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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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

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Lord Collins of Highbury	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Whip
Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on Trent	Spokesperson for NI Office, Scotland Office and Wales Office, Whip
Baroness Blake of Leeds	Whip
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Lord Coaker	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Cryer	Whip
Baroness Gustafsson	Minister of State, Department for Business and Trade and HM Treasury
Lord Hanson of Flint	Minister of State, Home Office
Baroness Hayman of Ullock	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill	Minister of State, Department for Transport
Lord Hermer	Attorney-General
Lord Hunt of Kings Heath	Minister of State, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
Baroness Jones of Whitchurch	Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department for Business and Trade and Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, and Whip
Lord Kennedy of Southwark	Chief Whip
Lord Khan of Burnley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Lord Leong	Whip
Lord Livermore	Financial Secretary, HM Treasury
Baroness Merron	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice, Whip
Baroness Sherlock	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Baroness Smith of Cluny	Advocate-General for Scotland
Baroness Smith of Malvern	Minister of State, Department for Education
Baroness Taylor of Stevenage	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Whip
Lord Timpson	Minister of State, Ministry of Justice
Baroness Twycross	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture Media and Sport, Spokesperson, Cabinet Office, Whip
Lord Vallance of Balham	Minister of State, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
Baroness Wheeler	Deputy Chief Whip

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Written Statements

Thursday, 16 January 2025

Gas Shipper Obligation Consultation

[HLWS364]

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: My hon. Friend the Minister for Industry (Sarah Jones MP) made the following Statement today:

Today the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero is publishing a consultation on the design of a Gas Shipper Obligation. The Government intends for the Gas Shipper Obligation to be the long-term funding mechanism for hydrogen production business model payments to initial hydrogen production projects and related costs. Decisions on funding for future hydrogen production business model projects will consider consumer affordability, value for money and fairness.

We are working to rapidly increase the rollout of homegrown, clean energy. Publication of this consultation demonstrates this government's commitment to developing a thriving and world-leading UK hydrogen sector. Low carbon hydrogen will play an important role in supporting the delivery of our Clean Energy Superpower and Growth missions, as a key enabler of a low carbon and renewables-based energy system. It can make our energy system more flexible, resilient, and independent, and could lead to billions of pounds of savings by 2050. The Government is committed to leaving no community behind by investing in a new era for the clean energy industry and supporting good, skilled jobs as the sector matures. Low carbon hydrogen provides opportunities for UK companies and workers, reigniting our industrial heartlands by investing in the industries of the future.

I will deposit a copy of "Funding mechanism for the Hydrogen Production Business Model" in the Libraries of the House.

Written Answers

Thursday, 16 January 2025

Access to Work Programme: Equipment

Asked by **Lord Godson**

To ask His Majesty's Government what were the most common specialist aids and equipment paid for by Access to Work in the last five financial years. [HL3809]

Baroness Sherlock: Access to Work provides funding towards the cost of a range of equipment, these should be items that are beyond what would normally be required under an employer's responsibility to provide reasonable adjustments. Information on specific items of Special Aids and Equipment (SAE) for which grants were approved is not readily available. This is stored as descriptive, free-text information and would require manual examination of individual applications to analyse and therefore falls outside of the costs limit. Expenditure on SAE was £21m in 2023/24, this was the third highest of all Access to Work elements and an 82% increase in real terms compared to the previous financial year.

Access to Work Programme: Staff

Asked by **Lord Godson**

To ask His Majesty's Government what was the spending on support workers through Access to Work in each of the last five financial years. [HL3810]

Baroness Sherlock: The annual Access to Work Official Statistics show expenditure on the Support Worker element within each financial year from 2007/08 to 2023/24. The latest publication can be found here: [Access to Work statistics: April 2007 to March 2024 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/access-to-work-statistics-april-2007-to-march-2024)

The below table shows expenditure, in real terms (2023/24 prices), on the Support Worker element type from 2019/20 to 2023/24. These figures can be found in Table 12a of the Access to Work Official Statistics:

Financial year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Expenditure (£m) in real terms (2023/24 prices)	104	88	121	136	178

When interpreting results, particularly comparing time periods, please be aware of the potential effect of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic between 2020/21 and 2022/23.

Nominal expenditure for the Support Worker element type can be located in Table 12 of the Access to Work Official Statistics.

Avian Influenza

Asked by **Lord Randall of Uxbridge**

To ask His Majesty's Government, following reports of cases of avian flu in pheasants, what assessment they have made of the risks that 'catching up' pheasants this shooting season may pose to people, captive birds, and wild birds; and what plans they have, if any, to publish guidance and a risk assessment on this activity. [HL3897]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) has published on GOV.UK their assessment of the [risk of catching up gamebirds and the transmission of highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1](#). The need to update this risk assessment in response to new scientific evidence, veterinary advice or significant changes in the epidemiological situation is kept under review as part of the Government's work to monitor and manage the risks of avian influenza.

Defra has also published guidance on GOV.UK specifically covering the avian influenza rules and best practice in disease prevention for gamebirds. Defra, together with APHA and Natural England, work closely with industry groups to ensure this vital information is distributed and utilised by the gamebird sector.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

risk assessment 2022 [gamebirds catching up risk assessment 2022.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2025-01-08/HL3897>

Avian Influenza: Disease Control

Asked by **Lord Randall of Uxbridge**

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they have taken in the UK, or working with international partners, to address animal management practices known to be higher risk for the emergence or transmission of avian flu. [HL3900]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: Stringent biosecurity is key to protecting the health and welfare of poultry and other captive birds and is critical to preventing disease spread during an avian influenza outbreak. Defra has published guidance and together with the Animal and Plant Health Agency provides support to bird keepers on how to implement strong biosecurity measures. Government will continue to work closely with industry to ensure good flock management and husbandry practices are implemented on all farms regardless of their size or type. The need to mandate enhanced biosecurity or other controls on bird keepers are kept under regular review as part of the government's work to monitor and manage the risks of avian influenza.

At an international level, collaboration and knowledge exchange with international partners takes place regularly

through the networks of international reference laboratories, the World Organisation for Animal Health, the Quadripartite Organisations and allied projects, including through the joint World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Scientific Network on animal influenza OFFLU.

Asked by Lord Randall of Uxbridge

To ask His Majesty's Government why a regional avian influenza prevention zone for the East Riding of Yorkshire, the City of Kingston upon Hull, and Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk was not put in place before 23 December 2024. [HL3901]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: The prevention measures mandated through an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) are introduced in a phased and escalating manner proportionate to the escalating risk to an area. An AIPZ mandating enhanced biosecurity was declared across the East Riding of Yorkshire, the City of Kingston upon Hull, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk on the 13 November 2024 in response to cases in the area and an increase in both the wild bird and poultry avian influenza risk levels. The AIPZ was extended to include mandatory housing from the 23 December 2024 following a further increase in both the wild bird and poultry risk levels and an escalating number of cases in the area indicating further controls were required to stop the spread of disease. Decisions on when to introduce or vary controls are based on risk assessments of the latest scientific and ornithological evidence and veterinary advice.

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to co-ordinate the response to the threat of H5N1 and H5N5 transmission to companion animals, cattle, domestic poultry, wild birds and humans. [HL3919]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: Defra and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) have stood up their well-established outbreak structures to control and eradicate disease, restore normal trade, and assist local communities' recovery as set out in the [Contingency plan for exotic notifiable diseases of animals in England, Notifiable Avian Disease Control Strategy for Great Britain](#) and the [Mitigation Strategy for Avian Influenza in Wild Birds in England and Wales](#). This includes working closely to share information and manage incidents with the Department for Health and Social Care, the UK Health Security Agency and the Food Standards Agency.

In addition, international collaboration and knowledge exchange on the threat of avian influenza from across Government is coordinated by Defra and facilitated through discussions between the UK Chief Veterinary Officer and representatives from Defra policy teams and APHA's avian influenza national and international reference laboratories, and their global counterparts through the World Organisation for Animal Health, the Quadripartite Organisations and allied projects. Including

through the the joint World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Scientific Network on animal influenza OFFLU.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Avian disease strategy [avian-disease-control-strategy.pdf]

Contingency Plan
[Contingency_Plan_for_Exotic_Notifiable_Diseases.pdf]

Mitigation Strategy for Avian influenza
[Mitigation_Strategy_for_Avian_Influenza_in_Wild_Birds.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2025-01-09/HL3919>

Asked by Lord Randall of Uxbridge

To ask His Majesty's Government, following the report of an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in released pheasants in Worcestershire resulting in mass mortality, what estimate they have made of the number of pheasants and other birds killed; what assessment they have made of the impact of released pheasants on the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza; and what plans they have, if any, to increase disease surveillance of game birds. [HL3942]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) carries out year-round surveillance for highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in dead wild birds, including wild gamebirds, in Great Britain and publishes results on GOV.UK. These can be explored through APHA's interactive map and dashboard available at GOV.UK

To ensure our approach to disease control reflects any risk these activities pose, APHA has assessed the [impact gamebird releases have on the likelihood of transmission of avian influenza to wild birds, and between wild birds and kept birds](#). The need to update this risk assessment in response to new scientific evidence or veterinary advice or significant changes in the epidemiological situation is kept under review as part of the government's work to monitor and manage the risks of avian influenza.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

released gamebird impact assessment [released gamebirds impact assessment.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2025-01-09/HL3942>

Bangladesh: Rohingya

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government what processes and systems they have in place to ensure that aid from the United Kingdom reaches (1) the Christian Rohingya minority, and (2) the majority Muslim Rohingya, in refugees camps in Bangladesh. [HL3708]

Baroness Chapman of Darlington: The UK is a leading donor to the Rohingya response. We have provided £406 million to support the Rohingya and host communities since 2017, including food provision, clean water, healthcare and protection services. We work closely with UN agencies and the Interim Government of Bangladesh to support the Rohingya and provide basic services. The UK ensures that aid reaches the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, including the Christian Rohingya minority, by working with international partners like the UN Refugees Agency, the International Organisation of Migration and the World Food Programme.

Cancer: Health Services

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, together with the NHS, to improve information sharing between healthcare services to support higher quality and patient-centred cancer care. [HL3904]

Baroness Merron: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has announced the intention for there to be a single patient record, so professionals have the data they need when treating patients and are able to make better informed decisions and deliver more preventative health and care. We are in the early stages of engaging with the public and stakeholders to understand their views about the use of health and care data. We will use the findings to form the basis of our future plans.

Furthermore, NHS England is investing £1.9 billion to support hospital trusts to either adopt a new or improve their existing systems, to ensure every hospital in England can benefit from digital transformation, to achieve the vision of a digitised National Health Service by March 2026.

The aim of the Frontline Digitisation programme is for all secondary care trusts to have an electronic patient record system (EPR) that meets our standards. The programme is forecasting to achieve 97% EPR coverage by the programme end in March 2026, with the remaining 3% of trusts having advanced in their plans for an EPR.

Disability Living Allowance: Personal Independence Payment

Asked by **Lord Godson**

To ask His Majesty's Government what proportion of people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance transitioned to Personal Independence Payment over the last five financial years. [HL3811]

Baroness Sherlock: The table below shows the proportions of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) caseload that have undergone a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) reassessment in each of the last five financial years (FY).

FY	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Percentage of caseload					
Children	6.2	7.3	8.1	9.5	8.4
Adults	22.1	7.4	2.7	2.8	2.6
Total	16.7	7.4	5.1	6.1	5.7

Points to note:

- Figures are for England and Wales only.
- Figures are split for children and adults. Adults include those of working age and those over state pension age.
- Reassessment statistics count individual people who have registered PIP claims that are classified as DLA reassessments, where there is a matching DLA record.
- Children are usually invited to claim PIP on or shortly after their 16th birthday. If they choose to apply for PIP this will be considered a reassessment.

Dredging

Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering**

To ask His Majesty's Government how many miles of maintenance and dredging of minor watercourses will be achieved this year. [HL3820]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: The Environment Agency plan to carry out dredging on 147 miles (236km) of watercourses for which they are responsible in 2024/25. Figures can be subject to change based on in-year inspections and the potential to have a requirement to redistribute resources to incident response and recovery.

Dredging: Finance

Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering**

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they will consider a single budget for the maintenance and dredging of watercourses, rather than two separate ones as at present for capital and operational maintenance. [HL3821]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: Currently, dredging is part of the Environment Agency's routine maintenance programme on its watercourses.

To ensure we protect the country from the devastating impacts of flooding, we will invest £2.4 billion in 2024/25 and 2025/26 to improve flood resilience, by maintaining, repairing and building flood defences. Longer term funding decisions will be made at the next Spending Review.

Driving under Influence: Deaths

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

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people were killed in collisions where the driver was under the

influence of drugs in (1) 2019, (2) 2020, (3) 2021, (4) 2022, (5) 2023, and (6) 2024. [HL3765]

Lord Henty of Richmond Hill: Data on road injury collisions are reported by police using the STATS19 system. Police officers who attend the scene can assign factors to a driver if they believe that they may have contributed to the collision occurring.

The number of fatalities from collisions where the road safety factor “affected by drugs” was assigned to the driver of a motor vehicle for the years 2019 to 2023 are shown in the table below.

Data for 2024 will be published in September 2025.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Fatalities</i>
2019	90
2020	92
2021	78
2022	96
2023	144

Electric Scooters: Hire Services

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the results of the pilot schemes for renting e-scooters. [HL3822]

Lord Henty of Richmond Hill: The Department monitors how the e-scooter trials are running on a continuing basis to ensure they are operating safely and developing the evidence base that will inform our future decisions on e-scooters.

A second national evaluation of e-scooter trials will start early this year. This will look to understand what journeys are being replaced by e-scooter journeys and how they integrate with public transport; their safety for users and for others; and examine accessibility impacts of e-scooters. It will also explore changing travel patterns since the coronavirus pandemic, when the trials were initially set up, and as e-scooters have become more embedded in public life.

Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

Asked by Lord Rogan

To ask His Majesty's Government how many electric vehicle public charging devices have been installed in each of the past five years; and how many they expect to be installed in each of the next five years in order to meet their target of 300,000 charge points by 2030. [HL3905]

Lord Henty of Richmond Hill: The number of electric vehicle public charging devices installed in each of the past five years is not available. However, the Department does hold data on the total size of the public network.

While the number of devices over time is not equivalent to the number of installations, since some devices will be decommissioned in any given year, it can be used to show growth of the charging network and this is given in the table below.

There were 73,334 public charging devices in the UK on 1st Jan 2025; this was 19,657 higher than 1st Jan 2024.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Public charging device network count on this date</i>	<i>Year-on-year change to public charging device network count</i>
1 st January 2020	16,505	
1 st January 2021	20,775	4,270
1 st January 2022	28,375	7,600
1 st January 2023	37,055	8,680
1 st January 2024	53,677	16,622
1 st January 2025	73,334	19,657

The Department for Transport does not hold a specific forecast of the number of charging devices to be installed in each year. But based on the observed growth rate we are confident that the UK is on track to meeting a projected demand of at least 300,000 devices in 2030, as echoed by the recently published National Audit Office (NAO) report. This will be supported by government investment, including the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund which is estimated to deliver at least 100,000 chargepoints.

Electric Vehicles: Sales

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that firms are not managing to reach the 22-per-cent electric vehicle sales target; and what assessment they have made of whether the UK has the appropriate (1) legislation, and (2) infrastructure, in place to support the sales of electric vehicles. [HL3848]

Lord Henty of Richmond Hill: Due to the CO₂ conversion flexibility included in the ZEV Mandate legislation, which allows a manufacturer to sell fewer ZEVs in exchange for reducing their CO₂ emissions of their non-ZEVs, the Government believes that the car market as a whole has complied with the 22% target. In December the Government launched the consultation *Phasing out sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 and supporting the ZEV transition* which seeks views from the public and industry on how to support vehicle manufacturers to meet the targets going forward.

Financial Services: Disadvantaged

Asked by Lord Kamall

To ask His Majesty's Government what engagement is taking place between the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and the Treasury with

regard to the newly formed Financial Inclusion Committee and the future Financial Inclusion Strategy, given the commitment within the Committee's Terms of Reference to look at the link between digital and financial inclusion. [HL3818]

Lord Livermore: On 5 December, Government announced it will develop a Financial Inclusion Strategy, alongside a supporting Committee, to tackle the problem of financial exclusion. Digital exclusion can be a significant barrier in how consumers are able to access and use financial services products. This is why digital inclusion will be a key area of focus within the Financial Inclusion Strategy and will be considered by the digital inclusion and access to banking sub-committee.

HM Treasury is working closely with the Department of Science, Innovation, and Technology (DSIT), the lead department for digital inclusion, to ensure that this work complements wider initiatives to address the barriers which can affect consumers, such as digital skills, access to devices and connectivity, and a lack of support and confidence.

Food: Prices

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the likelihood that food prices will rise, and of the effect this will have on consumers, particularly those impacted by the increased cost of living. [HL3952]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: This Government cares deeply about the cost of living and food security; therefore, it closely monitors food prices and the factors impacting them. After a period of high inflation experienced during 2022 and 2023, year-on-year food price inflation (based on ONS CPI data) has been at or below 2% since May 2024. In 2025 food price inflation is expected to remain positive, with current industry forecasts indicating an average rate of 3.4% for 2025.

Defra regularly engages with supermarkets and producers about a number of issues, including to explore the range of measures they can take to ensure the availability of affordable food. For example, by maintaining value ranges, price matching and price freezing measures. However, it is not for HM Government to set retail food prices nor to comment on day-to-day commercial decisions by companies. It is for each individual food retailer to take the commercial decision around which products they sell in their stores. This government is committed to ensuring that everyone in Great Britain and Northern Ireland can access nutritious and fairly priced food.

To further support struggling families, £1 billion, including Barnett impact, will be invested to extend the Household Support Fund in England by a full year until 31 March 2026, on top of the six months already announced, and to maintain Discretionary Housing Payments in England and Wales.

To support people with the cost of living we are tripling investment in breakfast clubs to over £30 million, introducing a Fair Repayment Rate for deductions from Universal Credit, and increasing the National Living Wage, boosting the pay of 3 million workers.

Gender Dysphoria: Hormone Treatments

Asked by Lord Cashman

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they plan to publish in full the evidence behind their decision of 11 December 2024 to ban puberty blockers for patients over the age of 18 for the treatment of gender incongruence or gender dysphoria under the care of private or non-United Kingdom prescribers. [HL3803]

Baroness Merron: On 1 January 2025, indefinite restrictions preventing new patients aged under 18 years old from being supplied with puberty blockers for the purposes of gender incongruence and/or gender dysphoria, under the care of private or non-United Kingdom prescribers, took effect.

The Government is committed to transparency and accountability in its decision-making and understands people will wish to understand how this decision was reached. Further to my response on 7 January 2025 to the Noble Lord's question, HL3426 tabled on 12 December 2024, I can confirm that the Government will publish shortly the full independent report by the Commission on Human Medicines on the indefinite banning order of puberty blockers for gender dysphoria and/or incongruence. I will gladly write to the Noble Lord when this is published.

General Practitioners: Recruitment

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask His Majesty's Government what recent steps they have taken to increase the number of GPs nationwide. [HL3839]

Baroness Merron: We have committed to training more general practitioners (GPs) across the country and to recruiting over 1,000 newly qualified GPs through an £82 million boost to the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) over 2024/25. The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has confirmed that recently qualified GPs who are employed via the ARRS will continue to be supported through the scheme in 2025/26. We have announced a proposed £889 million uplift to the GP contract for 2025/26, with a rising share of total National Health Service resources going to general practice and we are currently consulting the profession on key proposals to improve GP recruitment.

General Practitioners: Standards

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask His Majesty's Government what recent steps they have taken to improve patient access to face-to-face GP appointments. [HL3840]

Baroness Merron: We are committed to improving the capacity within general practice and improving access to face-to-face appointments. We have pledged to guarantee a face-to-face appointment for all those who want one and bring back the family doctor for those who would benefit from seeing the same clinician regularly.

In October 2024, we provided an £82 million boost to the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme, enabling the recruitment of 1,000 newly qualified general practitioners (GPs) across England, increasing the number of appointments delivered in general practice, benefitting thousands of patients that are struggling to receive the care they desperately need. Additionally, we have announced a proposed £889 million uplift to the GP contract for 2025/26, with a rising share of total National Health Service resources going to general practice. We are currently consulting the profession on key proposals to improve access to general practice, continuity of care and GP recruitment.

Hospices: Children

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Wales about safeguarding the funding of children's hospices that provide services to children on both sides of the England–Wales border. [HL3778]

Baroness Merron: There have not been any discussions between the Department and the Welsh Government about safeguarding the funding of children's hospices.

The Department works collaboratively with the Devolved Governments to drive forward our objective of supporting people to lead more independent, healthier lives for longer. While health is predominantly devolved, the Department holds some reserved functions and working together across the United Kingdom on health and social care is ingrained in the values of our National Health Service and social care sector.

Children and young people's hospices in England will receive £26 million in revenue funding for 2025/26, through what until recently was known as the Children's Hospice Grant. We are also supporting both the children and adult hospice sector with a £100 million capital funding boost to ensure they have the best physical environment for care. We will set out the details of the funding allocation and dissemination for both funding streams in the coming weeks.

London Underground: Disability

Asked by Lord Weir of Ballyholme

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Transport for London on improving disability access across the London Underground. [HL3960]

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill: Disabled people should be able to travel easily, confidently and with dignity. Ministers and officials have regular conversations with Transport for London on a variety of issues including accessibility of their network. Transport in London is devolved to the Mayor and TfL is responsible for managing the London Underground.

Mission Boards

Asked by Baroness Finn

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they intend to make it a policy to publish the agendas and minutes from their mission boards. [HL3536]

Baroness Twycross: It is a long-established precedent that information about discussions that have taken place in Cabinet and its committees — including mission boards — is not usually shared publicly.

Asked by Baroness Finn

To ask His Majesty's Government whether mission board decisions have the same authority as Cabinet decisions. [HL3537]

Baroness Twycross: Decisions taken by Mission Boards have the same authority as decisions taken by the Cabinet or committees of the Cabinet.

Motorcycles: Diesel and Petrol

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to ban all petrol and diesel motorcycles. [HL3851]

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill: The Government has no plans to ban all petrol and diesel motorcycles.

MV Ruby: Ammonium Nitrate

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they intend to place in the Library of the House a copy of the confidential document referred to in the Daily Telegraph on 18 December 2024, about the MV Ruby and its cargo of ammonium nitrate, as well as all correspondence with the Health and Safety Executive on this subject and any modelling of the dispersal of the chemical in sea water and its effect on marine life. [HL3793]

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill: The MV Ruby has completed the successful discharge of her cargo and is currently undergoing repair in dry dock. The document referenced by the noble Lord was an internal briefing note and thus not prepared for publication, and we do not intend to provide any further documentation.

Myanmar: International Criminal Court

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking as penholder of the UN Security Council on Myanmar to call for the referral of the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court Prosecutor. [HL3908]

Baroness Chapman of Darlington: The UK fully supports the International Criminal Court (ICC); however, our assessment remains that there is insufficient support amongst Security Council members for an ICC referral on the situation in Myanmar. It will not advance the cause of accountability in Myanmar for an ICC referral to fail to win Security Council support or to be vetoed; such a result would only give comfort to the Myanmar Armed Forces and reduce the pressure they currently face. In the event that an arrest warrant is issued, the UK will act in accordance with its international obligations.

NHS: Audit

Asked by *Lord Agnew of Oulton*

To ask His Majesty's Government what proportion of NHS providers failed to complete audited financial results in line with the Department of Health and Social Care's reporting timetable in the past financial year. [HL3971]

Baroness Merron: The Department set a deadline of 28 June 2024 for the completion of National Health Service provider audits for the year that ended on 31 March 2024. 38 of the 211 NHS providers, representing 18%, did not meet the deadline.

Non-surgical Cosmetic Procedures: Licensing

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Merron on 7 November 2024 (HL1998), what steps they intend to take to ensure the safety of the non-surgical cosmetics sector; and when they will set out their position on this subject. [HL3948]

Baroness Merron: The Government is committed to taking action to address concerns about the safety of the cosmetics sector, and is exploring options for further regulation in this area. We will set out the details of our approach in due course.

Nursing Associates: Finance

Asked by *Lord Willis of Knaresborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase financial support for nursing associates who wish to become registered nurses. [HL3968]

Baroness Merron: We have a complete apprentice pathway for nursing, from entry level to postgraduate advanced clinical practice. Nursing associates can go on to become registered nurses through a degree apprenticeship, allowing people to earn a salary while gaining a nursing qualification.

Nursing associates can also become registered nurses by completing a shortened undergraduate nursing degree. For those taking this route, the NHS Learning Support Fund provides eligible students with a non-repayable training grant of a minimum of £5,000 per academic year. The Government keeps the funding arrangements for all healthcare students under close review. The Government attempts to strike a balance between ensuring students are financially supported during their studies and delivering maximum value for money for the taxpayer.

Training and retaining talented National Health Service staff is absolutely central to our mission of rebuilding a health service that is fit for the future. Our 10-Year Health Plan to reform the NHS will establish how to train and provide the staff the NHS needs, including nurses, to care for patients across our communities. This summer we will also publish a refreshed Long Term Workforce Plan to deliver the transformed health service we will build over the next decade.

Nursing Associates: Training

Asked by *Lord Willis of Knaresborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many student nursing associates completed their training for adult social care in each year from 2018 to 2023. [HL3967]

Baroness Merron: The Department does not hold the information requested. As the independent regulator of nurses and midwives in the United Kingdom, and nursing associates in England, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is responsible for nurse registration. The NMC publishes the number of UK trained nursing associates joining its register for the first time in England, which will be a close proxy for the number completing training. Skills for Care data shows that in 2023/24, there were 700 nursing associates in adult social care, a decrease of 50 from 2022/23.

The following table shows the number of UK trained nursing associates joining the NMC register in England for the first time, each financial year from 2018/19 to 2023/24:

Year	Number of UK trained nursing associates joining the NMC register for the first time
2018/19	485
2019/20	1,182
2020/21	2,708
2021/22	2,743
2022/23	3,166

2023/24	3,343
<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of UK trained nursing associates joining the NMC register for the first time</i>
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2019/20	1,182
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2021/22	2,743
2022/23	3,166
2023/24	3,343

Source: Nursing and Midwifery Council, March 2024 Annual Data Report

Personal Independence Payment: Employment

Asked by Lord Godson

To ask His Majesty's Government what data they have on the employment rate of individuals (1) before they claim Personal Independence Payment, and (2) in the 12 months after their claim is approved. [HL3808]

Baroness Sherlock: Of all individuals who subsequently went on to apply for Personal Independence Payment (PIP), 37% were in employment in the month their PIP case was cleared.

Of those who were awarded PIP, 23% were still in employment after 12 months.

Notes:

- Figures are based on the 2021-22 financial year cohort where the claims have been cleared – the latest financial year of data available for the analysis.
- Data is for England and Wales only.
- Data is for New Claims only.
- Employment includes both employed and self-employed individuals.
- The 2022-23 tax records for self-employment were not available when the analysis was conducted, therefore the 2021-22 self-employment data was used as a proxy.

Pharmacy: Contracts

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask His Majesty's Government whether the 2024–25 formal negotiations for the community pharmacy contractual framework have been recommenced since the last general election; and, if not, why is this the case and when might they recommence. [HL3909]

Baroness Merron: We are committed to working with the sector to achieve a service that is fit for the future.

As identified by Lord Darzi's review, primary care is under pressure and in crisis, but there are also demands in

other parts of the National Health Service. This has made allocation of available funding very challenging.

As we committed to parliament at the end of last year, we will be resuming our consultation with Community Pharmacy England regarding the funding arrangements for community pharmacy very shortly.

Plastic Surgery: Medical Treatments Abroad

Asked by Lord Beamish

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the cost to the NHS of treatment of individuals returning from overseas having undergone cosmetic surgery. [HL3790]

Baroness Merron: The Department does not have data on the overall costs to the National Health Service for treating complications from cosmetic procedures conducted overseas. We are exploring ways to improve our understanding of the scale of the cost to the NHS.

Asked by Lord Beamish

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to regulate the sale and marketing of overseas cosmetic surgery procedures in the UK. [HL3791]

Baroness Merron: The Department is working closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office and with the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) to tackle inappropriate advertising of overseas cosmetic surgeries in the United Kingdom. The ASA is taking enforcement activity against any company which contravenes UK advertising standards.

Plastic Surgery: Regulation

Asked by Lord Beamish

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce the licensing of non-surgical cosmetic procedures in England. [HL3789]

Asked by Lord Beamish

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to regulate the cosmetic surgery industry. [HL3792]

Baroness Merron: The Government is committed to taking action to address concerns about the safety of the cosmetics sector and is exploring options for further regulation in this area. We will set out the details of our approach in due course.

Prostate Cancer

Asked by Lord Watson of Wyre Forest

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the findings in the National Prostate Cancer Audit's State of the Nation Report, published in January, particularly regarding the disparities in health

outcomes for black men diagnosed with prostate cancer. [HL4015]

Baroness Merron: The Department has not made a specific assessment of the findings in the National Prostate Cancer Audit's State of the Nation Report. However, the Government understands more needs to be done to improve outcomes for all people with prostate cancer, including for black men.

To address disparities and find ways to better detect prostate cancer, we have invested £16 million in the TRANSFORM trial, aimed at helping to find a way of catching prostate cancer in men, even if they are not displaying any symptoms. This research will ensure that one in ten participants are black men.

Following publication of the 10-Year Health Plan, we will publish a new National Cancer Plan, which will include further details on how we will improve outcomes for all tumour types, including prostate cancer. We are now in discussions about what form that plan should take, and what its relationship to the 10-Year Health Plan and the Government's wider Health Mission should be. We will provide updates on this in due course.

Railway Network

Asked by Lord Grocott

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill on 4 December 2024 (HL2747), which Restoring Your Railway projects are (1) already in delivery, and (2) not yet in delivery. [HL3812]

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill: Following the Chancellor's announcement in July 2024, the Restoring Your Railway (RYR) programme has been brought to a close. Three RYR-originated projects were already in the delivery phase, which we are continuing funding for: Northumberland Line, Thorpe Park Station, White Rose Station. This is in addition to the three projects already delivered under this programme: Dartmoor Line, Thanet Parkway Station, Marsh Barton Station.

All other RYR projects were not yet in delivery and are in scope of the Chancellor's announcement. The Spending Review, announced by the Chancellor at Budget, will consider the funding available for rail enhancements and schemes will be considered as part of that process.

Railway Stations: Disability

Asked by Lord Weir of Ballyholme

To ask His Majesty's Government what capital commitment they have made, or plan to make, to improve disability access at stations across the railway network. [HL3961]

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill: £350m is currently allocated to the Access for All programme until 2028/29. A further £75m programme of works to install platform edge tactile strips on at stations that did not already have

them is approaching its completion. These investments are in addition to accessibility enhancements delivered as part of other major projects or industry renewal activities.

Royal Liverpool University Hospital: Accident and Emergency Departments

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government what action they are taking (1) to end the delays at the Royal Liverpool Hospital's Accident and Emergency Unit which are reportedly up to 50 hours, and (2) to address the decision of the Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to declare a "critical incident" due to "exceptionally high demand". [HL3864]

Baroness Merron: NHS England's regional teams are working closely with the integrated care boards to ensure that appropriate action is being taken to address and mitigate the issues identified within each declared critical incident, including at the Royal Liverpool Hospital. This includes actions to support the flow of patients through the hospital and the reprioritising of resources to support urgent and emergency care.

Salmon: Conservation

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect Atlantic salmon from extinction, following recent research from the International Union for Conservation of Nature that shows the species is at high risk. [HL3946]

Baroness Hayman of Ullock: This is a devolved matter, and the information provided therefore relates primarily to England.

Defra is working internationally to protect salmon populations through participation in the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO). A full list of actions related to salmon conservation can be found in the England and Wales NASCO "Implementation Plan", along with annual progress updates, which can be found at <https://nasco.int/conservation/third-reporting-cycle-2/>.

The Environment Agency, responsible for managing salmon fisheries in England, ensured that 95% of salmon catches in 2023 were released alive through a combination of voluntary and mandatory measures. Between 2019 and 2023, they mitigated 58 barriers to fish passage on England's salmon rivers. The Environment Agency is re-assessing the key pressures on salmon, in England, ahead of producing a new salmon Action Plan.

Cleaning up the water environment is a key priority for Defra. In October, the Government launched an Independent Commission of the water sector regulatory system. The Commission will report back this year with recommendations.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Implementation Plan [Implementation-Plan_UK-England-and-Wales.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2025-01-09/HL3946>

Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill

Asked by The Lord Bishop of London

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they intend to produce an equalities impact assessment ahead of the coming stages of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill. [HL3749]

Baroness Merron: Now that Parliament has voted to give the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill a Second Reading, the Government will assess the impacts of the Bill.

This continues to be a matter for Parliament and, as the Bill progresses, members of Parliament, both Honourable and Right Honourable, will further debate and scrutinise the legislation and the Government will respect Parliament's will.

Youth Justice: Staff

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask His Majesty's Government how many staff from ethnic minority backgrounds were employed in

the youth justice secure estate on (1) 31 March 2024, and (2) 30 September 2024. [HL3800]

Lord Timpson: Information is held on staffing numbers in the public-sector youth secure estate, and is published quarterly at table 5b of the HMPPS Workforce Statistics Bulletin:

Table 5b: Youth Custody Estate staff in post, by protected characteristic (headcount)

Protected characteristic	Group	31-Mar-24	30-Sep-24
Ethnicity	Ethnic Minorities	292	323
	White	1001	980
	Unknown	195	177
Declaration rate		86.90%	88.00%
	Ethnic minority representation %	22.60%	24.80%

Staffing information in relation to settings that are managed independently is not held by HM Prison & Probation Service.

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