BBC's transition to a "digital-first" organisation, to ensure they remain relevant in a rapidly changing technological world. Whilst radio broadcasts for BBC Persian are ceasing, TV broadcasting for these services will continue and investment in digital services will increase, reflecting audience trends. The BBC is operationally and editorially independent from Government and therefore decisions about how language services are delivered are for them to take.

### **Blood: Viral Diseases**

*Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood*

To ask His Majesty's Government on what timeframe they will (1) assess the first year of opt-out HIV and hepatitis testing, and (2) decide whether to expand opt-out testing to areas with a high HIV prevalence. [HL6612]

*Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the costs and benefits of funding HIV and hepatitis testing in emergency departments. [HL6613]

**Lord Markham:** NHS England and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) will publish the reports for the first year of opt-out human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and blood borne virus testing, including hepatitis, in 2023. When examining the feasibility of further expanding HIV opt-out testing to areas of high prevalence, we will be considering these results and assess its contribution to finding cases of undiagnosed or untreated HIV and preventing further HIV transmissions in the areas it is currently being rolled out. We will also take into account data on progress towards our ambitions to end new HIV transmissions, acquired immune deficiency syndrome and HIV related deaths within England by 2030, including the estimated number of people living with undiagnosed HIV, published regularly by UKHSA through the HIV Action Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

### **British Overseas Territories**

*Asked by Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton*

To ask His Majesty's Government what contingency plans they have in place to exercise their reserve powers in overseas territories. [HL6679]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The UK maintains reserved powers to carry out its obligations under international law and in line with our constitutional relationship. While the UK maintains the responsibilities of the sovereign power, the Overseas Territories are

largely internally self-governing. HM Government has plans in place to support the Overseas Territories in a range of scenarios where assistance may be required - such as in providing relief following a natural disaster - and keeps these under review, including in consultation with the Territories as appropriate.

### **Children: Swimming**

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what was the total number of children for the 2021/22 academic year who could not swim upon leaving (1) primary, and (2) secondary, school. [HL6481]

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the total number of schools that do not have access to a swimming pool to provide swimming and water safety lessons. [HL6483]

**Baroness Barran:** The department does not collect data on pupils' swimming ability on leaving primary or secondary school or on schools' access to swimming pools. By 31 July 2023, all schools in receipt of the primary PE and Sport premium are required to publish the percentage of their pupils in year 6 who met each of the three swimming and water safety national curriculum expectations.

### **Counter-terrorism**

*Asked by Lord Weir of Ballyholme*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decision to include the film Zulu as a 'key text' in the Prevent programme; and what plans they have, if any, to reassess this decision. [HL6494]

*Asked by Lord Weir of Ballyholme*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decision to include the works of CS Lewis under the Prevent programme; and what plans they have, if any, to reassess this decision. [HL6495]

*Asked by Lord Weir of Ballyholme*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to review the overall vetting process for considering works of art and literature under the Prevent programme. [HL6496]

**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 did not identify the film Zulu as a 'key text' in the Prevent programme, nor include the works of CS Lewis.

## Department for Business and Trade: Finance

*Asked by Lord Leong*

To ask His Majesty's Government what was the cost of merging the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy with the Department for International Trade; and whether the budget for the new Department of Business and Trade has been settled. [HL6464]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** The creation of the Department for Business and Trade from the Business groups of the former Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and the Department for International Trade is being implemented through Machinery of Government changes. High-level indicative budgets for the Department for Business and Trade can be found in the published Spring Budget and officials continue to work closely with HM Treasury to finalise these as soon as possible.

## Development Aid

*Asked by Lord Marlesford*

To ask His Majesty's Government what proportion of Official Development Assistance (ODA) was spent on (1) responding to emergencies and other unpredictable events, (2) illegal immigration into the UK, and (3) payments to the government of France for measures to prevent or reduce illegal migration across the English Channel, in each of the last three years. [HL6203]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The Statistics on International Development (SID) National Statistics provides an overview of all UK spend on Official Development Assistance (ODA).

UK ODA spent on Humanitarian Aid activities, which includes Humanitarian Emergency Response ODA, for 2019, 2020 and 2021 (the latest three years available) are outlined in the SID Statistics. The proportions have been reported in respect to total bilateral UK ODA (otherwise known as earmarked ODA). The figures do not include the UK's core contributions to humanitarian focused multilaterals, for instance the UK's core funding to Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in 2021 was £63.5m.

The Home Office does not have any ODA spend in relation to illegal migration or any payments to France (which is not an ODA eligible country).

## Disease Control: International Co-operation

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the Financial Intermediary Fund for Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response on tackling (1) new diseases, and (2) existing diseases such as malaria. [HL6541]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The UK is shaping discussions to improve pandemic prevention, preparedness and response globally. In June 2022, the UK announced a £25 million commitment to the Pandemic Fund. The Fund should fill some of the financing gaps for preparedness in health systems and disease surveillance at country, regional and global levels including by catalysing countries' own financing so that they are better prepared to detect and respond whenever and wherever a health risk emerges. Improved health systems preparedness and surveillance should positively impact wider disease control efforts, including new diseases and malaria.

## Driving: Eyesight

*Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many drivers have reported problems with their eyesight to the DVLA in the last 10 years; and what proportion of those have had their driving licences withdrawn as a result. [HL6794]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** During the period 1 March 2013 and 28 February 2023, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency recorded 623,078 drivers as having an eyesight condition. During this period, 19,766 drivers recorded as having an eyesight condition had their driving licence revoked, or their licence application refused. However, it is not possible to say if all of these revocations/refusals were due to eyesight or another medical condition.

## Earwax: Medical Treatments

*Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask His Majesty's Government why ear syringing is now only provided by a private sector provider in some areas, and not by the NHS. [HL6640]

**Lord Markham:** Integrated care boards are responsible for commissioning services on the National Health Service in line with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance. This includes provision of recommended ear wax removal services for patients with a clinical need for ear wax removal.

In June 2018, NICE updated its guidance *Hearing loss in adults: assessment and management* so that it no longer recommends manual ear wax syringing. This update of the guidance was due to risks associated with the treatment such as trauma to the ear drum or infection. Instead, the guidance suggests alternative arrangements, such as ear irrigation using an electronic irrigator, micro suction, or another method of earwax removal such as manual removal using a probe.

A copy of the guidance is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Hearing loss in adults: assessment and management [hearing-loss-in-adults-assessment-and-management-pdf-1837761878725.pdf]



The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-20/HL6640>

## Employment Schemes: Young People

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Derby*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the success of the Youth Offer and Kickstart scheme against their stated aims of supporting those under 25 to find employment. [HL6617]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** Evaluations of the Youth Offer and the Kickstart Scheme are ongoing.

The Kickstart evaluation will continue to assess the longer-term outcomes for Kickstart participants after they have completed their six-month jobs. The commissioned process evaluation will conclude in Spring 2023.

We aim to publish the findings of the Kickstart Scheme evaluation once complete.

## Female Genital Schistosomiasis: Health Services

*Asked by Baroness Barker*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to tackle female genital schistosomiasis. [HL6508]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The UK is supporting research and development into schistosomiasis through funding for the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi) which is actively developing new drugs for the disease with the aim to counter the risk of resistance and to treat female genital schistosomiasis. We had previously supported research into female genital schistosomiasis through support to the Coalition for Operational Research on Neglected Tropical Diseases (COR-NTD) and this had led to the development of new competencies for the training of health professionals on the disease. Through our funding for The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and support for their Global AIDS Strategy 2021-26 we are also supporting initiatives to address female genital schistosomiasis and integrate treatment and prevention services for the disease with HIV services, sexual and reproductive health and rights services and comprehensive sexuality education.

## Financial Services: Regulation

*Asked by Lord Birt*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to assess the effectiveness of financial regulation in the UK following the failure of Silicon Valley Bank. [HL6450]

**Baroness Penn:** As the Bank of England Governor has said: "The sale of SVB UK highlights the workings of the regime to protect the UK financial markets and financial stability." However government will, as expected,

consider what learnings, there are from this case as we would with all cases of this significance.

## Football: Sportsgrounds

*Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to address (1) pitch invasions, and (2) fan disorder, at football stadiums in order to ensure the safety of (a) fans, and (b) footballers. [HL6444]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The safety of all attendees at sporting events – whether they are fans, players, coaches or officials – is of the highest importance.

The Sports Minister, the Rt Hon Stuart Andrew MP, recently convened a round-table meeting with representatives from the football authorities to discuss issues relating to fan disorder at football matches, and the actions that all parties can continue to take. We will continue to work closely with the relevant authorities to ensure that all spectators and players can continue to enjoy football safely.

## Gambling: Licensing

*Asked by Lord Smith of Hindhead*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to make it a mandatory requirement for affiliates who provide gambling tips to hold a licence. [HL6479]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** All gambling advertisements, wherever they appear, must be socially responsible and are subject to strict controls on content and placement to protect children and vulnerable people from harm. As a licence condition, gambling operators must comply with the restrictions set out in the Advertising Codes, which are set by the Committee of Advertising Practice and Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice, and administered by the Advertising Standards Authority. Operators are liable to enforcement action from the Gambling Commission if affiliates which they pay to carry out marketing activities do not comply with the rules.

The Government's review of the Gambling Act 2005 is considering a wide range of issues relating to gambling advertising and marketing as part of its broad scope; the forthcoming White Paper will set out our conclusions and next steps.

## General Practitioners: Standards

*Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether General Practitioners are no longer able to perform routine procedures such as syringing of ears and treatment of minor injuries; and if not, who took the decisions to remove these procedures from general practice; and when these decisions were taken. [HL6639]

**Lord Markham:** The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) issued guidance in 2018 no longer advising manual ear syringing due to risks associated, such as trauma to the ear drum or infection. NICE guidance suggests alternative arrangements for treatment of excessive ear wax, such as considering ear irrigation using an electronic irrigator, micro suction, or manual removal using a probe. General practitioners follow this guidance and are increasingly recommending self-care methods as the primary means to support the safe removal of ear wax, such as in cases of deafness.

## Health and Sports: Departmental Responsibilities

*Asked by The Earl of Effingham*

To ask His Majesty's Government what recent assessment they have made of the recommendation in the House of Lords National Plan for Sport and Recreation Committee's report A national plan for sport, health and wellbeing (HL Paper 113, Session 2021–22) to establish a new ministerial post with responsibility for sport, health and wellbeing. [HL6748]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** While His Majesty's Government welcomed the report of the House of Lords' Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation, we do not agree with its proposal to establish a separate, new ministerial post for Sport, Health and Wellbeing.

The Government is committed to improving the health of the nation, including through supporting sport and activity, within its existing structures. Ministers and officials at Government Departments including the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Department of Health and Social Care, and the Department for Education work closely together on policies to promote sport, health and wellbeing.

## Hepatitis: Disease Control

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they (1) have developed, or (2) intend to put in place, for the maintenance phase of Hepatitis C elimination once England has reached the World Health Organisation elimination metrics. [HL6760]

**Lord Markham:** Significant progress has been made in the effort to eliminate Hepatitis C (HCV) in England and NHS England has publicly committed to the elimination of HCV in England by financial year 2025/26.

Work to support the elimination maintenance phase is currently being developed. It will involve multiple stakeholders including NHS England Specialised Commissioning, integrated care boards (ICBs), the Department, and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). In addition, commissioning arrangements for HCV elimination are expected to be devolved to local levels, with ICBs managing funding for issues such as

testing. UKHSA will continue to monitor maintenance of elimination through routine surveillance data.

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the HCV Action report Taking the initiative: how England is eliminating Hepatitis C, published on 21 February, what assessment they have made of (1) the effectiveness of peer-to-peer support workers and volunteers with lived experience in combating Hepatitis C, and (2) the lessons for the other areas of healthcare from the Hepatitis C peer programme. [HL6761]

**Lord Markham:** Peer programmes are a well embedded and demonstrably effective part of NHS England's Hepatitis C (HCV) Elimination Programme. Almost every elimination initiative that NHS England manages and commissions HCV Operational Delivery Networks to provide, at local and sub-regional levels, has peer involvement. NHS England consistently finds that people with lived experience are excellent advocates and are crucial in developing therapeutic alliances to support people into testing and treatment who may have felt excluded from traditional healthcare and other settings.

The Government will continue to review opportunities for using peer-to-peer support workers and volunteers with lived experience to support other areas of healthcare.

## Homelessness: Rural Areas

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to tackle rural homelessness. [HL6805]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The Government is spending £2 billion to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the next three years. The vast majority of this funding is being provided to local authorities across England to help them end rough sleeping and reduce homelessness in their area, including in rural communities.

## Household Support Fund

*Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the reply by the Viscount Younger of Leckie on 9 March (HL5842), where the management information on the household support fund is published; and what steps they have taken to analyse this information. [HL6684]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The published management information for the Household Support Fund covering the period 6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-support-fund-management-information-6-october-2021-to-31-march-2022>.

The information for the subsequent Household Support Fund schemes are the subject of an upcoming statistical

release and will be released following the usual quality assurance.

In terms of analysing this information, The Government collects high level data on the types of households supported to ensure that funded activities are within the scope of the Fund's guidance and uses this to inform the design of future schemes.

### Investment Trusts: Hong Kong

*Asked by Lord Leong*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether HM Treasury has fully implemented the Mutual Recognition of Funds (MRF) between the UK and Hong Kong. [HL6465]

**Baroness Penn:** The Mutual Recognition of Funds arrangement between the UK and Hong Kong is the responsibility of financial regulators in each jurisdiction. The Government is therefore not involved in its implementation.

Specifically in 2018, the Financial Conduct Authority entered into a Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Recognition of Funds (MoU), which allows eligible Hong Kong public funds and United Kingdom retail funds to be distributed in each other's market through a streamlined process.

### Kenya: Droughts

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what support they are providing to Kenya to alleviate the effects of famine caused by drought in that country. [HL6474]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** In response to the ongoing drought in Kenya, 30,500 children have received life-saving nutritional assistance due to the UK's support. UK supported programmes have also reached over half a million people in Kenya in drought-prone areas. Programmes such as the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) are bolstering the use of cash-based safety nets and have had a demonstrable impact in mitigating some of the worst effects of the drought.

### Merchant Shipping: Medals

*Asked by Lord West of Spithead*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 21 March (HL6375), whether the Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service is on a par with the fire service, ambulance service and police meritorious service medals in the Order of Wear; and if not, why. [HL6776]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service is placed in the category of Efficiency and Long Service Decorations and Medals. It

is set out in the Royal Warrant that "in the official list showing the order in which Orders, Decorations and Medals shall be worn, The Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service shall be placed immediately after the Jersey Honorary Police Medal for Long and Meritorious Service".

### Migrants

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people came to the UK each year from 2002 to 2022 on migration grounds, excluding those seeking asylum. [HL6476]

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

A response to the Noble Peer's Parliamentary Question of 14 March is attached in the answer.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UK Statistics Authority Response [PQHL6476 (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-14/HL6476>

### National Gallery: Copyright

*Asked by Lord Freyberg*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much the National Gallery raised in image fees from their image licensing department in 2021–22 and 2022–23; and what costs that were directly applicable to the sale of image licenses were incurred. [HL6622]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The National Gallery operates independently, at arm's length, from HM Government. The Government does not collect financial data of this kind from its public bodies in-year, so the figures below do not cover the whole period requested, but rather constitute an incomplete snapshot of trading activity over two post-pandemic years of recovery.

Over the period concerned, which only extends to the first half of 2022/23, The National Gallery raised £180,000 through imaging licensing and incurred costs of £211,000 in relation to image licensing.

National museums provide free entry to their permanent collections as a condition of their annual Grant-in-Aid from the Government. They also raise commercial revenue to expand their public programmes and reach wider audiences, of which the Government is highly supportive. The National Gallery's collection is accessible in person at Trafalgar Square, by people across the country (and internationally) in the form of loans and partnerships, and online. The entire collection – over 2,500 paintings telling a comprehensive story of European painting – can be enjoyed online, with images available for download free of charge.

## Nicaragua: Religious Freedom

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the implications for political and religious freedom in Nicaragua of (1) the decision of the government of Nicaragua to suspend diplomatic relations with the Holy See, and (2) the sentencing of Bishop Alvarez of Matagalpa to 26 years in prison, following his refusal to be exiled. [HL6598]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The ongoing deterioration of political and human rights in Nicaragua is deeply disturbing. In March, the report by the UN Human Rights Council's Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua (GHREN) condemned the restrictions on civil space and radical repression against political opponents, clergy, independent media, and human rights defenders. The UK's Human Rights Ambassador, Rita French, delivered two UK statements on Nicaragua, decrying the climate of repression, intimidation, and harassment, and expressed UK support for the recommendations of the GHREN report. We will continue to raise our concerns about political and human rights in Nicaragua, including on the imprisonment of Bishop Alvarez and all political prisoners, and urge the Nicaraguan Government to respect the human rights of all Nicaraguans.

## Offenders: Personal Names

*Asked by Baroness Browning*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Lord Murray of Blidworth on 8 March (HL Deb col 797), for how long they have recorded changes of name by individuals following conviction; and how such data is (1) collected, and (2) recorded. [HL6454]

*Asked by Baroness Browning*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to change the law applying to those individuals who change their name to avoid being brought to justice. [HL6455]

**Lord Sharpe of Epsom:** Protecting the public from dangerous criminals is a top priority for the Government. The UK has some of the toughest powers in the world to deal with sex offenders and those who pose a risk, and we are committed to ensuring that the system is as robust as it can be.

Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs) and Registered Terrorist Offenders (RTOs) are required, by law, to notify their details to the police annually and whenever those details change (including name changes) and they face up to five years in prison for failing to do so.

The Government has been reviewing whether more can be done in the legislative and non-legislative space to prevent criminals from being able to evade detection. This includes ensuring that law enforcement and other partners are fully utilising the monitoring tools and information sharing sources available to them, such as those provided

by HM Passport Office, in addition to other ways to strengthen the system further.

We take this issue seriously and will take whatever action is required to prevent nefarious criminals from seeking to evade detection.

RSOs and RTOs are required to report name changes within three days of that change taking place. This information is collected and recorded by the police, and is not collected centrally by the Home Office.

## Pharmacy: Contracts

*Asked by Baroness Redfern*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework remains fit for purpose, given that it was negotiated before the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL6696]

**Lord Markham:** The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) 2019-24 five-year deal commits £2.592 billion per year to the sector and outlines a joint vision for how community pharmacy will be more integrated into the National Health Service, deliver more clinical services and become the first port of call for minor illnesses. The Government continues to support this ambition.

Each year of the CPCF is negotiated separately between the Department, NHS England, and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee. In September last year, following a joint review of the CPCF, we announced the agreement for the remainder of the five-year deal, which included a further one-off investment in the sector of £100 million.

## Plastics: Recycling

*Asked by Baroness Hayman of Ullock*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the operation of plastic packaging recycling services in supermarkets and other retail settings, and (2) whether the availability of such services is increasing or decreasing. [HL6627]

**Lord Benyon:** UK Plastic Pact members have introduced more than 6,000 supermarket collection points across the UK, and the availability of these collection points is increasing.

## Private Rented Housing: Standards

*Asked by Lord Truscott*

To ask His Majesty's Government what existing (1) qualifications, and (2) training, are required to establish a letting or property management company. [HL6553]

*Asked by Lord Truscott*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to introduce regulations covering the



operation of letting and property management companies in order to rectify bad practices. [HL6555]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** As part of a fair and just housing system, the Government is committed to making sure that homeowners and tenants are protected from abuse and poor service. This commitment includes raising professionalism and standards amongst property agents (letting, estate and managing agents), protecting consumers while defending the reputation of good agents from the actions of rogue operatives. We therefore welcome the ongoing work being undertaken by the industry itself to raise professionalism and standards across the sector, including on codes of practice for property agents. We will continue to work with industry on improving best practice.

When parliamentary time allows, the Government intends to legislate to ensure that freehold homeowners who pay estate rent charges have the right to challenge their reasonableness and to go to the tribunal to appoint a manager to manage the provision of services.

Mandating professional qualifications was one of the areas the Government asked Lord Best's independent working group on regulation of property agents to look at as part of its review. We are considering the recommendations on qualifications and training for property agents alongside the others in the working group's report.

There are several qualification providers operating in the property agent marketplace, including those not affiliated with any trade association or professional body. It is also a legal requirement for letting and managing agents in England to belong to one of the two Government approved redress schemes.

*Asked by Lord Truscott*

To ask His Majesty's Government what forms of redress are available for those with complaints against letting agencies where they are not members of recognised industry standards associations. [HL6554]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** As part of a fair and just housing system, the Government is committed to making sure that landlords and tenants are protected from abuse and poor service. This is why we introduced in October 2014 a legal requirement for letting and managing agents in England to belong to one of the two Government-approved redress schemes. Agents who fail to comply can be fined up to £5,000. The two schemes are: The Property Ombudsman (<https://www.tpos.co.uk/>) and the Property Redress Scheme (<https://www.theprs.co.uk/>).

Whether or not letting agencies choose to also be members of an industry standards association, landlords and agents have access to redress via the redress schemes.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

The property ombudsman [The Property Ombudsman scheme\_free, fair & impartial redress.pdf]

The property redress scheme [the Property Redress Scheme - Home Page.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-15/HL6554>

## Public Expenditure

*Asked by Lord Wigley*

To ask His Majesty's Government what will be the Barnett Consequential Financial Provision for (1) Scotland, (2) Northern Ireland, and (3) Wales, as a result of their expenditure on the HS2 railway project in England. [HL6500]

**Baroness Penn:** Spending on HS2 contributes to the Barnett consequentials generated from changes in the Department for Transport's settlement. The Block Grant Transparency publication which is available on GOV.UK sets out all Barnett consequentials generated at both departmental and programme level.

## Public Transport: Rural Areas

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of how many people used public transportation supported by the Rural Mobility Fund in (1) 2018, (2) 2019, (3) 2020, (4) 2021, and (5) 2022. [HL6763]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Our £20 million Rural Mobility Fund (RMF) was awarded via a competitive process in 2021. It is supporting 16 innovative, demand-led minibus trials in rural and suburban areas across 15 local authorities in England. The majority of these pilot Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) schemes have now launched, with most launching in late 2021 and over the course of 2022.

A monitoring and evaluation process is in place. We expect to publish interim findings, including on patronage, in the first half of 2023, further findings in late 2023/early 2024, and the final findings in 2025 in the form of written reports. However, the exact timings and dissemination approach will be determined closer to the time.

## Roads: Fly-tipping and Litter

*Asked by Lord Jackson of Peterborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to encourage (1) National Highways, (2) principal local authorities, (3) the Environment Agency, and (4) private landowners, to put in place measures to reduce littering and fly tipping on (a) roadsides, (b) slip roads, and (c) embankments adjacent to trunk roads, in England. [HL6459]

**Lord Benyon:** The Department for Transport (DfT) works closely with National Highways to ensure the Strategic Road Network is predominantly free from litter, without compromising safety. National Highways aims to influence littering behaviour, and improve operations,



responsiveness to road user feedback and partnership-working with local authorities. National Highways performance is also reported to DfT and the Office of Rail and Road through a litter performance indicator.

Defra is supporting councils to tackle litter and fly-tipping such as by bolstering their enforcement powers (including where litter is thrown from a vehicle) and in recent years, providing grant funding for local interventions. These grants include nearly £1 million across 44 councils in 2021 to help them purchase litter bins and over £400,000 across 11 councils in 2022 to reduce fly-tipping using equipment such as CCTV. We have also committed to awarding a further £800,000 in grants in 2023 to help more councils tackle fly-tipping.

In 2022, Defra published a report on litter on the Strategic Road Network which highlighted good practice. Next steps on tackling the issue were outlined in our most recent Litter Strategy Annual Report, including how to ensure better collaboration between National Highways and local authorities. Defra continues to chair the National Fly-tipping Prevention Group, made up a wide range of interested bodies including the Environment Agency, organisations representing private landowners and local authorities, to promote and disseminate good practice with regards to preventing fly-tipping, including on private land.

### Rugby

*Asked by **Baroness Merron***

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to commission a review of rugby similar to that of the Fan-Led Review of Football Governance. [[HL6576](#)]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** His Majesty's Government recognises the recent challenges faced by Rugby Union and is clear that robust governance is essential to sustainable and successful sport, but has no plans to commission a review similar to the Fan-Led Review of Football Governance.

### Serbia: Military Aid

*Asked by **Baroness Helic***

To ask His Majesty's Government how many Ministry of Defence Form 680 applications for the release of information or equipment to Serbian entities have been (1) made, (2) granted, and (3) refused, in the last three years for which records are available. [[HL6456](#)]

**Baroness Goldie:** Ministry of Defence F680s are a security clearance process, the approval of which does not constitute an export licence approval. Exporters are required to separately, but in addition, apply for export licences to supply information or material to a foreign entity.

Within the last three years, 21 F680 applications were made by exporters to Serbian entities, of which ten were granted and eight were refused. Three applications were withdrawn.

### Shipping

*Asked by **Lord West of Spithead***

To ask His Majesty's Government, other than the Ministry of Defence, which departments monitor shipping, potential illegal imports by sea, and other sea-based threats. [[HL6822](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department for Transport is responsible for policy and compliance relating to the security of UK shipping and ports, in line with the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code. Many departments play a role in wider maritime security activity, including the monitoring of potential illegal imports by sea and other sea-based threats.

The National Strategy for Maritime Security, published in August 2022 by the Secretaries of State for the Department for Transport, Home Department, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Ministry of Defence and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, sets out the full spectrum of responsible departments, agencies and other organisations.

### Skilled Workers: Vacancies

*Asked by **Lord Tyrie***

To ask His Majesty's Government what representations they have received in the past 12 months to add occupations to the Skilled Workers Shortage Occupation List. [[HL6489](#)]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** His Majesty's Government regularly engages with all sectors about the UK immigration system, which includes the Shortage Occupation List.

The Migration Advisory Committee recently opened their call for evidence for their review of the Shortage Occupation and we would encourage businesses and sector bodies to contribute.

### Special Educational Needs

*Asked by **Lord Knight of Weymouth***

To ask His Majesty's Government what criteria they will use to decide whether a young person needs an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). [[HL6463](#)]

**Baroness Barran:** The Children and Families Act 2014 is clear on the criteria for when a local authority should issue a child or young person with an education, health and care plan. There are no proposals in the recently published Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan to change the statutory criteria.

## Sports Competitors: Work Permits

*Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton*

To ask His Majesty's Government what representations they have received concerning the Governing Body Endorsements regulations; and what plans they have to review the current arrangements. [HL6443]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The Governing Body Endorsement process is led by the Home Office. Regular reviews are a common and integral part of it.

The Government has committed to a review of the efficiency of the existing visa system for English football in attracting the best global talent while maintaining strong support for young domestic players to develop from the grassroots level. The scope of the review will include the Governing Body Endorsement criteria for English football.

## Sports: Health Hazards

*Asked by Baroness Merron*

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with (1) sporting bodies, and (2) other stakeholders, regarding guidance for schools and clubs about (a) the prevention of concussion, and (b) promotion of good health, whilst playing contact sports. [HL6578]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The safety, wellbeing, and welfare of everyone taking part in sport is paramount. National governing bodies are responsible for ensuring the safe provision of their sports.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is currently working with sporting bodies and others to develop a single set of concussion guidelines to be shared across the UK, which will be published in the near future.

The guidelines are designed for everyone involved in grassroots sport from school age upwards – participants, coaches, volunteers, and parents – as well as those working in educational settings and in healthcare.

The Government remains committed to working with interested parties to promote safer sport.

## Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill

*Asked by Baroness O'Grady of Upper Holloway*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the impact assessment for the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill should be revised to consider fully the potential consequences of spontaneous solidarity for workers when they are perceived to have been treated unfairly, in light of the response to the temporary suspension of Gary Lineker by the BBC. [HL6414]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** The published impact assessment, as noted by the Regulatory Policy Committee, includes an in-depth discussion of the

potential risks to the policy of the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill. The Government therefore does not believe that it is necessary to change the impact assessment in this respect.

## Swimming: Children

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the findings by Sport England that 80 per cent of black children do not swim. [HL6482]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The Government recognises the importance of swimming to everyone. That is why, as part of the National Curriculum, all primary schools must provide swimming and water safety lessons in either Key Stage 1 or 2. This includes being able to swim competently, confidently, and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres. Currently 75% of 11 year-olds leave primary school able to swim 25 metres.

Sport England's Active Lives Survey sets out that 14.2% of Black children and young people had swum in the last week across the 2021/22 academic year, compared to 23.6% of children and young people overall. Sport England is working with the Black Swimming Association to gather more insight, data, and research on the barriers and motivations for participation in swimming by people of African, Caribbean and Asian descent. Sport England is also working with the Black Swimming Association to deliver water safety programmes.

As part of the legacy of the Birmingham Commonwealth Games, Sport England has provided £500,000 to Swim England's Inspire 2022 project which will use innovative and accessible means to help people from all kinds of backgrounds in the West Midlands take part in swimming. This will include teaching children the key water safety messages which could save their life in an emergency.

## Syria: Earthquakes

*Asked by Baroness Blower*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that relief materials reach the earthquake victims in Northern Syria. [HL6451]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** In response to the devastating earthquakes, the UK has committed a significant package of aid. In Syria, we have delivered vital lifesaving items such as blankets and tents, and we are supporting trusted partners, including the UN and Syria Civil Defence (White Helmets). The UN-brokered agreement to open additional border crossings into north west Syria for an initial period of three months is welcome and we continue to work with the UN to ensure access is secured in the longer term to improve humanitarian conditions. As of 14 March, over 787 aid trucks provided by six UN agencies have crossed to north west Syria from Turkey.

*Asked by **Baroness Blower***

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to assist in the protection of women and girls in the earthquake hit region of Northern Syria. [HL6452]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK responded swiftly and committed a significant package of aid to address urgent humanitarian needs to those affected by the earthquake in Syria. This included funding to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to support immediate needs around childbirth, midwifery and reducing risk of violence against women and girls and support to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for child protection activities. The UK has also delivered hygiene kits alongside other emergency relief items.

### **Syria: Peace Negotiations**

*Asked by **Baroness Blower***

To ask His Majesty's Government what diplomatic efforts they are making to pursue a ceasefire in Northern Syria given the continuing clashes in that region. [HL6453]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is closely monitoring developments in northern Syria, where security and stability are necessary to prevent the worsening of the already serious humanitarian situation, especially in the wake of the 6 February earthquakes. The UK continues to use our position at the UN Security Council to call on all parties to respect agreed ceasefires, de-escalate tensions and restrain from activity that could lead to further destabilisation or civilian loss of life. There can be no military solution to the Syrian conflict, only a political settlement on the basis of UNSCR 2254.

### **Transport: Capital Investment**

*Asked by **Lord Berkeley***

To ask His Majesty's Government what capital departmental spending limits are set under the Spring Budget 2023 for the next three years for expenditure on (1) highways, (2) other roads, (3) High Speed 2, (4) other railways, (5) shipping, and (6) air transport. [HL6611]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Spring Budget confirmed the Department's budgets for 2023-24 and 2024-25, where we received an additional £200m in 2023-24 for local authorities to repair potholes. We are currently working through to finalise our budgets as part of our internal business planning process. Our forward plans will be detailed in the Annual Report and Accounts under the 'Expenditure Tables' Annex, which the Department intends to publish in July.

### **Veterinary Medicine: Nurses**

*Asked by **Baroness Bakewell of Hardington Mandeville***

To ask His Majesty's Government what recent assessment they have made of the risks to animal and public health posed by individuals calling themselves veterinary nurses, despite not being registered with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons; and what plans they have to make "veterinary nurse" a protected title reserved for those who are properly qualified and regulated. [HL6600]

**Lord Benyon:** Defra is aware of concerns over people without suitable qualifications calling themselves veterinary nurses. There are over 19,000 veterinary nurses registered with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons with appropriate qualifications, although no assessment has been made about the impact of unqualified persons using this title. The protection of the title "veterinary nurse" is being considered along with other proposals for veterinary legislative reform.

### **Visas**

*Asked by **Lord Scriven***

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people entered the UK legally on a visa each year from 2015 to 2022; and of those, how many have remained in the UK illegally by overstaying their visa. [HL6477]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The Home Office publishes data on entry clearance visas in the 'Immigration System Statistics quarterly release'. Data on visas granted are published in table Vis\_D02 of the 'Entry clearance visa applications and outcomes' detailed datasets. Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to Q4 (October to December) 2022. Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the 'Entry clearance visas summary tables'. The 'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on visas.

Please note that the published Home Office entry clearance visa statistics show the number of visa applications and outcomes, but this may not necessarily equal the total number of individuals arriving in the UK on visas (for example, some visas may be unused, or some individuals may apply for more than one visa in a given period).

The Home Office also publishes data on the number of instances of individuals either departing late or having no record of departure against their leave in the published 'Reports on statistics relating to exit checks', with the latest data relating to the year ending March 2020. Please note, the data cannot tell us the number of 'overstayers' as some people may have departed on time but not been picked up in the data (for example those leaving the UK via the Common Travel Area from the UK to Ireland).

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar'.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

table Vis\_D02 [entry-clearance-visa-outcomes-datasets-dec-2022 (2).xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-03-14/HL6477>

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