

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS ON COVID-19 AND ANSWERS BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Wednesday 27 May 2020

Written questions lodged on 27 May can be found on page 18 of this document.

Links to First Minister's Questions relating to COVID-19 on 27 May, are included at page 17.

ANSWERS TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS (Received on 27 May)

Government Initiated Question

Tom Arthur (Renfrewshire South) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how much funding has been allocated to each ministerial portfolio to support the policy response to the COVID-19 emergency.

S5W-29361

Kate Forbes: The Scottish Government today publishes an additional Summer Budget Revision, detailing both the indicative Barnett consequentials received to date and the funding allocations Scottish Ministers have made to support the COVID-19 response (Document no SG/2020/78).

Document is available here www.gov.scot/isbn/9781839607615.

Ministerial portfolio: Communities and Local Government

Gordon Lindhurst (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what consideration it has given to proposals to allow for the clearing of a backlog of home reports required to support housing transactions in progress.

S5W-29127

Kevin Stewart: Most housing transactions in progress are likely to have been brought to the market with valid Home Reports before 23 March lockdown. Providing a property has not been withdrawn from the market for a period exceeding four weeks, the Home Report will remain valid until the property is sold.

For any housing transactions commenced during lockdown and for those properties which will be brought to market after lockdown, a Home Report will be required. A feature of the housing market restart could mean an increased demand for Home Reports and pressure on surveyors to carry them out timeously.

My officials are discussing with industry and other stakeholders the safe reopening of the housing market and how this can be achieved in line with Scotland's route map through and out of the crisis, published on 21 May. Part of this will include the potential level of demand for surveyors to carry out Home Reports.

Elaine Smith (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has in place for allowing Roman Catholic churches to re-open to the public, respecting social-distancing guidance.

S5W-28954

Aileen Campbell: We acknowledge the outstanding contribution of Scotland's faith communities, including our Catholic Communities, and recognise the difficulty in being unable to come together or attend places of worship during this challenging time. However, we know faith communities understand that these restrictions are vital to protect our NHS workers, carers and to save lives.

On Thursday 21 May, the First Minister outlined Scotland's route map through and out of the COVID-19 crisis, which is available on the Scottish Government website. This route map takes an evidence-led approach to easing restrictions and sets out a phased approach towards re-opening places of worship.

Current guidance remains to stay at home and only travel where it is essential to do so. For this reason, at this time places of worship are only able to open for the very limited purposes that are currently permitted including for funerals, to broadcast an act of worship and/ or to provide an essential voluntary service. However, It is anticipated that restrictions around places of worship may begin to ease at phase 2 of the route map, at which time they would be able to open for private prayer (with physical distancing and hygiene safeguards). Places of worship may then open to extended groups at phase 3, also subject to physical distancing and hygiene safeguards, and finally for all ceremonies at phase 4.

We will continue to engage in discussion with our faith communities as we work towards re-opening places of worship for services in line with the phases set out above, including how this can be done as safely as possible.

Elaine Smith (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to support the work and projects of individual Roman Catholic churches and religious groups, including the Society of St Vincent de Paul, in its endeavours to help the most vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

S5W-28950

Aileen Campbell: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Elaine Smith (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on Roman Catholic churches reopening to conduct funerals to allow higher numbers of socially-distanced attendees to attend, in light of reports of there being up to 20 such attendees at services held in smaller crematoria.

S5W-28953

Aileen Campbell: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Elaine Smith (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it agrees that the reopening of churches will allow more people to pay their last respects to loved ones, while keeping within social distancing.

S5W-28955

Aileen Campbell: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Elaine Smith (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what reassurance it can give Roman Catholic Bishops in Scotland that it is committed to ensuring that communal worship and religious activities can be resumed as promptly as possible.

S5W-28956

Aileen Campbell: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Ministerial portfolio: Constitution, Europe and External Affairs

Mark Griffin (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the average weekly number of items of correspondence it received from MSPs and MPs has been since 1 January 2019, broken down by ministerial portfolio, and what the average time taken to respond was by portfolio.

S5W-29184

Graeme Dey: The information in following the table is taken from the Scottish Government Case Handling systems

MSP/MP correspondence to Ministers from January 2019 to 18 May 2020

Cabinet Secretary/Minister responding	Average Items Received Per Week	Average Response (working days)
First Minister	0.7	20
Deputy First Minister	7.3	15
Minister for Children and Young People	3.0	16
Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science	2.2	16
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government	2.7	21
Minister for Local Government and Housing	9.5	14
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture	6.6	15
Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills	2.8	19
Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation	0.5	19
Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform	7.2	19
Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment	2.2	18
Cabinet Secretary for Finance	9.0	21
Minister for Public Finance and Migration	4.1	13
Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, Europe and External Affairs	0.6	13
Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans	1.3	21
Minister for Europe and International Development	0.1	15
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport	23.9	18
Minister for Mental Health	3.2	21
Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing	8.4	19
Cabinet Secretary for Justice	6.1	20
Minister for Community Safety	3.9	19
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism	6.6	11
Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People	2.2	18
Minister for Older People and Equalities	0.8	18
Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity	13.0	16
Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands	5.7	44

Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work	2.2	15
Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs	3.8	18
Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations	0.5	17
Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy	7.1	14
Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy	4.9	20
Minister for Europe, Migration and International Development	1.7	17

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government for what reason it is reportedly taking up to eight weeks for it to provide a substantive reply to some written parliamentary questions.

S5W-29129

Graeme Dey: The Government remains committed to answering all parliamentary questions as quickly as possible and within the deadlines agreed with Parliament. The vast majority of questions continue to be answered on time. It is clear however that the impact of responding to the exceptional demands of the current Coronavirus pandemic is having, and will continue to have, some impact on response times.

Ministerial portfolio: Economy, Fair Work and Culture

Claire Baker (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the net annual economic worth is of the (a) winter festival and (b) pantomime season; how many jobs are dependent on it; what impact the COVID-19 outbreak could have on it in 2020, including what the risk is of the season not going ahead, and what (i) financial and (ii) other support it will provide to the (A) venues and (B) staff affected by any closures.

S5W-29062

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government does not hold details of the net annual economic worth and the jobs created by the pantomime season.

Similarly, the measurement of the impact of individual events outwith Scotland's Winter Festivals programme is not a matter for the Scottish Government.

Scotland's Winter Festivals 2018-19 was a great success delivering over 110 events and engaging 416,000 people across 17 Local Authorities and the Scottish Government is currently gathering information from delivery partner on the impacts of Scotland's Winter Festivals 2019-20.

“Scotland’s route map through and out of the crisis” published on 21 May sets out how we will look at the cumulative and overall impact of those measures, and of ongoing restrictions. The route map provides an indication of the order in which the Scottish Government will carefully and gradually seek to lift current restrictions, but does not attempt to specify dates for all of the different phases. Rather as we move beyond the first phase, future phases will be based on meeting particular criteria.

In the meantime the Scottish Government moved swiftly to support (a) venues and (b) staff by investing £2.3 billion into support for businesses and employers, with hardship funds for self-employed people and the creative and tourism sectors plus funding has been made available for tourism, hospitality and creative industry businesses that are experiencing hardship as a result of COVID-19 and are not eligible for other sources of support (except UK Job Retention Scheme).

Further information on the full package of UK and Scottish Government support to help events businesses through the coronavirus pandemic is provided at: <https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus>

Ministerial portfolio: Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what support will be given to angling associations in respect of District Salmon Fishery Board levies, in light of lost fishing months as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown.

S5W-28993

Roseanna Cunningham: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Ministerial portfolio: Finance

Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how much in non-domestic rates relief will be given in the financial year 2020-21 to (a) Aldi, (b) Asda, (c) Co-op, (d) Lidl, (e) Morrisons, (f) Sainsbury’s and (g) Tesco.

S5W-28939

Kate Forbes: The grants and reliefs are being administered by local authorities and Scottish Government does not hold information on individual relief recipients.

We are determined to help keep companies in business and our financial support now exceeds the £2.3 billion passed on from the UK Government.

This includes a universal 1.6% relief available to all non-domestic properties, and a 100% relief for businesses in the Retail, Hospitality, Leisure and Airport sectors.

The Scottish Government accepted the recommendation of the Barclay Review of Non-Domestic Rates to publish lists of recipients of rates relief, and we are working with local councils to deliver this in the future, in line with General Data Protection Regulations.

Maurice Golden (West Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to ensure that COVID-19 support measures are made available to estate agents that are not solicitors and whose firms do not meet rateable value criteria.

S5W-28966

Kate Forbes: The Scottish Government is determined to support businesses during this time, and we are delivering a package of support worth £2.3 billion for businesses who can now claim rates relief and apply for grants to help them deal with the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Estate agents will be able to benefit from the 1.6% universal rates relief in 2020-21, which will apply automatically to their non-domestic rates bills.

Estate agents may also be eligible for the Small Business Grant scheme for premises in receipt of the Small Business Bonus Scheme (SBBS), or eligible for the SBBS but in receipt of a range of other reliefs.

In addition, the Business Support Grant scheme guidance provides an element of discretion which local authorities may use to ensure that the grant reaches those business ratepayers in need and directly affected by COVID-19. This includes the discretion to award a grant to a property if they are satisfied that it is engaged solely or mainly in the marketing of property and not the provision of financial and/or legal services, and provided other qualifying criteria are met for the grant. This is subject to the local authority being satisfied with the validity and eligibility of individual cases.

Ministerial portfolio: Health and Sport

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservatives and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many meetings Ministers held to discuss the Silver Swan pandemic meeting in 2015.

S5W-29056

John Swinney: The Cabinet Secretary for Health, Minister for Public Health and I were briefed on the findings of Exercise Silver Swan in 2015. While this may have been discussed in subsequent meetings, we do not hold records of meetings that far back in relation to specific or general meetings that may have taken place.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government (a) how many and (b) what proportion of referrals to mental health services during the COVID-19 pandemic have been identified as needing prioritised assessment.

S5W-28968

Clare Haughey: During the COVID-19 pandemic, NHS Boards are prioritising referrals to mental health services in line with local continuity plans. The Scottish Government does not hold data centrally regarding (a) how many and (b) what proportion of referrals to mental health services during the COVID-19 pandemic have been identified as needing prioritised assessment.

Waiting times data on CAMHS and psychological therapies is published by Public Health Scotland each quarter and the September 2020 publication will report on April to June referrals.

Brian Whittle (South Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to make an assessment of the reported increase in number of deaths from non-COVID-19-related diseases during the lockdown period.

S5W-29054

Joe FitzPatrick: National Records of Scotland (NRS) publish weekly statistics on COVID-19 deaths, including where COVID-19 was a suspected or underlying cause of death.

NRS report that up to week 13, the number of weekly registered deaths in Scotland had been broadly in line with the five year average. From week 14 (30 March) onwards, there has been a clear divergence from the five year average number of deaths. Whilst the majority of these “excess deaths” have COVID-19 reported as the underlying cause, NRS also report excess deaths for the underlying causes of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease, circulatory (heart disease and stroke) and cancer.

The Scottish Government, along with analytical partners such as Public Health Scotland and National Records of Scotland are engaged in programmes of research to understand the wider impact of covid-19 on Scotland's population. Public Health Scotland plan to release an analysis of health inequalities in COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 mortality around mid-June.

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether specific advice will be provided for each leisure activity as the COVID-19 lockdown measures are eased.

S5W-29237

Joe FitzPatrick: The Scottish Government is working with sportscotland and sports governing bodies to ensure robust, medically assessed, guidance is in place to ensure participants can engage in activities safely and in line with the current physical distancing restrictions in place.

Claire Baker (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how much has been spent on NHS operations and procedures undertaken in the private healthcare sector during the COVID-19 outbreak, broken down by NHS board.

S5W-28959

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Claire Baker (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many (a) NHS cancer operations and (b) other NHS procedures have taken place in private healthcare facilities during the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28960

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Claire Baker (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what arrangements have been made with private healthcare providers regarding the provision of services to the NHS during the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28961

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

David Stewart (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what proportion it is supplying of the personal protective equipment (PPE) being used in care homes.

S5W-28963

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of reports that they might be at higher risk from the virus, what risk assessment has been carried out for the appropriate deployment of BAME workers in health and social care services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

S5W-28974

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government (a) how many and (b) what proportion of the (i) NHS and (ii) social care workforce belong to BAME groups.

S5W-28975

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how social distancing in response to the COVID-19 outbreak can be applied in dormitory hospital wards, and what plans are in place to ensure an adequate supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) to staff in these settings.

S5W-28978

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government on what basis the First Minister made the statement in the Parliament on 24 March 2020 that "To be blunt, based on what I have been told, the UK, and Scotland within it, probably has the greatest testing capacity of any country in the world proportionately, per head of population" (Official Report, c. 28).

S5W-28981

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government for what reason people with untreated chronic lymphocytic leukaemia are not on the COVID-19 shielded list, and when they might be included.

S5W-28982

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it has assessed the resilience plans of the health and social care partnerships in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28984

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on whether communal activities in care homes that do not maintain two-metre physical distancing should be happening during the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28988

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether Tiger Eye protective goggles and frames form part of the country's pandemic personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies, and, if so, (a) how many items there are and (b), in light of the Health and Safety Executive's assessment, what action has been taken to review the supply chain and remove products that do not meet safety standards.

S5W-28989

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many mental health patients have died in hospital from COVID-19.

S5W-28990

Clare Haughey: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what information it has regarding staffing-to-patient ratios in intensive care unit settings during the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28991

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government who signed off the revised guidance to care homes regarding COVID-19 testing before it was published on the Scottish Government website on the weekend of 9-10 May 2020.

S5W-28994

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will expand its COVID-19 testing to include residents in sheltered accommodation.

S5W-29006

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Ministerial portfolio: Justice and the Law Officers

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to help protect taxi drivers and private hire drivers who are transporting key workers to and from work.

S5W-28957

Ash Denham: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will help private hire and taxi drivers with the provision of (a) personal protective equipment (PPE) and (b) a safety screen or shield to ensure they are protected as much as possible from COVID-19 when transporting key workers and others.

S5W-28958

Ash Denham: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Liam Kerr (North East Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether formal guidance or direction has been issued to sheriffs to avoid sentencing offenders to prison terms during the COVID-19 lockdown.

S5W-29026

Humza Yousaf: Sentencing decisions in individual cases are entirely a matter for the court to take within the overall legal framework, taking account of all the relevant facts and circumstances of the case.

The Scottish Ministers do not issue guidance or direction to sheriffs regarding the sentencing of offenders. The Scottish courts are entirely independent of the Scottish Ministers and the Lord President is constitutionally and legally responsible for the efficient disposal of business within the courts and for the issuing of guidance to the judiciary.

[Ministerial portfolio: Rural Economy and Tourism](#)

Oliver Mundell (Dumfriesshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what specific action it is taking to support coach drivers and the coach holiday industry in Scotland during the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28998

Fergus Ewing: The Scottish Government fully acknowledges the critical role that coaches play in supporting tourism, whether directly providing holidays, or taking passengers from cruise ships to visitor attractions.

We have engaged directly with the industry through the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK, to both discuss its concerns and direct the sector to appropriate support.

This includes assistance through our £2.3 billion package of measures to support Scottish businesses during this difficult time, including access where applicable to business grants and through the Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund.

We also continue to press the UK Government on the need to assist our tourism sector, and have specifically raised the needs of the coach industry to them, underlining the vital support that they provide.

The Confederation is also part of the Scottish Tourism Alliance (STA), who represent the tourism industry on the Scottish Government's Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group. Through this, coach interests have been taken

into account in the delivery of the National Action Plan developed to respond to impacts on the sector.

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what support it will provide to veterinary businesses that have remained open to carry out continuing surveillance and statutory testing of livestock, but which have lost most of their usual income streams as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

S5W-29185

Mairi Gougeon: Veterinary practices have not been instructed to close and the Scottish Government has issued advice concerning ongoing veterinary surveillance activities and statutory testing of livestock to the effect that such work should continue provided all public health guidance can be adhered to.

There is no specific veterinary support scheme, however a wide range of business support measures have been made available to businesses. This includes support for non-domestic properties eligible for universal 1.6% rates relief, and veterinary practices in receipt of the Small Business Bonus Scheme, and/or Rural Relief, will be eligible for a one-off £10,000 grant. Businesses are advised to contact their respective local council directly to determine their eligibility for financial assistance.

The Scottish Government's package of measures announced on 15 April included £120 million to extend the Small Business Grant scheme to ensure that small business rate payers, including eligible veterinary businesses, will be eligible for a 75% grant on subsequent properties, in addition to a 100% grant on the first property. £100m was also made available for self-employed people, including those in the veterinary sector, and viable micro and SME businesses in distress as a result of Covid-19. This fund is intended to ease difficulties for those businesses and individuals that are ineligible for UK Government support, or not currently in receipt of the funds they require to survive. This fund is channelled through local authorities and enterprise agencies to assist the recently self-employed and businesses currently ineligible for other support schemes.

This is a rapidly evolving situation and Scottish Government will continue to monitor its position and work with the UK Government, and engage with veterinary sector representative bodies, to consider where further support may be required.

[Ministerial portfolio: Social Security and Older People](#)

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what statements, comments, announcements and news releases about her policy remit have been issued by the Minister for Older People and Equalities since the COVID-19 lockdown began.

S5W-28942

Christina McKelvie: The Scottish Government has ensured a strong focus on equality and human rights throughout the response to this pandemic, an approach set out in a letter to the Scottish Parliament's Equality and Human Rights Committee on 12 May 2020

([https://www.parliament.scot/S5 Equal Opps/12 May 2020 Ms McKelvie Minister OPE to EHRC.pdf](https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Equal_Opps/12_May_2020_Ms_McKelvie_Minister_OPE_to_EHRC.pdf)).

The work of a Minister is, of course, much wider than statements, comments, announcements and news releases, but those that have been made since lockdown began in the Minister's sole name - as opposed to those she has been involved in but issued in another Minister's name - include:

- Chairing a meeting of the Older People's Strategic Action Forum on 21 May 2020, to hear updates on valuable work being carried out across communities and allow shared thinking to shape next steps;
- Funding a range of organisations working with older people, enabling them to provide greatly expanded advice and support for older people across Scotland (*A Balancing Act*: <https://blogs.gov.scot/fairer-scotland/2020/05/09/a-balancing-act/>)
- Over £55,000 of additional funding directly to organisations supporting LGBT people, including older people, to increase services during the pandemic (<https://blogs.gov.scot/fairer-scotland/2020/05/12/support-for-lgbt-during-coronavirus-minister-blog/>)
- Building the capacity of race equality organisations to support minority ethnic communities during the pandemic, including supporting older people through the Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network (<https://twitter.com/ScotGovFairer/status/1250058580960698369>)
- Supporting local authorities to deal with increased levels of domestic abuse and gender-based violence during the pandemic (<https://news.gov.scot/news/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-during-covid-19>)
- Highlighting the importance of safeguarding human rights and equality (<https://twitter.com/ScotGovFairer/status/1260569080337178624>)

This list is not exhaustive. The Minister for Older People and Equalities, alongside Ministers across the Scottish Government, continue to focus on continued engagement with stakeholder groups as we put the intersectional experience of those most affected by the pandemic at the centre of the response.

ORAL QUESTIONS ON 27 MAY 2020

First Minister's Questions

The following questions were asked:

1. Jackson Carlaw: Question to be taken in Chamber. ([S5F-04148](#))

2. Richard Leonard: Question to be taken in Chamber. ([S5F-04149](#))

3. Alison Johnstone: Question to be taken in Chamber. ([S5F-04150](#))

4. Willie Rennie: Question to be taken in Chamber. ([S5F-04151](#))

5. Kenneth Gibson: To ask the First Minister whether the Scottish Government has had any discussions with the Treasury regarding Project Birch, the plan to assist struggling companies of strategic importance. ([S5F-04153](#))

6. Alexander Stewart: To ask the First Minister what the Scottish Government's response is to Police Scotland reporting that nearly 1,700 cases have been recorded under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018. ([S5F-04162](#))

7. Jackie Baillie: To ask the First Minister when the Scottish Government will commence its review of care homes. ([S5F-04165](#))

Answers to all of the above questions, and others relating to COVID-19, can be found in the Official Report of proceedings [here](#).

Government initiated questions lodged on 27 May 2020

[S5W-29445](#) Gillian Martin: To ask the Scottish Government whether it will delay the publication of the Heat Decarbonisation Policy Statement and Energy Efficient Scotland Routemap update and the launch of its Heat Transition Deal in light of the COVID-19 crisis.

Written questions lodged on 27 May 2020 (Expected answer date 10 June 2020)

[S5W-29235](#) Jeremy Balfour: To ask the Scottish Government what guidelines it has set out regarding online mental health counselling during the COVID-19 outbreak; what easing of these guidelines has taken place or is planned, and whether it expects the people providing these services to carry out any specific training.

[S5W-29308](#) Alison Johnstone: To ask the Scottish Government what research it is (a) carrying out and (b) supporting on vitamin D deficiency and its impact on COVID-19 severity and mortality.

[S5W-29309](#) Alison Johnstone: To ask the Scottish Government what research it is (a) carrying out and (b) supporting on the impact of low levels of vitamin D on high-risk COVID-19 groups, including (i) black and minority ethnic people, (ii) obese people and (iii) older people (A) in and (B) outwith care homes.

[S5W-29310](#) Alison Johnstone: To ask the Scottish Government, in light of recent international research on the links between low vitamin D levels and COVID-19 severity, what consideration it has given to testing vitamin D levels in (a) hospital patients and (b) care home residents.

[S5W-29311](#) Alison Johnstone: To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to increase the provision of free vitamin D supplementation to include all high-risk groups for COVID-19.

[S5W-29312](#) Alison Johnstone: To ask the Scottish Government, in light of recent research, including in connection with the COVID-19 outbreak, what action it is taking to update public health guidance on vitamin D supplementation, and how it will promote this as widely as possible.

[S5W-29313](#) Lewis Macdonald: To ask the Scottish Government how many COVID-19 tests can be carried out each day at the test centre at Aberdeen Airport, and whether it is currently working at, or close to, full capacity.

[S5W-29314](#) Lewis Macdonald: To ask the Scottish Government whether it is responsible for determining who can access the COVID-19 test centre at Aberdeen Airport, and what responsibility it has for any decision to extend access to other groups of key workers.

[S5W-29315](#) Lewis Macdonald: To ask the Scottish Government whether it will support access to the COVID-19 test centre at Aberdeen Airport for asymptomatic offshore workers who (a) live in the North East Scotland region and (b) travel to and from work through the airport.

[S5W-29364](#) Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government how many self-catering units have (a) applied for and (b) received a Small Business Grant, broken down by local authority.

[S5W-29365 Jackie Baillie](#): To ask the Scottish Government whether there is a timescale target for local authorities between receiving a Small Business Grant application and providing the business with the grant, if it is approved.

[S5W-29372 Maurice Golden](#): To ask the Scottish Government how many unique visitors have been recorded to the managingourwaste.scot/ website on each day since it launched. **R**

[S5W-29401 Miles Briggs](#): To ask the Scottish Government how many outbreaks of COVID-19 it has reported to other UK Home Nations, and on what dates.

[S5W-29402 Miles Briggs](#): To ask the Scottish Government what advice it has provided on DNR (do not resuscitate) forms put in place for individual patients during the COVID-19 outbreak.

[S5W-29403 Miles Briggs](#): To ask the Scottish Government what information it has on how many DNR (do not resuscitate) forms have been signed in each year since 1999.

[S5W-29404 Miles Briggs](#): To ask the Scottish Government what consultation it had with professional representational organisations regarding the guidelines for DNR (do not resuscitate) forms put in place for individual patients during the COVID-19 outbreak.

[S5W-29405 Miles Briggs](#): To ask the Scottish Government what legal advice it sought regarding DNR (do not resuscitate) forms put in place for individual patients during the COVID-19 outbreak.

[S5W-29406 Miles Briggs](#): To ask the Scottish Government what discussions ministers have had regarding DNR (do not resuscitate) forms being put in place for individual patients during the COVID-19 outbreak.

[S5W-29408 Miles Briggs](#): To ask the Scottish Government how many retired medics have expressed an interest in returning to support the NHS during the COVID-19 outbreak.

[S5W-29409 Miles Briggs](#): To ask the Scottish Government how many retired medics returning to support the NHS have been employed during the COVID-19 outbreak.

[S5W-29410 Miles Briggs](#): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of ministers stating that the Scottish Government does not know what the COVID-19 R number is in care homes, what steps are being taken to monitor the R number in care homes.

[S5W-29411 Miles Briggs](#): To ask the Scottish Government how many care home beds the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport instructed to be purchased, broken down by the (a) care home and (b) NHS board area they were purchased for.

[S5W-29412 Neil Findlay](#): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on deep cleaning as a strategy to tackle COVID-19.

[S5W-29414 Beatrice Wishart](#): To ask the Scottish Government what consideration it has given to permitting maritime activities such as recreational (a) boating, (b) fishing and (c) sailing to resume, given COVID-19 restrictions.

[S5W-29415 Neil Findlay](#): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide a list of central contact numbers for people returning to work who have questions about issues related to the COVID-19 outbreak, such as health, safety and the furlough scheme, to ensure that they receive consistent reliable advice.

S5W-29416 Neil Bibby: To ask the Scottish Government what (a) monitoring and (b) analysis has been undertaken by (a) it and (b) its agencies and partners regarding the (i) quantity, (ii) quality and (iii) relevance of school-initiated engagement with pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

S5W-29418 Neil Bibby: To ask the Scottish Government what (a) monitoring and (b) analysis has been undertaken by (a) it and (b) its agencies and partners regarding pupil response and engagement with schools during the COVID-19 lockdown.

S5W-29419 Neil Bibby: To ask the Scottish Government what (a) monitoring and (b) analysis has been undertaken by (a) it and (b) its agencies and partners regarding the comparative effect on learning and attainment during the COVID-19 lockdown between school pupils who have had access to computers and online learning and those without.

S5W-29420 Neil Bibby: To ask the Scottish Government what (a) monitoring and (b) analysis has been undertaken by (a) it and (b) its agencies and partners regarding the efficacy of Glow as a platform for online learning and teaching during the COVID-19 lockdown.

S5W-29421 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government how much of the £60 million in support for meeting business water bills that it announced on 23 March 2020 will be paid for by (a) businesses and (b) licensed providers.

S5W-29422 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government how much financial support it has provided specifically to meet the cost of the £60 million of support for meeting business water bills that it announced on 23 March 2020.

S5W-29423 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on whether the granting of temporary vacant status to businesses in England affected by the COVID-19 lockdown is more immediately beneficial to the cash demands on those businesses than firms similarly affected by lockdown in Scotland, and what steps it will take to ensure that businesses in Scotland can have the same financial benefits on water charges as all those in England.

S5W-29424 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government what additional borrowing it has provided to Scottish Water to address the impact of the COVID-19 emergency since the lockdown began.

S5W-29425 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government what consultation the Water Industry Commission had with business organisations prior to implementing temporary changes to water charges for businesses in response to the COVID-19 emergency.

S5W-29426 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government whether the borrowing it makes available to Scottish Water is specifically to support capital expenditure or is general revenue support, and whether the aims of this is to benefit customers or households or business customers only.

S5W-29427 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government whether any of the additional finance provided to it by the UK Government in response to the COVID-19 emergency will be used to support the impacts of the outbreak on Scottish Water and its customers, or whether the customers will be expected to meet any additional costs.

S5W-29428 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government whether it will publish the Water Industry Commission's ethical business principles referred

to in the paper, *COVID-19 Response and Decision on Measures in Support of Non-household Customers and to protect Household Customers*.

[S5W-29429](#) Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government whether licensed providers are required by the Water Industry Commission as part of their license to abide by its ethical business principles and, if so, whether imposing such a requirement is of itself consistent with these principles in securing the confidence and trust of stakeholders.

[S5W-29430](#) Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government what its response to the stakeholders that were consulted by the Water Industry Commission on a temporary relief scheme for business water charges in response to the COVID-19 emergency who claim that the actions were not consistent with the commission's own ethical business principles.

[S5W-29431](#) Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government what additional financial support it has provided to Highlands and Islands Airports Limited to allow it to respond to the financial pressures arising from a loss of customer income as a result of COVID-19, and in what form any such support was provided.

[S5W-29432](#) Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government what additional financial support it has provided to CalMac to allow it to respond to the financial pressures arising from a loss of customer income as a result of COVID-19, and in what form any such support was provided.

[S5W-29433](#) Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government what additional financial support it has given to its rail franchise operators to allow them to respond to the financial pressures arising from a loss of customer income as a result of COVID-19, and in what form any such support was provided.

[S5W-29434](#) Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government what additional financial support it has given to bus operators to allow them to respond to the loss of concessionary fare and other customers as a result of COVID-19, and in what form any such support was provided.

[S5W-29435](#) Neil Findlay: To ask the Scottish Government how many people in each NHS board area have received emergency dental treatment during each month of the COVID-19 lockdown, and, if it does not hold this information, whether NHS boards can provide it with this.

[S5W-29436](#) Neil Findlay: To ask the Scottish Government how many deaths have occurred in each care home since 1 March 2020 and who owns each of these homes, and if it does not hold this information, whether it will provide details of who does and if it can obtain the information from that source.

[S5W-29437](#) Liam Kerr: To ask the Scottish Government whether it can confirm that, on school buses, social distancing measures would mean these running at 15% of normal capacity, and, if so, whether this means that only 15% of children can travel each day; whether, in light of that, and in order to accommodate all children, this would require an increase in school transport provision, and, if that is the case, which body or bodies would be expected to pay for this, or which budgets would be reduced to cross-fund this.

[S5W-29438](#) Jeremy Balfour: To ask the Scottish Government, in light of the resumption of one-to-one tennis coaching on 29 May 2020, whether one-to-one tennis playing is also permitted, and, if not, for what reason.

[S5W-29439](#) Daniel Johnson: To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with the UK Government regarding the partial easing of the Job Retention Scheme in July 2020.

[S5W-29441](#) Annie Wells: To ask the Scottish Government, in light of the COVID-19 outbreak, what financial support is available to people who are long-term self-employed, and whether it plans to expand this.

[S5W-29442](#) Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government how the COVID-19 R number is calculated, and what the number is for care homes.

[S5W-29444](#) Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Government what contingency planning it has carried out to respond to any second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[S5W-29446](#) Alex Cole-Hamilton: To ask the Scottish Government what level of routine COVID-19 testing takes place in hospital dormitory dementia wards.

[S5W-29447](#) Alex Cole-Hamilton: To ask the Scottish Government how many people in hospital dormitory dementia wards have been (a) infected with and (b) died from COVID-19.

[S5W-29448](#) Alex Cole-Hamilton: To ask the Scottish Government for what reason hospital dormitory wards are not referred to in the COVID-19 infection control guidelines.

[S5W-29449](#) Alex Cole-Hamilton: To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to reported claims that the only mention of hospital dormitory wards in response to the COVID-19 outbreak is on the RCPsych website, and that the advice for infection control is vague and brief.

[S5W-29450](#) Alex Cole-Hamilton: To ask the Scottish Government for what reason there are no specific rules to review detention promptly for people who remain in hospital dormitory wards during the COVID-19 outbreak.

[S5W-29455](#) Beatrice Wishart: To ask the Scottish Government, further to the announcement by the First Minister on 21 May 2020 that £30 million in funding is to be used to provide laptops for disadvantaged children and young people, to enable them to study online, whether any of this funding will be used to provide broadband to families without a connection.

[S5W-29457](#) Daniel Johnson: To ask the Scottish Government what risk assessment it undertook of the opening of daycare centres during phase 1 of the COVID-19 route map.

[S5W-29458](#) Daniel Johnson: To ask the Scottish Government what additional requirements and advice are in place for local authorities and parents on the re-opening of daycare centres during phase 1 of the COVID-19 route map.

[S5W-29459](#) Miles Briggs: To ask the Scottish Government whether the NHS Louisa Jordan will be used as part of the phased reopening of NHS services and, if so, on what date it will be made operational for such services.

Searching for questions and motions

While this report contains only questions and answers relating to COVID-19, answers to all parliamentary questions can be found in daily written answer reports, which are published [here](#).

All parliamentary questions and answers can also be searched for by keyword, MSP asking, Scottish Government Minister answering, as well as by date and other filters, through the advanced search function on the Parliament's website [here](#).