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**Wednesday  
13 September 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>Lord Caine</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office, Whip
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
<b>Viscount Camrose</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
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<b>Lord Davies of Gower</b>	Whip
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<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
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<b>Baroness Neville-Rolfe</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Lord Offord of Garvel</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business and Trade and 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 Swinburne</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Chief Whip
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions

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# Written Statements

Wednesday, 13 September 2023

## Back British Farming Day

[HLWS1001]

**Lord Benyon:** My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Thérèse Coffey) has made the following Statement:

British farmers play a crucial role in driving economic growth, supporting national food security, and achieving our ambitious net zero goals. On Back British Farming Day, the Government is proud to celebrate our British farmers and growers who work tirelessly to produce world-renowned, high-quality produce all year round.

British food is the best in the world and this government wants to do all it can to support hard-working British farmers to produce it. We are backing industry-led action that helps customers to ‘buy British’ when they shop online and we are supporting the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board’s ‘We Eat Balanced’ campaign, which endorses the excellent taste and quality of home-grown meat and dairy products.

Across government, we are taking concrete actions to back British farming and strengthen our domestic food production. Today, the government is setting out further support for British farmers and encouraging more people to buy high quality British produce. These latest measures form part of the £3.1 billion being invested into the UK farming sector every year and will help meet our commitment to continue to produce at least 60% of the food we consume here in the UK. By improving farm productivity, they will also provide a further boost to the economy, with the sector contributing £127 billion to the UK’s economic prosperity annually.

Today we are building on the significant progress made with a new package of measures designed to cut red tape, support our farmers to invest in new technologies and build energy resilience, and boost our vitally important abattoir network. Today the government is announcing:

The government will support British food, which is the best in the world. That is why we are backing industry-led action to signpost customers to “buy British” when they shop online. We are also proud to support to AHDB’s We Eat Balanced campaign, which launched on 8 September, and aims to highlight the exceptional taste and quality of our home-grown meat and dairy produce, and its role in a nutritionally balanced and sustainable diet. We are today confirming that farmers producing sustainable British food under our environmental land management schemes will be able to use them to help meet public procurement standards, benefiting our British farmers and allowing the public sector to benefit from more excellent British food.

The government will bring forward the planned payment schedules for all those who join the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI). The new and improved

Sustainable Farming Incentive 2023 - which has 23 actions on offer for farmers - is currently accepting expressions of interest and will start accepting applications from 18 September. Today, in recognition of the challenges faced with inflation and rising input costs, we are confirming that farmers who have a live Sustainable Farming Incentive 2023 (SFI) agreement before the end of the year, will receive an accelerated payment in the first month of their agreement, helping with cashflow and ensuring SFI works for farm businesses.

Our food and drink exports bring £24 billion to the British economy, and we have had great success stories in recent years including securing access for British lamb to the US. Our network of agri-food attachés play an important role in breaking down barriers to trade and opening up new trading markets. Following our commitment at the Farm to Fork Summit, we have launched a recruitment drive to appoint an additional five agri-food attachés to boost the UK’s agri-food exports, bringing the total number of dedicated UK agri-food attachés to 16. The new attachés will cover Northern Europe, Southern Europe, Australia/New Zealand, South Korea and Africa.

The government will help farmers to reduce their carbon footprint and improve their energy resilience and productivity. As well as producing food for our tables, farmers and land managers play a crucial role in helping the UK achieve our ambitious Net Zero plans. Through our Farming Investment Fund, we are helping farmers invest in climate-smart technologies that enhance productivity and reduce carbon emissions.

Today, we are pleased to announce an additional £15 million for farmers to invest in solar equipment, opening later this year, backing their energy security and cutting costs in the long term. This funding complements the £10 million already available for cattle farmers under the Animal Health and Welfare Infrastructure Grant, which included a solar offer alongside grants to improve calf housing.

We are also unveiling plans to allocate an additional £15 million to farmers and growers and in England to fund the purchase of innovative robotic and automated equipment. By supporting our farmers to invest in modern farming techniques, innovation, and infrastructure, we not only enhance the productivity of the sector, but also strengthen our competitiveness in global markets. The second round of our successful Improving Farm Productivity grant, part of the Farming Investment Fund, will launch later in 2023.

The government wants more abattoirs around the country. That is good for farmers and for animal welfare. We are identifying opportunities to remove unnecessary burdens while maintaining our animal welfare standards. We have listened to the concerns of smaller abattoir owners and are identifying opportunities to cut unnecessary burdens, making it easier for them to operate and support farmers in reaching local and international markets while maintaining our world-leading standards.

The government recognises that a thriving livestock sector depends on a sustainable abattoir network. We are going to support small abattoirs – financially and by cutting red tape. The £4 million Smaller Abattoirs Fund will launch in Q4 2023, to support abattoirs to improve productivity, enhance animal health and welfare, add value to primary products, and encourage innovation and investment in new technologies.

I encourage you to champion our schemes with farmers in your area. Our schemes are about supporting resilient and sustainable farm businesses, preserving and improving the countryside that we've stewarded for generations and putting food on the plates of people across the nation.

## Delivering for our Protected Landscapes

[HLWS1004]

**Lord Benyon:** My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Thérèse Coffey) has made the following Statement:

Our National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), collectively known as Protected Landscapes, are home to some of our most iconic and beautiful places. These remarkable landscapes support our nation's health and wellbeing and are crucial to delivering our commitments to tackle climate change and restore nature, including our international commitments under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

As we approach the 75th Anniversary of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, which legally safeguarded these precious landscapes, the government is acting to accelerate the recovery of nature in England's National Parks and AONBs.

### *1. Delivering enhanced management plans that contribute to our targets*

Through the introduction of new legislation in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, we are enhancing management plans and placing a stronger requirement on partners to contribute to their delivery. This will ensure Protected Landscapes organisations and their partners collaborate effectively, creating a national network of beautiful, nature-rich spaces that can be enjoyed right across the country. We will table an updated government amendment to the Bill at Third Reading to deliver this and will shortly publish our response to the Landscapes Review consultation which will set out our action plan for these special places.

We will also shortly publish our new Outcomes Framework. The Outcomes Framework will define the contribution that our Protected Landscapes should make to national targets to guide local decision-making and prioritisation. This is a landmark step forward in achieving our global goal to protect 30% of land for nature by 2030.

### *2. Establishing a new Protected Landscapes Partnership*

We are supporting the creation of a new partnership between the National Association for AONBs, National Parks England, National Trails UK and Natural England to deliver a range of exciting projects and programmes on nature recovery and widening access to nature. The partnership will also boost opportunities for private sector investment in our Protected Landscapes. The first meeting of the partnership will take place by the end of November, and it will be backed by over £2m of funding.

### *3. Enhancing support for farming in protected landscapes*

We have extended the Farming in Protected Landscape (FiPL) programme by a further year until March 2025 with £10m additional funding each year in recognition of the positive feedback and outcomes delivered. In the first two years we have:

- Supported more than 2,500 projects, engaging around 5,000 farmers and land managers.
- Created 41 new farm clusters and supported more than 100 existing ones.
- Funded more than 400 projects to make the landscape more inclusive for visitors, including around 200 projects delivering educational access visits.
- Created more than 40 miles of new permissive access.
- Engaged more than 5,000 volunteers.
- Planted around 100 miles of hedgerow and restored 8 miles of dry-stone walling.
- Created or restored 262 ponds.
- Undertook positive management on around 27,000ha of SSSIs.
- Improved management for biodiversity on around 69,000ha.
- Funded more than 400 projects reducing carbon emissions and other forms of pollution.
- Restored, enhanced and better interpreted more than 300 historic structures, buildings and features.

### *4. Improved access to nature in Protected Landscapes*

The £9.3m 3-year Access for All programme in our Protected Landscapes is now at the halfway point. We have already distributed £3.6m to our National Parks and AONBs to deliver accessibility improvements across all 44 Protected Landscapes. This has resulted in more accessible paths, more Changing Places toilets and rest stops, more accessible physical and digital way-marking of paths including access guides for autistic and visually or hearing-impaired visitors, new equipment such as accessible e-bikes, or beach access kits and other accessible infrastructure such as upgraded bridges.

Together with our local partners, we will ensure people and nature can thrive in these special places for the next 75 years and beyond.

## DWP Estate: Decommissioning of Temporary Jobcentres

[HLWS999]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** My honourable Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Social Mobility, Youth & Progression (Mims Davies MP) has made the following Written Statement:

I previously provided updates on decommissioning Temporary Jobcentres; [Expanding Our Services](#) on 23 March 2021, and [Expanding Our Services Update](#) on 21 October 2021. These statements reaffirmed the Department's commitment to reducing its Jobcentre estate back to pre-pandemic levels by decommissioning these Temporary Jobcentres (or the additional space in established Jobcentres) in a phased approach, where the increased capacity is no longer needed. The full list of Temporary Jobcentres and their current status can be found [here](#).

As part of this ongoing, phased, approach to decommissioning the Temporary Jobcentres, the Department is today announcing the fourth and latest phase, which consists of decommissioning a further 26 temporary sites (or additional space in existing Jobcentres). Subsequent phases of decommissioning will continue to follow throughout 2023 and 2024 and Parliament will be kept updated. Details of the sites being decommissioned are listed below.

The decommissioning of Temporary Jobcentres will not reduce the levels of service, or access to face-to-face appointments. Customers will return to being served by an established Jobcentre and there will be no reduction in the number of Work Coaches supporting customers as a result of the decommissioning.

The Department continues to support and update colleagues in a timely and sensitive manner. We also remain committed to ensuring all relevant stakeholders, organisations and Parliament are engaged and regularly updated on our work. Letters are being sent to each MP with changes in their constituency to explain what this means for their local Jobcentre, its staff, and their constituents.

The 26 Temporary Jobcentres or additional space in existing sites to be formally decommissioned are:

<i>Phase 4</i>	<i>Address</i>
<i>Temporary Jobcentre Location</i>	
Barnsley	Wellington House, 36 Wellington Street, Barnsley S70 1WA
Basildon	Church Walk, Great Oaks, Basildon SS14 1GJ
Bedford	Woodlands Annexe, Manton Lane, Bedford MK41 7NU
Blackburn	The Mall, Northgate, Blackburn BB2 1BD
Bracknell	Phoenix House, Cookham Road, Bracknell RG12 1RB

<i>Phase 4</i>	<i>Address</i>
<i>Temporary Jobcentre Location</i>	
Exeter	Units 1 and 2, The Depot, Belgrave Road, Exeter EX1 2FT
Falkirk	Part of MSU 4, Callendar Square Shopping Centre, High Street, Falkirk FK1 1UJ
Harlow	Unit 58-60 Harvey Centre, Harvey Centre Approach, Harlow CM20 1XR
Hounslow (Additional space only)	Unit 27, Treaty Centre, 44 High Street, Hounslow TW3 1ES
Huddersfield	Unit 2, 11 Trinity Street, Huddersfield HD1 4DA
Kingston	Anstee House, Wood Street, Kingston upon Thames KT1 1TG
Leeds	123 Albion Street, Leeds LS2 8ER
Leeds	Temple House, Ring Road, Seacroft, Leeds LS14 1NH
London Bromley	129 Burnt Ash Lane, Bromley, BR1 5AJ
London Croydon Borough	Part Grd, 1st & 2nd Floors, Simpson House, 6 Cherry Orchard Road, Croydon CR0 6BA
London Edmonton (Enfield)	10 West Mall, Edmonton Green, Edmonton N9 0AL
London Hammersmith	1 Hammersmith Broadway, London W6 9DL
London Rushey Green (Lewisham)	Old Town Hall, 1 Catford Road, Rushey Green, London SE6 4HQ
London Walthamstow	Grd, & 1st Floors of Units 9 & 10, The Mall, 45 Selborne Walk, Walthamstow E17 7JR
Newport	Unit 31, Kingsway Centre, John Frost Square, Newport NP20 1EB
Oldham	West Wing Grd & 1st Floor, Oldham Business Centre, University Way, Oldham OL1 1BB
Ramsgate	The Argyle Centre, 9 York Street, Ramsgate CT11 9DS
Reading	Kennet Place, 121 Kings Road, Reading RG1 3FR
Rhyl	7 Bodfor Street, Rhyl LL18 1AS
Scunthorpe	22-24 Southgate Mall, The Foundry Shopping Centre, Scunthorpe DN15 6SU
Southampton	Frobisher House, Nelson Gate, Wyndham Place, Southampton SO15 1GX

## Elections Act: Implementation and Evaluation

[HLWS1000]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The Elections Act 2022 is a critical part of the Government's work to ensure the integrity of our elections. I am today providing an update on the implementation of the Act, and the government's progress towards its evaluation.

*Non-party campaigner code of practice*

The Act took important steps to strengthen the political finance framework to support the existing principles of fairness, transparency and integrity. Section 29 of that Act created a duty for the Electoral Commission to prepare a code of practice on the operation of controls relating to third-party national election campaigns to provide greater certainty for campaigners. It also provides a defence for third parties who are charged with offences under Part 6 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, where they can demonstrate compliance with the code of practice.

Following the commencement of Part 4 of the Elections Act 2022, the Electoral Commission ran a consultation on a draft code of practice. Responses received from a range of groups were overall positive however the Commission made some modifications in response.

The Government has considered the draft code provided by the Commission and is today laying the code, with some minor and technical modifications, before Parliament for approval.

In two areas the version of the code of practice presented to the Secretary of State required modification to avoid providing a statutory defence where no defence is intended by the underlying primary legislation. It is important the code accurately reflects the legislation. The department worked with the Commission in developing these minor modifications.

The first set of modifications I have made is to insert that the words: “the Commission considers that” under the sections on Overheads and Staff Costs. These costs are not explicitly exempted from contributing to controlled expenditure under schedule 8A of the 2000 Act. These modifications will accurately reflect both the legislation and the position that the Electoral Commission takes as an independent regulator.

Secondly, it is important that the code of practice does not suggest a third-party is only involved in a common plan if the campaigner intends to spend money themselves; where the legislation is clear that a third party is party to a joint campaign even if the intention is that controlled expenditure is incurred on their behalf.

I have therefore modified the code under the heading *what is joint campaigning* to add the phrases “whether that expenditure is to be incurred by, or on behalf of, each non-party campaigner” and “whether that expenditure is to be incurred by, or on behalf, of the non-party campaigner in question”.

If the guidance is approved by Parliament, it will come into force later this year. To facilitate parliamentarians’ access to the guidance, the document has been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

*Progress towards evaluation of the Elections Act 2022*

The introduction of voter identification for reserved polls at polling stations in Great Britain fulfilled the Government’s commitment to protecting the integrity of

our elections through introduction of the policy, and brought the rest of the UK in line with Northern Ireland, where this has been a longstanding requirement.

The local elections in England in May were our first experience of the new voter identification requirements in practice, and the Electoral Commission’s interim report on the May polls showed that 99.75% of voters in polling stations were able to cast their vote successfully under the new rules. The Government is pleased with the smooth roll out of new practices and processes, and we are grateful for the work of local authorities and other partners in delivering the change in requirements. The Association of Electoral Administrators noted, in their own report of the May 2023 elections, that the polls were ‘well run’ and ‘run smoothly as usual, without any major issues’ and the Electoral Commission found that 90% of voters were satisfied with the process of voting in May’s elections – in line with the most recent comparable elections in 2019, when 91% of voters were satisfied.

We are also committed to ensuring we fully understand how the policy has operated in practice, what has gone well and where there are any areas for improvement in the future. To this end, we are, as set out in legislation, conducting an evaluation of the implementation of voter identification at the local elections in May as well as at the next two UK Parliamentary elections.

To provide Parliament with an assurance of progress towards the publication of the first evaluation report in November 2023, I have today published two documents which will provide further detail of the work being carried out.

An external research agency - IFF Research - has been appointed to conduct the evaluation, and the Electoral Integrity Programme Evaluation Plan sets out IFF’s plan for an impact and process theory-based evaluation of the introduction of the new requirements.

As part of this evaluation, research into public attitudes towards and experiences of voting, and perceptions of the changes to the process of voting due to the introduction of the Elections Act, is being carried out by another external research agency, IPSOS UK, through a series of public opinion surveys. The first report of these surveys, published today, indicates that voter satisfaction with voting in elections remains high, with the majority of voters reporting they are confident that the recent local elections were run well and that in person voting is secure.

We will continue to learn from this research, from other sources of data, and from research conducted by the Electoral Commission, to ensure the full picture of the impact of the implementation of voter identification is understood. The government remains committed to stamping out the potential for voter fraud and ensuring our democracy remains fair, up-to-date, and secure well into the future.

The associated documents will be deposited in the House libraries.



## Northern Ireland Investment Summit

[HLWS1002]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for the Department of Business and Trade (Kemi Badenoch MP) has today made the following statement:

Yesterday I launched the Northern Ireland Investment Summit (NIIS) in Belfast, which I am hosting today in partnership with my Rt Hon friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The event will be a key moment in the 25th anniversary years of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. This is an opportunity to look to the future, and consider how we can build on the remarkable progress Northern Ireland has made this past quarter century. Northern Ireland is an integral, uniquely positioned part of the UK and is an ideal location for companies to grow. Its combination of a highly educated workforce, competitive operating costs and unique market access make it a compelling proposition for both domestic and international investment. The Summit will set out how the UK Government intends to strengthen the UK's already competitive business environment and ensure it remains one of the most attractive destinations for international investment.

The Summit, jointly hosted with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and delivered in partnership with Invest Northern Ireland, will bring together over 150 investors from the United States, Europe, Asia Pacific, Middle East, and India, to discover the opportunities available to businesses in Northern Ireland. This event will be an opportunity to promote what Northern Ireland does best, with breakouts covering some of Northern Ireland's key sectors including technology, financial and professional services, life and health sciences, green economy, advanced manufacturing and engineering; creative industries and capital investment opportunities.

It will also mark a key moment to encourage investment into Northern Ireland – the Windsor Framework has further enhanced the attractiveness and competitiveness of Northern Ireland as an investment location for businesses seeking market access to the UK and the EU Single Market for goods. The Summit will showcase its strengths across all parts of Northern Ireland to build a sustainable and inclusive economy that will benefit everyone.

The Department for Business and Trade is committed to championing investment across the UK, and this event is yet another example of this government's commitment to

growing the UK economy – as laid out in the Prime Minister's key priorities for 2023.

## Shipbuilding Credit Guarantee Scheme

[HLWS1003]

**Lord Johnson of Lainston:** My Hon Friend the Minister for Industry and Economic Security (Nusrat Ghani MP) has today made the following statement:

Further to the statement by my Hon. Friend, the Minister for International Trade last week, I have today laid the accompanying Departmental Minute before Parliament describing a contingent liability arising from the launch of a Shipbuilding Credit Guarantee Scheme (SCGS).

The SCGS is a finance instrument which will provide guarantees to banks in respect of loans made to vessel owners and operators seeking to place orders at UK shipyards. The scheme will guarantee a portion of the value of eligible loans, sharing the risk with lenders to encourage offers of finance to UK vessel owners and operators.

The SCGS is one of a number of targeted interventions being taken as part of over £4 billion of government investment planned through the government's National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh, to encourage UK ship owners and operators to place new orders and upgrade their existing fleets with world-leading shipyards that are based up and down the UK. HM Treasury has approved the arrangements.

In addition, I hereby give notice of the Export Credits Guarantee Department's (known as UK Export Finance, UKEF) intention to seek an advance from the Contingencies Fund. This was made over recess, and I am notifying Parliament at the earliest opportunity. I have previously notified the Chairs of Public Accounts Committee and the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) Select Committee. UKEF will act as service provider to DBT. They will manage enquiries and applications under the SCGS and DBT will cover resource and other costs. To have the necessary approvals to undertake this work on behalf of DBT, UKEF must apply for a Contingencies Fund Advance.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £105,000 for this new expenditure will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for UK Export Finance. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £51,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

## Written Answers

Wednesday, 13 September 2023

### Bishop's Castle Community Hospital: Hospital Beds

Asked by *Lord Rooker*

To ask His Majesty's Government why the in-patient beds at Bishop's Castle Community Hospital in Shropshire have been closed; and what plans they have to reopen them. [[HL9947](#)]

**Lord Markham:** NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin commissions Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust to provide services in Bishop's Castle Community Hospital, including inpatient bed facilities. 16 inpatient beds were temporarily closed in October 2021 due to sustained and unacceptable nursing vacancies and concerns about the quality of care and patient safety.

In August 2023, the trust commissioned an external review of its recruitment process and on 12 June 2023 began a period of formal engagement with patients, carers, members of the public, stakeholders, clinicians, and staff to inform its final decision on whether to relinquish the contract it holds for the inpatient service.

A board meeting was held on 7 September 2023, which considered the details of the reports from all the planned engagement activity. The Board concluded that it cannot be assured the recruitment efforts have been reasonable and sufficient and further recruitment attempts are needed before withdrawing from the inpatient service. The trust will now produce a workforce and recruitment plan and re-attempt recruitment with a view to safely staffing and re-opening the beds.

### Business Rates

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to reduce the business rate multiplier in England and Wales. [[HL9917](#)]

**Baroness Penn:** At the Autumn Statement 2022, the Government announced a freeze to the business rates multiplier for 2023-24, a tax cut worth £9.3 billion over the next five years. This was the third consecutive year the multiplier has been frozen, protecting businesses from inflationary pressures at an overall cost of £14.5 billion.

Business rates are an essential form of funding for local government to provide vital public services.

The Government keeps all taxes under review.

### Cancer: Young People

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the campaign by Young Lives vs

Cancer to establish a fund to help cover the cost of travelling to treatment for young cancer patients. [[HL9934](#)]

**Lord Markham:** The Minister of State for Health and Secondary Care (Will Quince MP) is aware of this campaign and has exchanged correspondence with Young Lives vs Cancer on this matter.

The Government recognises that the cost of travel should not be a barrier to treatment. There are schemes, such as the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme, in place to provide financial assistance for travel to a hospital or other National Health Service premises for specialist NHS treatment or diagnostics tests when referred by a doctor or other primary healthcare professional.

### Capital Gains Tax

Asked by *Lord Sikka*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the tax revenues which could be raised by aligning the capital gains tax rates with those applied to wages and salaries. [[HL9909](#)]

**Baroness Penn:** As set out in the Government's response to the Office of Tax Simplification's report on Capital Gains Tax (CGT) on 30 November 2021, substantial reforms to CGT rates and allowances would involve a number of wider policy trade-offs and so careful thought must be given to the impact that they would have on taxpayers, as well as any additional administrative burden on HMRC.

The Government will continue to keep the tax system under review to ensure it is simple and efficient.

### Clinical Trials: Applications

Asked by *Lord Blunkett*

To ask His Majesty's Government what are the reasons for the variation between 2019 and 2023 in the time taken for new Clinical Trial Authorisation applications to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency to be assessed. [[HL9873](#)]

**Lord Markham:** A combination of factors has resulted in extended timeframes in Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) assessment of clinical trial applications and amendments, in particular the loss of experienced staff and the need to recruit and train new staff. The MHRA understands the vital importance to patients and the public as well as researchers and developers of efficient clinical trials approvals, and over the summer it has taken urgent action to address delays to clinical trial approval.

Applicants will have seen increased rates of assessment in all key areas, as the MHRA focused considerable resources within the agency to deliver accelerated improvements to timescales for clinical trial assessments. The MHRA has made significant progress and most delayed applications have now been processed.



From 31 July to 1 September 2023, the MHRA assessed 1,185 applications for initial clinical trials and amendments. This demonstrates the significant effort that the MHRA has made to address backlogs and move back to assessment in statutory timescales. From 1 September 2023 all newly received fully compliant applications are being assessed within statutory timeframes.

### Continuing Care: Finance

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Markham on 24 July (HL9409), whether they intend to make enquiries as to whether personal health budgets are available to all those receiving National Health Service Continuing Healthcare (CHC); and whether integrated care boards are providing information on personal health budgets to all those eligible for CHC, including offering them the option of taking them up, and supporting them to do so. [HL9816]

**Lord Markham:** The Government have not made an assessment of whether personal health budgets are available to people receiving NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC) that need them.

The Department is responsible for CHC policy and legislation, which includes the National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and National Health Service-funded Nursing Care. Operational delivery of CHC is the responsibility of integrated care boards (ICBs) with oversight from NHS England. Quarterly performance data is used by regional NHS England teams to inform ICB assurance.

Legislation requires ICBs to provide people eligible for CHC with information about personal health budgets, to promote their availability and to provide advice and assistance with respect to requesting such budgets.

### Coronavirus: Vaccination

*Asked by Earl Russell*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure accurate and timely monitoring of (1) new COVID-19 cases, and (2) new variants of the disease; and when the next round of booster vaccines will be made available to each age group. [HL9837]

**Lord Markham:** The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) conducts routine monitoring and surveillance of COVID-19 and the emergence and spread of new variants internationally via a range of surveillance systems and genomic capabilities. These systems report on infection rates, hospitalisations and the risks posed by new variants.

This year's autumn influenza and COVID-19 vaccine programmes is starting earlier than planned in England, on 11 September 2023, as a precautionary measure. Speeding up the Autumn vaccine programme will deliver greater protection, supporting those at greatest risk of

severe illness and reducing the potential impact on the National Health Service.

The COVID-19 vaccine will be offered to:

- residents in a care home for older adults;
- all adults aged 65 years and over;
- persons aged six months to 64 years in a clinical risk group;
- frontline health and social care workers;
- persons aged 12 to 64 years who are household contacts of people with immunosuppression; and
- persons aged 16 to 64 years who are carers and staff working in care homes for older adults.

An appointment will be offered to eligible people between September and December 2023, with those at highest risk being called in first. Those eligible for vaccination are encouraged to take up the offer of the vaccine as soon as they are called to ensure they head into winter with the best protection.

### Disability: Mental Illness

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask His Majesty's Government, following the publication of the Inequalities in disability report by the Institute of Fiscal Studies on 23 August, what steps they are taking to address the rise in mental health issues and disability benefit claims among children, and in particular the doubling of the rate of girls aged 16 who are in contact with mental health services since 2017–18. [HL9941]

**Lord Markham:** We are progressing work with NHS England to increase access to children and young people's mental health services as outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan. The NHS Long Term Plan commits to increasing investment in mental health services by at least £2.3 billion a year by March 2024 so that an additional 345,000 children and young people are able to get the National Health Service-funded mental health support they need.

### Drugs: Safety

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the quality and safety of (1) imported, and (2) home produced generic drugs; and whether they plan to step up testing following the decision of the US military to introduce a new testing programme. [HL9752]

**Lord Markham:** Before a medicine can be placed onto the market in the United Kingdom, it must first receive approval from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) via the granting of a Marketing Authorisation, commonly known as a product licence. Each medicinal product is assessed for its safety, quality, and efficacy. For a generic medicine, an

assessment of whether the medicinal product is equivalent to the proprietary medicine will also be performed.

Manufacturers of all medicines, including generics, are required to perform testing for each batch before it is released to market to ensure that it meets the specifications as set out in the product licence. There are currently no plans to amend these testing processes. If the UK product is manufactured in a third country there is an additional requirement for testing after importation i.e., after shipping, but before release to the market. This extra control measure is not a requirement for supply to the market in the United States of America.

It should be noted that medicines, including generics, must comply with the same Good Manufacturing Standards which are applicable for domestic and third country manufacturers. The MHRA's medicines inspectorate conduct inspections to ensure that those manufacturing medicines meet these stringent Good Manufacturing Practice standards. These standards are also applicable to the testing facilities, which are also the subject of inspections to ensure the appropriate standards are being met.

### Genito-urinary Medicine

*Asked by Baroness Merron*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have assessed demographic data in respect of the move by some sexual health services to offer in-person appointments only to those reporting symptoms of a sexually transmitted infection. [HL9944]

**Lord Markham:** No assessment has been made of demographic data on provision of sexual health services.

Local authorities are responsible for commissioning comprehensive open access to most sexual health services through the public health grant funded at £3.5 billion in 2023/24. It is for individual local authorities to decide their spending priorities based on an assessment of local need and to commission and evaluate the service lines that best suit their population, including online and in-person provision.

### Hammersmith Bridge

*Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they expect Hammersmith Bridge to reopen to traffic. [HL9790]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Transport in London is devolved. Hammersmith Bridge is owned by the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF) which is responsible for its repair and maintenance.

Stabilisation works are underway; a business case for strengthening works is in development. Providing a schedule for the full reopening of the bridge is part of the business case development process.

### Health and Technology: Research

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the breakdown by department of the current allocation of Government funding for projects aimed at translating health research into practical innovations; what plans they have, if any, to increase such funding; how they plan to support collaborations between academic institutions and industry to expedite the development of healthcare technologies and treatments; and what steps they are taking to ensure that promising research findings are supported for successful translation into practical applications. [HL9825]

**Lord Markham:** The Department funds and enables research through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). In 2022/23, the NIHR budget was approximately £1.25 billion and enabling translation of research into practice is embedded across multiple workstreams in the NIHR portfolio. Its close working with the NHS England Accelerated Access Collaborative also promotes the adoption and diffusion of proven innovations and the decommissioning of ineffective or superseded interventions. The Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway, launched in 2021, also aims to accelerate the time to market by streamlining the regulatory and access processes, particularly for innovative and promising medicines, ensuring that they reach patients more efficiently and rapidly.

### Health Services: Children and Young People

*Asked by Baroness Merron*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce NHS treatment waiting times for children and young people. [HL9987]

*Asked by Baroness Merron*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce backlogs for elective procedures in child health services. [HL9988]

**Lord Markham:** Cutting National Health Service waiting lists, including for elective child health services, is one of the Government's top priorities. To support elective recovery, the Government plans to spend more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25 to help drive up and protect elective activity. Steps taken include increasing capacity, seeking alternative capacity in other trusts or the independent sector and engaging with patients to understand their choices.

We met our target to virtually eliminate long waits of two years or more for elective procedures in July 2022. We also virtually eliminated waits of over 18 months by the end of June 2023, a reduction of over 94% from the peak of 125,000 in September 2021. Our next ambition is to eliminate waits of 65 and 52 weeks.

## Health Services: EU Countries

Asked by *Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to encourage the provision of reciprocal free healthcare within Europe and England. [HL9882]

**Lord Markham:** There is currently wide-ranging advice and guidance on reciprocal healthcare arrangements across GOV.UK, the National Health Service website and the NHS Business Services Authority website. The Department also works closely with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office across Europe to promote people's reciprocal healthcare entitlements, which includes country-specific guides.

We use a variety of communications activities including videos, blogs and social media messaging to reach different groups. The Department also works with travel companies and relevant media outlets to include reciprocal healthcare information.

To further promote the benefits of the Global Health Insurance Card, which is the eligibility document for accessing necessary healthcare when United Kingdom residents visit eligible countries, we are in the process of reviewing all Government content to make clearer the benefits of reciprocal healthcare arrangements to the public and ensure people can easily access information on the support available in-country should they require necessary healthcare.

## Housing Improvement: VAT

Asked by *Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of any distortion to the housing market caused by VAT on the renovation and restoration of existing homes as opposed to VAT exemption for the building of new homes; and what plans they have, if any, to address such distortion. [HL9801]

**Baroness Penn:** The construction of certain new-build properties, including residential buildings, is subject to a VAT zero rate to encourage the construction of new homes. A reduced rate of VAT at five per cent is also maintained, subject to certain conditions, for residential renovations. This includes conversions of buildings from one residential use to another, conversions from commercial to residential use, and the renovation of properties that have been empty for two years or more.

Extending this VAT relief would impose additional pressure on the public finances to which VAT makes a significant contribution. As such, the Government has no plans to introduce a VAT relief on the renovation and restoration of existing homes; however, the Government keeps all taxes under review.

A temporary zero rate (up to April 2027) also applies to installations of qualifying energy saving materials, such as insulation, solar panels and heat pumps into residential accommodation. This relief is targeted at materials that

specifically improve the energy efficiency or reduce carbon emission from a residential property.

## Influenza: Vaccination

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government under what circumstances they would consider reintroducing the 50-to-64-year-old age cohort into the flu vaccine programme, as was the case during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL9899]

**Lord Markham:** The Government's policy on groups eligible for flu vaccination is based on the recommendation of the independent expert body the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the JCVI was supportive of the temporary expansion of the influenza programme to extend eligibility to all adults aged between 50 and 64 years of age to protect the population from the potential threat of co-circulation of COVID-19 and flu and alleviate pressure on the National Health Service. This was the policy for both the 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022 seasons.

The success of the COVID-19 vaccination programme and a better understanding of SARS-CoV-2 infection means that we are now able to return eligibility for the flu vaccination programme back to the approach taken pre-pandemic.

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the benefits of expanding the portion of the flu immunisation programme delivered by community pharmacies. [HL9900]

**Lord Markham:** National Health Service providers determine how many seasonal flu vaccines to buy each year based on their local populations, eligible cohorts and uptake ambitions for the NHS programme as outlined in the annual flu system letter. The letter, published on 25 May 2023, is based on the advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation who review the latest evidence on flu vaccines and advise on the type of vaccine to be offered to different age groups and on which vaccines should be prioritised for various at-risk groups.

In 2022/23, approximately 9,800 out of a total of around 10,800 community pharmacies delivered flu vaccinations in England. In the same year, approximately 700 community pharmacies piloted using the NHS National Booking Scheme for flu appointments for the first time. In terms of this year's programme, all community pharmacies delivering COVID-19 vaccinations will be expected to deliver flu vaccines too. All pharmacies will be given the functionality to offer flu appointments via the national booking system with the aim of increasing coadministration of COVID-19 and flu vaccinations.

The community pharmacy service is currently an advanced service, which means it is commissioned

nationally and any contractor that meets the criteria for the service can deliver it. We do not expect a significant change to be seen to the proportion of seasonal flu vaccination programme being delivered by community pharmacies, which is estimated to be approximately 86% total number of community pharmacies, in 2023/24.

In terms of this year's programme, all community pharmacies delivering COVID-19 vaccinations will be expected to deliver flu vaccines too. All pharmacies will be given the functionality to offer flu appointments via the national booking system with the aim of increasing coadministration of COVID-19 and flu vaccinations.

### Mesothelioma: Mortality Rates

Asked by *Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask His Majesty's Government what were the survival rates for people diagnosed of mesothelioma in each of the five years up to December 2022. [HL9788]

**Lord Markham:** The latest mesothelioma cancer survival statistics available are for those adults diagnosed between 2016-2020, followed up to 2021.

The table below provides the year of cancer diagnosis, the years since diagnosis (from 1 to 5), and the respective survival rates, with associated 95% upper and lower confidence intervals (CIs). Where estimates are not possible due to low reliability, a [u] is shown.

<i>Year of diagnosis</i>	<i>Years since diagnosis</i>	<i>Net survival (%)</i>	<i>Net survival, lower 95% CI</i>	<i>Net survival, upper 95% CI</i>
2016-2020	1	46	44.7	47.4
2015-2019	1	46	44.8	47.3
2014-2018	1	45.3	44	46.7
2013-2017	1	44.7	43.5	46
2012-2016	1	44.5	43.2	45.7
2016-2020	2	24.1	23	25.2
2015-2019	2	23.6	22.5	24.7
2014-2018	2	23.1	22	24.1
2013-2017	2	21.7	20.7	22.8
2012-2016	2	21.4	20.4	22.4
2016-2020	3	14.7	13.8	15.7
2015-2019	3	14.3	13.4	15.2
2014-2018	3	13.8	12.9	14.7
2013-2017	3	12.8	12	13.7
2012-2016	3	12.2	11.4	13.1
2016-2020	4	10	9.1	10.9
2015-2019	4	9.6	8.7	10.5
2014-2018	4	9.4	8.6	10.3
2013-2017	4	8.3	7.4	9.2
2012-2016	4	7.6	6.8	8.5

<i>Year of diagnosis</i>	<i>Years since diagnosis</i>	<i>Net survival (%)</i>	<i>Net survival, lower 95% CI</i>	<i>Net survival, upper 95% CI</i>
2016-2020	5	[u]	[u]	[u]
2015-2019	5	7.1	6.2	8
2014-2018	5	7.1	6.3	8.1
2013-2017	5	6.6	5.8	7.6
2012-2016	5	[u]	[u]	[u]

This information is provided as survival estimates in rolling five-year periods because there are insufficient diagnoses of mesothelioma to provide estimates by a single year of diagnosis. This is because of the statistical frameworks used in the estimation of survival analysis which require minimum numbers of patients to be alive at each estimation point and for a minimum number to have died around the same time to reliably estimate the mortality rates of the cancer cohort. For cancers like mesothelioma, the number of patients remaining alive quickly falls to a number that no longer permits the estimation of survival beyond 5-years after diagnosis, shown as [u] in the table to denote low reliability. Furthermore, all estimates of survival vary with time from diagnosis. We have provided estimates at one, two, three, four and five years after diagnosis for five periods of diagnosis: 2012-2016 to 2016-2020, which is the most recent available.

### Mesothelioma: Research

Asked by *Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they are funding research into finding a cure for mesothelioma. [HL9789]

**Lord Markham:** Research is crucial in the fight against cancer. That is why the Department invests £1 billion per year in health research through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). NIHR research expenditure for all cancers was over £101 million for 2021/22.

NIHR funded the following research programmes, totalling approximately £3 million, since 2018:

- A double blind, placebo-controlled, randomized phase II study of Pemetrexed and Cisplatin with and without Ruxolitinib in Malignant Pleural Mesothelioma;
- Mesothelioma and Radical Surgery 2: a multicentre randomised trial comparing (extended) pleurectomy decortication versus no (extended) pleurectomy decortication for patients with malignant pleural mesothelioma (MARS 2);
- Nivolumab with ipilimumab for untreated unresectable malignant pleural mesothelioma [ID1609];
- Treating mesothelioma with Intra-pleural Lipoteichoic acid (the TILT Trial): A feasibility study using the 'Trial within a Cohort' methodology;



- Developing a short-term integrated rehabilitation service for people with newly diagnosed thoracic cancer;
- Randomised controlled trial to compare the diagnostic yield of Positron Emission Tomography Computerised Tomography (PET-CT) guided pleural biopsy versus CT-guided pleural biopsy in suspected pleural malignancy (PET-biopsy trial);
- Zoledronic acid in the management of malignant pleural mesothelioma - a feasibility study (Zol-A Study); and
- MesoTRAP: A feasibility study comparing video-assisted thoracoscopic partial pleurectomy/decortication with indwelling pleural catheter in patients with trapped lung and pleural effusion due to malignant pleural mesothelioma designed to address recruitment and randomisation uncertainties and sample size requirements for a phase III trial.

The NIHR is also supporting delivery in the health and care system of over 50 mesothelioma research studies funded by research funding partners in the charity and public sectors since 2018.

The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including research into mesothelioma. As with other Government funders of health research, the NIHR does not allocate funding for specific disease areas. Applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made based on the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

### Motor Neurone Disease: Diagnosis

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government (1) what is their assessment of the effectiveness of their efforts to enhance early motor neurone disease diagnosis, specifically in terms of reducing diagnostic delays, (2) how they are monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their efforts to enhance motor neurone disease diagnosis, and (3) what metrics they are using to assess progress in this area. [HL9896]

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to ensure that healthcare professionals receive updated training and resources for the accurate and timely diagnosis of motor neurone disease. [HL9897]

**Lord Markham:** All health professionals involved in assessing, caring for and treating people with motor neurone disease (MND) should have sufficient and appropriate training and competence. Individual employers are responsible for ensuring their medical and nursing staff are trained and competent to carry out their role and to invest in the future of their staff through providing continuing professional development (CPD) funding.

To supplement local employer investment for CPD, the Government announced in September 2019 a £210 million funding boost to provide every nurse, midwife, and allied health professional (AHP) working in the National Health Service in England with a personal budget of £1,000 over three years to 2022/23.

The NHS Long Term Workforce Plan, published on 30 June 2023, sets out NHS England's commitment to continue national CPD funding for nurses, midwives and AHPs. The operation of this scheme will be kept under review, to ensure subsequent funding is in line with workforce growth and inflation, well-targeted and achieving the desired outcomes.

To support the diagnosis of MND, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has published a clinical guideline on the assessment and management of MND (NG42).

NHS England commissions specialised neurology services for the assessment, diagnosis and care of patients with a range of neurological conditions, including MND, as set out in the published service specification. A copy of this specification is attached.

NHS England currently has a National Transformation Programme for Neurosciences, which is undertaking considerable work to review and develop optimal care pathways, including early diagnosis and model of care for patients with a range of neurological conditions, including MND.

Additionally, the National Neurosciences Advisory Group, a collaboration of specialist clinicians, allied health professionals and charity representatives, developed a clinical pathway for MND, published in June 2023. A copy of the pathway is attached.

The pathway is being used to inform the proposed changes to the neurology service model, which will in turn be used to revise the service specification for neurology.

NHS England does not currently monitor or evaluate rates of diagnosis of neurological conditions, including MND, nor does it have metrics in place to assess diagnostic rates.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Attachment [Neuro service specification (2).pdf]

Attachment [06+Motor+Neurone+Disease+Pathway+No+Logos (2).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-09-05/HL9896>

### Motor Neurone Disease: Research

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is their current assessment of coordination of motor neurone disease research via the MND Collaborative Partnership, co-funded by the medical research charity



LifeArc and the motor neurone disease patient charities MND Association, My Name's Doddie Foundation and MND Scotland. [HL9898]

**Lord Markham:** The MND Collaborative Partnership is monitored by the funding partners via quarterly reporting. The Partnership was launched to bring researchers together to speed the development of effective treatments for motor neurone disease. The Government, via the Medical Research Council and the National Institute for Health and Care Research, is co-funding the £4.25 million collaborative alongside LifeArc, My Name's Doddie, MND Association and MND Scotland. The Government is contributing a further £2 million to focus on gathering and analysing existing data.

### National Insurance: Profits

*Asked by Lord Sikka*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the revenues which could be raised by levying national insurance upon chargeable capital gains. [HL9911]

**Baroness Penn:** National Insurance contributions (NICs) are part of the UK's social security system. The system, based around the longstanding contributory principle, is centred around paid employment and self-employment, with employers, employees and the self-employed paying into the National Insurance Fund and providing funding for the NHS. Payment of NICs builds an individual's entitlement to claim contributory benefits which then replace earnings in certain circumstances, for example if someone is unable to work or is retired. Non-employment income is generally excluded from liability to NICs as it is not derived from paid employment. Consequently, individuals with only non-employment income need to pay voluntary NICs in order to build entitlement.

The Government keeps all taxes under review.

### Neurology: Research

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the scale of the gap in the understanding of neurodegenerative diseases; how this compares to other similarly complex disease areas; and what steps they are taking to support research into the biological causes of dementia. [HL9823]

**Lord Markham:** Government responsibility for delivering dementia and neurodegeneration research is shared between the Department of Health and Social Care, with research delivered by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), and the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology, with research delivered via UK Research and Innovation. The NIHR funds translational, clinical, and applied health and care research.

The Government has not assessed the scale of the gap in the understanding of neurodegenerative diseases; and how this compares to other similarly complex disease areas. However, the Government has funded research which looks across neurodegenerative and complex conditions and opportunities to apply learning from research into one condition to another. A recent study undertaken at the Medical Research Council Laboratory of Molecular Biology determined the structures of  $\alpha$ -synuclein filaments from the brains of individuals with Parkinson's disease and dementia with Lewy bodies, which will aid in the development of better diagnostics for Lewy body diseases.

The Government supports research into the biological causes of dementia, for example, at the UK Dementia Research Institute, scientists are undertaking ground-breaking research on the biological mechanisms of dementia, driving early-stage development of diagnostics and treatments, and developing innovative technologies for assisted living.

### NHS: Doctors and Nurses

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many (1) doctors, and (2) nurses, left the NHS in (a) 2019, (b) 2020, (c) 2021, and (d) 2022. [HL9842]

**Lord Markham:** The table below shows the published data on the leaver rates as a percentage and the number of doctors and nurses & health visitors who have left active service in National Health Service trusts and core organisations, for each annual period 2019 to 2022.

<i>Period</i>	<i>Doctors</i>	<i>Nurses &amp; Health Visitors</i>
31 December 2018 to 31 December 2019	17,863 (14.7%)	33,188 (10.2%)
31 December 2019 to 31 December 2020	17,045 (13.3%)	30,392 (9.0%)
31 December 2020 to 31 December 2021	19,156 (14.4%)	36,689 (10.6%)
31 December 2021 to 31 December 2022	21,078 (15.2%)	41,121 (11.4%)

Source: NHS England Workforce Statistics

The latest figures published by NHS England for the year to March 2023 show leaver rates are falling, and currently stand at 15.0% for doctors and 10.9% for nurses and health Visitors. Leaver's data is based on headcount and shows staff leaving active service. This would include those going on maternity leave or career breaks, as well as those leaving NHS trusts and core organisations, including integrated care boards, to work in another part of the health and social care sector, including social care or primary care. The number of doctors leaving includes doctors in training grades, of whom some will be rotating out of NHS trusts to other parts of the health and social care sector as part of planned programmes of training.

## Railway Stations: Tickets

Asked by *Lord Patten*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they plan to publish the results of the public consultations on proposals to close manned ticket offices at railway stations in England; and if not, why they do not plan to publish. [HL9811]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** This is an industry led process where Train Operating Companies put forward proposals to close or change the opening hours of station ticket offices and launch passenger consultations. The independent passenger bodies, Transport Focus and London TravelWatch, are currently considering the consultation responses and will publish their response to each train operator's proposals once the process has completed.

## Self-employed: National Insurance

Asked by *The Earl of Clancarty*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to fully digitise the processing of A1 (CA3837) documents for UK self-employed workers in the music industry temporarily working in Europe, including the issuing of such documents. [HL9883]

**Baroness Penn:** In response to customer feedback, HMRC introduced a new online version of the form CA3837 in June 2023, which was designed to streamline the application process, offering a number of enhancements and providing additional guidance for more complex questions.

HMRC intend to automate the CA3837 application process in the Autumn which will improve processing times and remove opportunities for error.

Asked by *The Earl of Clancarty*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the average time between the (1) application for, and (2) issuing of, an A1 (CA3837) document for UK self-employed workers; and whether they have any plans to reduce the processing time for such applications. [HL9884]

**Baroness Penn:** The average time it is taking HMRC to process/issue A1s received online is 15 weeks as it stands today. HMRC processes 3 different applications forms (CA3822, CA3837 and CA8421) that can result in A1s being issued.

It is not possible to break it down to average processing times for each application due to the complexities of HMRC's internal digital mail systems.

In quarter 3, HMRC plans to upskill additional colleagues to help process the backlog of CA3822s and this will include CA3837s and CA8421s which will help to reduce processing times.

HMRC intend to automate the CA3837 application process in the Autumn which will improve processing times and remove opportunities for error.

Asked by *The Earl of Clancarty*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to replace all single-use A1 (CA3837) documents for UK self-employed workers in the music industry with an A1 document valid for two years covering multiple unspecified (1) tours, (2) countries, and (3) dates. [HL9885]

**Baroness Penn:** HMRC issues A1 certificates where a self-employed individual is subject to UK social security legislation whilst working in the EU. The rules for issuing certificates apply equally to HMRC and EU Member State social security authorities. The government has no plans to seek changes at this time.

## Social Security Benefits: Artificial Intelligence

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve the response to requests for transparency over the use of artificial intelligence to verify welfare claims. [HL9915]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** DWP recognises the public interest in being transparent about what we do and how we process personal information. However, we have to balance this with keeping the information secure, by not revealing publicly all methods and practices used particularly to detect fraudulent claims and cyber-attack against our systems.

DWP takes its responsibility to protect data very seriously and we have published the [Personal information charter \(PIC\)](#) which gives details of how we use information provided to us. We have done this to be as transparent as we can without hindering our ability to detect fraud and protect data.

The PIC also explains that DWP does not use artificial intelligence to replace human judgement to determine or deny a payment to a claimant. We will only use data for lawful purposes.

The [DWP annual report and accounts 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) also makes mention of audits covering data management and artificial intelligence.

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