

**Session 2022-23  
No. 208**



**Thursday  
21 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>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
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<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
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<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

Thursday, 21 September 2023

## Children's Social Care

[HLWS1039]

**Baroness Barran:** On 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023, we published our bold and ambitious plans to reform Children's Social Care. Our implementation strategy, 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' set out our plans to transform Children's Social Care, and provides a vision for how we will keep children safe, help families overcome challenges; and make sure children in care have stable, loving homes, long-term loving relationships, and opportunities for a good life.

Alongside this strategy, we launched three consultations asking for views on: our proposals for reform, our draft Children's Social Care National Framework and Dashboard, and our plan for addressing the high use of agency social workers in the workforce. All three consultations closed on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023, and this statement provides an update to the House on our progress in considering the views we have heard. I am pleased to say that today we are publishing responses to the first two consultations. We will publish a response to our social worker workforce consultation later this year.

Today represents a moment to reflect on the thousands of people who generously shared their views through these consultations, including those with personal experience of the care system, children and families, dedicated professionals and practitioners, foster carers, kinship carers, senior local authority leaders, and charities. I give my personal thanks to everyone who contributed, particularly those who shared their own stories and participated in the events we hosted.

*Consultation on proposals set out in 'Stable Homes, Built on Love'*

The consultation on our strategy has reaffirmed widespread support for our reforms in Children's Social Care. Many respondents agreed with our emphasis on family help, our proposed multi-agency approach to safeguarding, and our commitment to supporting kinship carers. They also supported our 'missions' for care leavers, and our recognition of the value of social workers, including proposals to improve recruitment and retention.

We have made good progress in delivering the vision of Stable Homes, Built on Love. We recently announced the first local authority areas to take part in the 'Families First for Children' Pathfinder and Family Network Pilots. These areas will help us co-create a new model for family help, and test and learn what works. We have launched a consultation on our statutory guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', and begun to invest £9 million in a national support and training offer for kinship carers.

I am pleased to announce we have also launched a consultation on National Standards and Statutory

Guidance for Advocacy today. Alongside this, I am pleased to inform the House that we are working with the North East region to deliver a foster care recruitment and retention programme in recognition of the vital role that foster carers play in so many children's lives, and we are funding £24m to enable up to 50% of all Local Authorities in England to implement their own regional recruitment and retention programmes. Furthermore, we are also investing £10m to test new initiatives to address the longest delays in family courts and we will be working with 27 more local authorities to deliver the Staying Close programme which provides support for young people leaving children's homes, building on a further investment of £16.2m we made at the Spring Budget.

From our consultation, we also know there are areas we need to go further, and where we need to make available more detail on how we intend to deliver reform. We will work in partnership with the sector to design and deliver Regional Care Cooperatives (RCCs) so that they achieve the long-term benefits of forecasting sufficiency of children's homes placements. I am committed to doing this as we invite applications to set up RCCs. RCCs present a radical shift from the existing approach to commissioning and delivering care placements. We believe that this level of change is necessary to truly reform the system so that it works for the children and young people who need a stable, loving home.

We must be ambitious for children in care and care leavers – to help them recover, thrive and achieve their potential into adulthood. We will implement improvements to recruitment and retention of practitioners in the workforce to ensure they have the capacity to deliver the services children and families need, and work with relevant partners to ensure a greater focus on wider interdependent services, particularly mental health support.

Throughout the consultation, we heard that further investment will be key to delivering reform and giving those who work in children's social care the capacity to transform the help available for children and families. The £200m investment, announced alongside the strategy, will set the path for longer term reform and builds on investments this Government has already made. For example, the £259m to increase the number of places in open and secure children's homes, £160m to deliver our Adoption Strategy, £142m to introduce new national standards and Ofsted registration and inspection requirements for unregulated supported accommodation, and over £230m over this spending review to support young people leaving care with housing, access to education, employment, and training.

*Consultation on the Children's Social Care National framework and Dashboard*

Alongside Stable Homes, Built on Love, we consulted on the new National Framework for Children's Social Care, which describes the outcomes that local authorities should achieve so that children and young people can grow up to thrive. In addition, we have consulted on the

indicators for the new Children's Social Care Dashboard, which will be a tool for learning and development for both local and central government. This will help us improve our understanding of what works in social work practice across Children's Social Care.

During the consultation, there was broad support for the intention of the National Framework in setting consistent expectations of the outcomes that local authorities should achieve in children's social care. Respondents to the consultation felt that the four outcomes in the National Framework were broadly the right ones. However, they were clear that the National Framework could be more user friendly, give greater visibility to the role of practice supervisors and that a separate version should be created that can be used with children and young people.

We heard clearly that partnership working is crucial to effective support for families, so we will introduce a new chapter on how multi-agency working enables positive outcomes. We also heard that building trusted relationships with whole families and their networks is crucial to practice, so we will emphasise this in the guidance and strengthen the focus on how practitioners can meet the individual needs of children and young people.

During the consultation we sought views on what indicators would help understand the outcomes and enablers within the National Framework. We recognise that practice is complex and sensitive, and developing a full set of indicators, which can genuinely offer insights into how local authorities are working towards the outcomes of the National Framework, will take time – and we are reviewing what indicators to include within the Dashboard. We heard that some indicators could be misleading if viewed in isolation or without wider context and will be mindful of how we present data, and how the Dashboard is used. We remain committed to the Dashboard as a tool for learning.

Following the consultation, the National Framework will be issued as statutory guidance by the end of the year, along with plans to support local authorities to embed the guidance in practice. We will issue the National Framework alongside the revised guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children, which is also being consulted on. The Dashboard roll-out will be phased from 2024, allowing us to iterate it, as we test, learn and evaluate.

#### *Delivering reform*

We are committed to transformational, whole system change. As we deliver the commitments set out in “Stable Homes, Built on Love”, we will prioritise working with partners in the system to ensure reform leads to long-lasting positive changes for all children, young people, and their families.

### **Correction to PQ HL 4237**

[HLWS1040]

**Baroness Penn:** The Government has become aware of an inaccuracy in response to a Parliamentary Question [HL4237] setting out which of the Chancellor's Edinburgh Reforms will be delivered via primary or secondary legislation or using existing powers issued on 15 December 2022.

The response stated that all changes to the Building Societies Act 1986 would be delivered through secondary legislation only. However, I should have stated that the following changes will be made through secondary legislation: exempting deposits from SMEs with a turnover of up to £6.5 million from the funding limit calculation; allowing one director to sign the balance sheet on behalf of the board; and removing the retirement age provisions as stated in the 1986 Act for directors. Primary legislation will be required for the remainder of the changes.

# Written Answers

Thursday, 21 September 2023

## ASW: Pensions

Asked by **Lord Wigley**

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with former Allied Steel & Wire employees regarding the non-payment of those employees' industrial pensions for the past 21 years. [HL10171]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The Allied Steel and Wire pension scheme was among the earliest of the major schemes to benefit from the Financial Assistance Scheme. The former Minister for Pensions and Financial Inclusion, Guy Opperman, met with members of the Allied Steel and Wire pension scheme on 16 June 2021 to discuss the financial assistance payments they have been receiving, in lieu of their pensions.

## Asylum

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Leicester**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the National Audit Office's report on the Government's Asylum and Protection Transformation Programme. [HL9986]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The NAO report into the Asylum & Protection Transformation Programme fully recognises the significance of the transformation programme, and the efforts of the Home Office to reform the asylum and protection system.

The report acknowledges the key work the programme has done to date to tackle the challenges facing the asylum system, but notes concern around securing dispersal accommodation, and the ability of decision makers to clear the backlog. The report suggested three recommendations for the programme to increase its chances of success, all of which are accepted and embedded within our programme approach going forward.

## Asylum: Children

Asked by **Earl Russell**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many unaccompanied child asylum seekers have been placed in HMP Elmley in Kent; and how many are still held there. [HL9991]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The Home Office does not collect data on the number of age dispute cases that have arisen in adult prisons and is unable to confirm the statistics referenced in the Guardian article, which are derived from local authority responses to an FOI request. Our published data on age assessment can be accessed

here. Asylum and resettlement datasets - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Furthermore, the Home Office published data on age disputes aggregates the age disputes resolved by including the outcomes of initial age decisions by the Home Office taken at the point of first contact, comprehensive Merton compliant age assessments conducted by social workers and any subsequent legal challenge into one category.

Asked by **Earl Russell**

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that unaccompanied child asylum seekers arriving in the UK are not placed in adult prisons. [HL9992]

**Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Determining the age of a young person is a difficult task and therefore, the age assessment process for immigration purposes contains safeguards.

Where a new arrival does not have genuine documentary evidence of their age and their claimed age is doubted, an initial age decision is conducted as a first step to prevent individuals who are clearly an adult or minor from being subjected unnecessarily to a more substantive age assessment and ensure that new arrivals are routed into the correct accommodation and processes for assessing their asylum or immigration claim. The lawfulness of the initial decision on age process was endorsed by the Supreme Court in the case of R (on the application of BF (Eritrea)) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2021] UKSC 38.

Where doubt remains and an individual cannot be assessed to be significantly over 18, they will be treated as a minor for immigration purposes until further assessment of their age by a local authority.

The Home Office initial decision on age is not binding on the courts, and where the Court has doubt whether the individual is a minor or not, the courts will take a decision on the age of an individual before them based on the available evidence. This decision would then determine the type of detention estate someone is sent to if given a custodial sentence or remanded in custody. If an individual is sent to an adult prison and is later found to be a child, they can be moved to the youth custody estate if there continues to be a need to detain them.

The recent legislative reforms introduced by this government will improve the accuracy of the scientific age assessment outcomes, minimising the risk that a person will be incorrectly treated as either an adult or a minor and ensure that age-appropriate services and care are reserved for genuine minors.

## Childcare: Costs

Asked by **Lord Browne of Ladyton**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many parents of children under four years of age are in full time education or training. [HL9977]

*Asked by Lord Browne of Ladyton*

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the cost of providing 30 hours of free childcare each week to children aged between 9 months and 4 years, with one or both parents in full-time education or training. [HL9978]

**Baroness Barran:** The department does not hold the data on the number of parents of children under four years of age that are in full time education or training.

In the Spring Budget 2023, the government announced a number of transformative reforms to childcare for parents, children and the economy. By 2027/28, the government will expect to be spending in excess of £8 billion every year on free hours and early education, helping working families with their childcare costs. This represents the single biggest investment in childcare in England ever.

The announcement included the expansion of the 30 hours free childcare offer, through which eligible working parents in England will be able to access 30 hours of free childcare per week for 38 weeks per year from when their child is 9 months old to when they start school. The key objective of this measure is to support parental participation in the labour market, which is why the offer is conditional on work.

All students, who work in addition to their studies and earn the equivalent of at least 16 hours a week at national minimum/living wage, and under £100,000 adjusted net income per year, will be eligible for this offer. If they are unable to meet this threshold, they will remain eligible for the universal 15 hours of free early education, which is available to all 3- and 4-year-olds regardless of family circumstances.

The department recognises the value of parents continuing in education and provides a range of support for students in further or higher education (HE) to support them with childcare.

Eligible undergraduate students attending full-time HE courses qualify for fee loans to meet the full costs of their tuition and partially means-tested loans as a contribution towards their living costs.

Additional support is provided for full-time students with dependent children. This support includes the Childcare Grant and Parents' Learning Allowance which are based on a student's household income.

The Childcare Grant is available for parents in HE undertaking a full-time undergraduate course and is paid to help with weekly childcare costs. The amount of childcare grant payable in 2023/24 will be based on 85% of actual childcare costs, subject to a maximum grant of £188.90 per week for one child only or £323.85 per week for two or more children. The Parents' Learning Allowance is for full-time undergraduate students with one or more dependent children. For the 2023/24 academic year, students could receive up to £1,915 a year depending on household income. Students whose household incomes are £39,796 or less qualify for the full

Childcare Grant and Parents Learning Allowance applied for.

In addition to the standard student support package set out above, eligible nursing, midwifery and allied health profession students receive a non-repayable training grant of a minimum of £5,000 per academic year. Eligible students with child dependants can also access a further £2,000 per academic year.

**Cotton: Supply Chains***Asked by Lord Rooker*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Lord Benyon on 11 September (HL Deb col 666), how many clothing retailers are using element analysis systems rather than paper trails to determine where the cotton in their products is grown. [HL10075]

**Lord Benyon:** Defra does not hold information on the number of retailers that are using element analysis systems to determine where cotton in their products is grown. However, Defra funds Textiles 2030 which commits signatories to meeting targets on their water and carbon usage and working towards a Circular Economy. The government's proposals for minimising textile waste outlined in Maximising Resources Minimising Waste (MRMW) which was published in July will increase the amounts of clothing and other textiles, including ones made from cotton, that will be collected for recycling and reuse and therefore keep textiles in use for longer.

Under Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, commercial businesses who operate in the UK and have a turnover of £36m or more are required to report annually on the steps they have taken to prevent modern slavery in their operations and supply chains. The prevalence of modern slavery and complexity of global supply chains means that it is highly unlikely that any sector or company is immune from the risks of modern slavery.

The Government encourages companies to monitor their supply chains with rigor to uncover and remedy any instances of modern slavery they may find. The UK continues to support the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The UK continues to be an authority on modern slavery reporting, and we continue to share our experiences with other countries who are introducing their own transparency legislation.

**Female Genital Mutilation Protection Orders***Asked by Baroness Jenkin of Kennington*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many female genital mutilation protection orders were issued in (1) 2019, (2) 2020, (3) 2021, and (4) 2022. [HL10037]

**Lord Bellamy:** Data on the number of female genital mutilation protection orders issued for the period 2019-2022 is routinely published and can be found in the Family Court Statistics Quarterly series available on gov.uk.

The data for the period requested is as follows:

2019	2020	2021	2022
199	136	54	71

## Female Genital Mutilation: Prosecutions

Asked by *Baroness Jenkin of Kennington*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether there have been any more female genital prosecutions in the UK since the first conviction in February 2019. [HL10038]

**Lord Bellamy:** The Ministry of Justice publishes information on prosecutions and convictions for female genital mutilation (FGM) in the Outcomes by Offence data tool using the following HO code:

- 00852 - Offences under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003

Since the first conviction in February 2019, there was one prosecution in 2022, and no convictions for the offence of FGM.

The data tool can be accessed via the following link: [Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: December 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly).

## House of Lords: Costs

Asked by *Lord Wigley*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what the most recent annual cost for the House of Lords was (1) in total, and (2) per member. [HL10170]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The most recent costs of the House of Lords can be found in the Annual Report and Resources Accounts 2022-23 available on the Parliamentary website. Significant costs are incurred with running and maintaining the variety of the buildings across the World Heritage site of the Parliamentary Estate, and the associated non-cash costs (e.g. depreciation and revaluation adjustments).

For the 2022-23 financial year the costs of the House of Lords excluding estates and works expenditure and non-cash items was £104,670,000. Of this amount the costs directly relating to the Members Finance Scheme (including allowances and travel expenses) totalled £21,110,000. As at 31 March 2023 there were 776 members eligible to attend the House.

## House of Lords: Security

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what support the Houses of Lords Administration receives from His Majesty's Government regarding the issuing of parliamentary passes and the vetting of individuals when passes are requested; and what consideration he has given to a review into the activities of hostile states and the subversion of parliamentary democracy in the House of Lords. [HL10084]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** All passholders are subject to vetting, and Parliament follows the Government vetting framework and is regulated by the Government's statement of vetting policy. Parliament's vetting processes draw on data provided by the relevant national authorities. More information can be found in Parliament's [National Security Vetting booklet](#). I am constrained in what further I can share widely on Parliament's security measures.

Parliament works with the relevant national authorities to keep all potential threats to Parliament, parliamentarians and parliamentary democracy under constant review and ensure our mitigations are appropriate. This includes the threat posed by foreign state interference. Parliament is also represented at the Defending Democracy taskforce which is chaired by the Security Minister.

## Housing: Greater London

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Southwark*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support London Councils who have reported a 120 per cent rise in requests by landlords for return of properties used as temporary homes and a 41 per cent reduction in the number of properties available for private rental since 2020. [HL10001]

**Baroness Swinburne:** This Government is investing over £1 billion into the Homelessness Prevention Grant between 2022 and 2025. In London, this includes over £350 million for 2023/24 and 2024/25 which funds local authorities to offer financial support for people to find a new home or to work with landlords to prevent evictions, among other preventative measures, or to provide temporary accommodation where needed.

## Local Government Finance

Asked by *Baroness Thornhill*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many councils have an up-to-date council plan. [HL9855]

Asked by *Baroness Thornhill*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many councils do not have an up-to-date council plan; and, of these, how many have plans that are respectively more than (1) five years, (2) 10 years, and (3) 15 years out of date. [HL9856]

Asked by *Baroness Thornhill*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many councils have withdrawn their council plan within the last year. [HL9857]

**Baroness Swinburne:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that up-to-date local plans should provide a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities.

All the information requested and more, on the status of Local Plan, is published by the Planning Inspectorate can be found on the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-plan-monitoring-progress>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Local Plan monitoring progress [Local Plan\_ monitoring progress - GOV.UK.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-09-04/HL9855>

## Ministers

*Asked by Lord Grocott*

To ask His Majesty's Government what has been the average tenure of office notwithstanding machinery of government changes, during the past 10 years, of (1) the Prime Minister, (2) the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and (3) the Secretary of State for (a) Foreign Affairs, (b) Home Affairs, (c) Education, (d) Health, (e) Defence, (f) Transport, (g) Culture, Media and Sport, (h) Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, (i) Work and Pensions, (j) Northern Ireland, (k) Scotland, and (l) Wales. [HL9981]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** The Cabinet Office does not calculate the average tenure of ministerial office. However, details of ministerial office-holders are on gov.uk at <https://www.gov.uk/government/ministers>. Details of the previous holders of each ministerial post dating back to 2010 are also available by selecting each ministerial role on this webpage, then 'previous holders'.

## Palace of Westminster: Beverage Containers

*Asked by Lord Lucas*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what assessment he has made of the environmental claims printed on the paper cups now in use on the Committee Corridor; if no such assessment has been made, whether he will undertake to carry this out; and whether he will share the findings of any such assessment with the Environment and Climate Change Committee. [HL10152]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** All of the paper cups for the water coolers on the House of Lords Estate are sourced from a single supplier, WaterLogic. Some of the cups on the estate are simply labelled 'Planet', as per the manufacturer name, and others come with the supplier's branding printed on. Both versions are the same product, which is advertised and sold as being recyclable, biodegradable and compostable. WaterLogic's website confirms that the cup is plastic-free and made of paperboard which is fully recyclable, biodegradable and compostable. The cup's material is heat resistant and can be reused multiple times.

There will be an internal review of how the cups are being collected across the House of Lords Estate by our cleaning partners, to ensure that they are continuing to be disposed of in the correct manner (i.e. not as part of the general refuse). This is an issue covered by the Services Committee who will be informed of the results of the review once it has been completed and whose agendas and minutes are published online.

## Patrick Ryan

*Asked by Baroness Foster of Aghadrumsee*

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Ireland on any plans to prosecute Father Patrick Ryan following recent admissions published in the book *The Padre: The True Story of Irish Priest who armed the IRA with Gadaffi's Money*, published in August. [HL10144]

**Lord Caine:** Criminal prosecutions regarding alleged criminal conduct in Ireland during the Troubles is a matter for the Irish authorities.

The Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR) established by the UK Government's Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy & Reconciliation) Act will conduct reviews into Troubles-related deaths and serious injury, with the primary objective of providing information to families, and victims and survivors.

The ICRIR will have all the necessary powers to conduct criminal investigations as part of any review, and will be able to refer cases relating to conduct which took place in the UK for prosecution in cases where conditional immunity from prosecution is not granted and sufficient evidence exists.

The legislation includes a requirement of full disclosure by UK bodies & agencies. Effective information recovery mechanisms for many families, however, will require the cooperation of both governments. The Government hopes, therefore, that the Irish Government will, in the absence of an alternative in place for dealing with Troubles-related incidents, support the work of the ICRIR in delivering better outcomes for victims and families across the UK and Ireland.

## Pets: Travel

*Asked by Lord Weir of Ballyholme*

To ask His Majesty's Government what price will be charged to obtain a pet travel document for pets travelling from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. [HL10288]

**Lord Benyon:** The new simplified arrangements under the Windsor Framework for those travelling with their pet or assistance dog to Northern Ireland will be free of charge.



## Property: Foreign Companies

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Southwark*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to identify the beneficial ownership of 100,000 properties held by foreign shell companies on behalf of others as disclosed by the report published on 4 September by the London School of Economics and Political Science, the University of Warwick and the Centre for Public Data. [HL10002]

**The Earl of Minto:** We are aware of the report provided by LSE, University of Warwick and the Centre for Public Data. We consider its methodology to be highly misleading. It has arbitrarily used a different definition of 'beneficial owner' from that in the Economic Crime Act 2022. This means that it counts as 'non-compliant' many overseas entities who have provided the required information.

As of 7 September 2023, over 29,000 overseas entities have registered with Companies House. So far, over 1,200 warning notices have been issued to unregistered overseas entities. Warning notices are a pre-cursor to the imposition of a financial penalty. Financial penalties to the value of around £660,000 have so far been issued. The Government currently has no plans to publish a list of unregistered entities.

## Property: Prices

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to mitigate any decrease in property prices. [HL10003]

**Baroness Penn:** Recognising that this is a concerning time for mortgage borrowers, the Chancellor worked with mortgage lenders, UK Finance and the Financial Conduct Authority to agree a new Mortgage Charter to support borrowers struggling with mortgage payments. The Charter sets out the standards signatory lenders will adopt when helping their customers, including new flexibilities to help customers manage their mortgage payments over a short period. The Government has also taken measures aimed at helping people to avoid repossession.

House prices are fundamentally driven by the balance of supply and demand in the market for housing.

## Rare Diseases: Health Services

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the UK Rare Diseases Framework on international collaboration since January 2021. [HL10200]

**Lord Markham:** Whilst no assessment has been made, international collaboration is an underpinning theme of the UK Rare Diseases Framework. The Department continues to engage with the Horizon Europe Partnership

on Rare Diseases, due to begin in autumn 2024. To support United Kingdom input into the proposal for the partnership, we have worked with Newcastle University to establish an International Mirror and Action Group, bringing together UK researchers working on rare diseases. We also engage with the World Health Organisation and Rare Diseases International on development of the important Global Network for Rare Diseases initiative, which will pool resources and connect centres of excellence around the world, to improve diagnosis and care for people living with a rare disease.

## Schools: Flexible Working

Asked by *Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that (1) teachers, and (2) schools, are supported to enable them to benefit from the provisions of the Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023. [HL10007]

**Baroness Barran:** The Department is taking action to ensure that both teachers and head teachers are supported to benefit from the provisions of the Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023.

The Department has published a collection of flexible working resources on GOV.UK, including non-statutory guidance and case studies. This collection will undergo development and the Department will ensure that resources are updated to provide practical support when the provisions of the Act take effect.

The Department is also funding support for teachers and head teachers. A culture change programme is being delivered, focusing on embedding flexible working in schools and multi-academy trusts. This includes the delivery of supportive webinars targeting both teachers and head teachers. The webinars include content focused on preparing for the legislative changes and on how to make a statutory request for flexible working. As part of this programme, the Department is also funding flexible working ambassador schools and multi-academy trusts to provide bespoke peer support to leaders in education. In June, seven new ambassadors were appointed and are currently in the process of recruiting more, building on the work of a previous cohort of ambassador schools.

The Department continues to work closely with the sector to identify and share examples of best practice and to determine how we can best target future support.

## Sleeping Rough

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of (1) their rough sleeping strategy, End Rough Sleeping for Good, and (2) their Rough Sleeping Initiative one year after its launch. [HL9980]

**Baroness Swinburne:** In September 2022, we published our new cross-government strategy 'Ending

Rough Sleeping for Good', setting out how we are investing £2 billion over three years to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping. As per our commitment in the rough sleeping strategy, our external Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel, made up of experts across the sector, are supporting government to assess our progress and how we are achieving the commitments in the strategy and to identify any gaps.

The published, independently peer reviewed Rough Sleeping Initiative impact evaluation, found that the Rough Sleeping Initiative produced a net reduction of 32% in rough sleeping in 2018 compared to areas with no Rough Sleeping Initiative funding. We have extended our flagship Rough Sleeping Initiative to 2025, with over £530 million funding so that local areas can provide the tailored support needed to end rough sleeping. This includes an additional investment of £34.6 million announced in September 2023, to increase funding of rough sleeping services in local areas with the greatest need and to maximise impact.

## Social Rented Housing

Asked by *Lord Whitty*

To ask His Majesty's Government what proportion of new homes completed in 2022 were for social housing; what is the figure net of social housing demolitions and sales; and what proportion of the net social housing was for social rent. [HL10011]

**Baroness Swinburne:** The most recent figures available are for the financial year 2021-22. In that year, there were 210,070 new build homes completed. Of these, 56,674 were affordable housing, including 6,635 for social rent. This means that 27% of all new build homes was affordable housing. A further 2,682 new affordable homes, including 1,009 for social rent, were delivered through acquisitions of existing stock or had no information available as to whether they were acquisitions or new build.

These data are available in Live Tables 120 and 1000 via the links below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-net-supply-of-housing>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply>

The department has released experimental statistics which estimate a net measure of the supply of affordable housing for rent by summarising the in and outflows to this sector of the housing stock in England. These statistics are still in development and so have a wider degree of uncertainty than more established figures. For 2021-22, the figures show that local authority affordable housing stock for rent decreased by nearly 7,200 while the rental stock owned by private registered providers increased by just over 18,900, an estimated net increase of 11,700 affordable homes for rent for these providers combined. Not all providers of affordable housing are covered, as non-registered providers and units where the

provider is unknown are not included. This was published alongside the "Social housing sales and demolitions 2021-22" statistical release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/social-housing-sales-and-demolitions-2021-22-england/social-housing-sales-and-demolitions-2021-22#net-supply-of-affordable-housing-for-rent>

The currently available data do not allow for a breakdown by tenure, including for social rent. Work has been ongoing with local authorities and the Regulator of Social Housing (which collects data from private registered providers) to collect all data necessary to provide a more comprehensive estimate, including by tenure. We hope to present this in future statistical publications.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Live table on affordable housing supply [Live tables on affordable housing supply - GOV.UK.pdf]

Live table on net supply of housing [Live tables on housing supply\_ net additional dwellings - GOV.UK.pdf]

Social housing sales and demolitions [Social housing sales and demolitions 2021-22 - GOV.UK.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2023-09-07/HL10011>

## Teachers: Labour Turnover and Recruitment

Asked by *Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask His Majesty's Government what (1) support, and (2) guidance, they are offering to schools to enable them to maximise teacher retention. [HL10006]

**Baroness Barran:** The Department's reforms are aimed not only at increasing teacher recruitment in key subjects and areas, through an attractive pay offer and financial incentives such as bursaries, but also at ensuring teachers stay and succeed in the profession.

There are now over 468,000 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers in state funded schools in England, which is an increase of 27,000 (6%) since 2010. This makes it the highest FTE of teachers since the School Workforce Census began in 2010.

The Department accepted in full the School Teachers' Review Body's recommendations for the 2023/24 pay award for teachers and head teachers, resulting in a pay award of 6.5%. This is the highest for teachers in over thirty years.

To support retention in the first few years of teaching, the Department has rolled out the Early Career Framework nationally, providing the foundations for a successful career in teaching, with over £130 million a year in funding. Beyond these first few years, the Department's priority is to help all teachers and head teachers to continuously develop their expertise

throughout their careers so every child in every classroom in every school has the best start in life.

The Department has therefore launched a new and updated suite of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) for teachers and head teachers at all levels, from those who want to develop expertise in high quality teaching practice to those leading multiple schools across trusts. Since autumn 2021, eligible teachers and head teachers have been able to access scholarships to undertake fully funded NPQs.

These measures will create a golden thread running from Initial Teacher Training through to school leadership and rooting teacher and head teacher development in the best available evidence.

The Department has also published a range of resources to help address teacher workload and wellbeing, and therefore support retention, including the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter, which schools are being encouraged to sign up to as a shared commitment to promote staff wellbeing. Developed in partnership with the education sector and mental health experts, the Charter can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-staff-wellbeing-charter>.

Additionally, a workload reduction toolkit has been developed for schools alongside head teachers and has been published here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-workload-reduction-toolkit>. On 13 July 2023, the Department also announced that it will convene a Workload Reduction Taskforce to explore how it can go further to support trusts and head

teachers to minimise workload for teachers and head teachers by building on previous successes.

The Department is also taking action to promote flexible working in schools. The Department has published supportive resources on GOV.UK, including non-statutory guidance and case studies: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flexible-working-resources-for-teachers-and-schools#guidance-for-flexible-working>.

## Water Tariff Scheme

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to introduce a universal social tariff for water to keep water bills affordable for all customers irrespective of income. [HL10386]

**Lord Benyon:** As the Secretary of State stated during the House of Lords inquiry into the work of Ofwat, Defra is minded not to introduce a single social tariff scheme due to the complexities involved with a national scheme, as well as due to legislative timetables, which would mean we would not be able to introduce a single social tariff to align with the start of the next price review – 1 April 2025.

However, I am very mindful that consumers are concerned about their bills. My officials continue to explore options to improve existing social tariff arrangements, focussing on improving consistency and fairness across existing regional social tariff schemes - a sensible and pragmatic approach given time constraints.

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