

Daily Report

Tuesday, 6 December 2016

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 6 December 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:05 P.M., 06 December 2016). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Business-University Research Collaborations Review

Peter Kyle:

[\[54729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Answer of 7 December 2015 to Question 18473, whether the Government plans to publish a response to the Dowling Review of Business-University Research Collaborations.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 29 November 2016]: The Dowling Review has been very influential upon Government thinking. For example, it has guided our approach to establishing UK Research and Innovation to make the science, research and innovation landscape more strategic, coherent and effective. The Government set out an initial response to the Review in the 2016 higher education White Paper and is developing a more detailed response, incorporating the recent Autumn Statement announcements on research and development.

■ Central Arbitration Committee

Ian Murray:

[\[55869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the recommendations for the appointments of deputy chairs or members of Central Arbitration Committee made between November 2014 and January 2015 were accepted; and on what grounds those decisions were made.

Margot James:

The former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills carried out interviews between November 2014 and January 2015 to recruit new deputy chairs and members to the Central Arbitration Committee.

No recommendations were made to Ministers during this time period.

■ Charities: EU Grants and Loans

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[55722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what information the Government holds on the number of charities based in (a) the UK and (b) Wales that are in receipt of EU research and innovation funding.

Joseph Johnson:

Organisations in the UK can receive research and innovation funding primarily through two different EU programmes: Horizon 2020 and the European Regional Development Fund.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy does not currently hold any data on the charitable status of UK Horizon 2020 participants. However, data is available from the European Commission (EC) on participations by non-profit organisations outside of the public sector which includes participations by charities.

Based on EC data, as extracted on 30th September 2016, to date there have been 687 participations in Horizon 2020 by non-profit organisations (excluding public organisations) in the UK, including 4 from Wales.

These figures exclude public universities as they are classified as public organisations. Please note that organisations may participate more than once.

Support for Research and Innovation from the European Regional Development Fund is most often provided through intermediaries such as universities and knowledge transfer centres and it is not possible to say how many organisations have received funding until projects have been completed and the outputs verified. As most projects last for about three years, it is too early to give a figure from the 2014-2020 programmes.

■ Director of Labour Market Enforcement

Karl Turner:

[\[55825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he expects to announce the identity of the Director of Labour Market Enforcement; how many candidates were shortlisted for that position; and where that position will be based.

Margot James:

My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State plans to announce the outcome of the recruitment process for the Director of Labour Market Enforcement in due course. It is intended that the position will be based in London. It is standard Government practice not to provide such information, and the Government only provides information about the successful candidate.

■ Electricity: Prices

Grant Shapps:

[\[55548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of the Capacity Mechanism on household electricity prices.

Jesse Norman:

[Holding answer 5 December 2016]: The Capacity Market enables us to buy energy in advance and is designed to ensure that families and businesses have access to secure, affordable energy supplies they can rely on.

As the Capacity Mechanism is a series of auctions, prices are subject to strong competition and the costs depend on the auctions' clearing prices. The two principal auctions held so far have secured capacity needed for 2018/19, and for 2019/20, at costs in those years of around £980m and £830m respectively (2015 values). This equates to gross household bill impacts of around £10 per year, but this figure will be significantly offset when reduced wholesale price spikes are taken into account.

Estimates made at the time of the introduction of the Capacity Market in 2014 suggested it would add only £2 net per year to a typical household energy bill on average over the long-term.

■ Energy Performance Certificates

Dr Alan Whitehead: [55106]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many fuel poor households are living in properties that have been assessed for an energy performance certificate the result of which has been placed on the register.

Jesse Norman:

The English Housing Survey, from which Fuel Poverty estimates are calculated, does not collect information on whether a surveyed household has an EPC certificate.

Detailed tables for 2014 fuel poverty statistics for England can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fuel-poverty-detailed-tables-2014>.

■ Energy: Prices

Dr Alan Whitehead: [55107]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of Priority Service Register customers of (a) British Gas, (b) EON, (c) nPower, (d) Scottish Power, (e) SSE and (f) the Big Six energy companies have been on their supplier's variable tariff for (i) three years or over, (ii) five years or over, (iii) 10 years or over and (iv) 15 years or over.

Dr Alan Whitehead: [55109]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of Priority Service Register customers of (a) British Gas, (b) EON, (c) nPower, (d) Scottish Power, (e) SSE and (f) the Big Six energy companies on their supplier's standard variable tariff.

Jesse Norman:

Data on customers who are on the Priority Service Register (PSR) is published by Ofgem. However, due to the incompatibility of the data sets, this cannot be linked with the data held by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the type of tariffs customers are on. For this reason, we cannot calculate the proportion of PSR customers who are on standard variable tariffs.

Dr Alan Whitehead: [55108]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of Warm Home Discount recipients who are (a) British Gas, (b) EON, (c) nPower, (d) Scottish Power, (e) SSE and (f) Big Six customers overall are on their supplier's variable tariff.

Jesse Norman:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Montgomeryshire on 1st December 2016 to Question [54581](#).

■ Fuel Poverty

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[\[55114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to paragraph 7.5 of the Fuel Poverty Strategy, on what date the first annual fuel poverty debate in Parliament was held; and when the Government plans to timetable the next such debate.

Jesse Norman:

Fuel poverty has received Parliamentary scrutiny in Westminster Hall debates held on November 24th 2015 and February 6th 2016 and in the House of Lords on October 25th 2016. Government also published a report setting out annual fuel poverty statistics on June 30th 2016.

The Department recognises the importance of Government holding an annual debate on this topic in Parliament, and will seek to schedule a debate as soon as Parliamentary time allows.

■ Green Deal Scheme

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[\[55097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish a consultation on changes to the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 required as a result of the end of the Green Deal.

Jesse Norman:

The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property)(England and Wales) Regulations 2015 requires that all landlords of domestic and non-domestic privately rented property in England and Wales ensure that, from 1 April 2018, their properties reach an energy performance rating of at least an E before granting a tenancy to new or existing tenants, unless a prescribed exemption applies.

Officials are considering the potential impact of the current absence of Green Deal finance from the market on the effective working of the regulations, and whether any changes may be required.

■ Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund

Peter Kyle:

[\[54629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he expects to issue guidance on the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 28 November 2016]: As a key part of our Industrial Strategy, we are committed to building on the UK's world class research base to develop new technologies.

The Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund will be managed by Innovate UK, Research Councils and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). We will begin to identify different challenge areas between now and the Budget in 2017. We will set out more detail on

funding breakdown and proposals, including for wider consultation with the research and business community, in due course.

Peter Kyle: [\[54630\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what delivery mechanisms the Government plans to use for the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 28 November 2016]: A key part of our Industrial Strategy is to build on the UK's world class research base to develop new technologies that have the potential to transform existing industries and create entirely new ones.

The Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund will be delivered by Innovate UK and the Research Councils, and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) when it is established. It will be delivered through collaborative programmes which bring together businesses with the research base to drive maximum economic and social impact. The fund will cover a broad range of technologies, to be decided by an evidence-based process.

Peter Kyle: [\[54631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he expects to commence the distribution of funding under the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 28 November 2016]: As a key part of our Industrial Strategy, we are committed to build on the UK's cutting-edge research base and its role in the development of new technologies.

The Industrial Strategy Challenge fund will be delivered by Innovate UK and the Research Councils, and UK Research and Innovation when it is established. The first challenge areas will start receiving funding from 2017/18, in line with agreed business cases.

Peter Kyle: [\[55389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 29 November 2016 to Question 54712, what proportion of the additional funding for research and development from April 2017 will be directed through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

Peter Kyle: [\[55390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what objectives he has set for the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 2 December 2016]: The proportion of the additional funding for research and development from April 2017 onwards that will be directed through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund is currently being worked through. Further details of funding and the objectives will be set out in due course.

■ Innovate UK: Staff

Clive Lewis: [\[55186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has for the future staffing of Innovate UK.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 1 December 2016]: Innovate UK's Chief Executive is responsible for determining the organisation's staffing level, ensuring it is both affordable and that recruitment controls are observed. The creation of UK Research and Innovation, subject to Parliament, and the announcement at the 2016 Autumn Statement of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, may have an impact on staffing at Innovate UK in due course. The Government will work with the Chief Executive to ensure the organisation is appropriately resourced.

■ Insolvency Service: Staff

Clive Lewis: [\[55153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has for the future staffing of the Insolvency Service.

Margot James:

We are reviewing the current operating model of the Insolvency Service to enable us to further increase our efficiency and effectiveness. This will include an assessment of future staffing requirements.

■ Living Wage

Andrew Rosindell: [\[55671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of the proposed increase in the national living wage announced in the 2016 Autumn Statement on the UK's international competitiveness.

Margot James:

The Government will publish an impact assessment on the increase in the National Living Wage announced at Autumn Statement in due course.

The Low Pay Commission has recently published its autumn 2016 report here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-minimum-wage-low-pay-commission-autumn-2016-report>

This considers evidence on the impact of the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage to date.

In addition, the Office for Budget Responsibility produced an assessment of the National Living Wage in annex B of its July 2015 Economic and Fiscal Outlook, available here: <http://budgetresponsibility.org.uk/efo/economic-fiscal-outlook-july-2015/>

■ Offshore Industry: North Sea

Ian Murray: [\[55870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on employment in the North Sea oil and gas industry in Scotland of the scale of North Sea assets by Shell; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

No such assessment has been made. The Oil and Gas Authority will assess any licence transfer as the licence authority.

■ Post Offices: Rural Areas

Craig Whittaker: [\[55166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support rural post offices.

Margot James:

The Government recognises the important role post offices play in communities across the country, especially in the more remote, rural areas. This is why in our Manifesto we committed to secure the future of 3,000 rural post offices.

Government will have provided nearly £2 billion between 2010 and 2018 to maintain modernise and protect a network of at least 11,500 post offices across the country, which includes funding to invest in rural community branches to improve the customer offer and increase their sustainability.

Through Government's investment, there over 11,600 post offices in UK and the network is at its most stable in decades.

■ Pyramid Selling: Regulation

Helen Hayes: [\[55715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the regulatory framework for multi-level marketing schemes.

Margot James:

There have been a number of recent prosecutions of pyramid selling schemes under the Fraud Act 2006 and the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.

The Government keeps the law on consumer protection under constant review.

Helen Hayes: [\[55716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what regulations govern multi-level marketing schemes in the UK.

Margot James:

Multi-level marketing schemes where no products are sold can be considered to be pyramid selling which is an unfair practice under Schedule 1 of the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 and may also be considered fraudulent.

To be legal, multi-level marketing schemes must comply with the Trading Scheme Act 1996 and the Trading Schemes Regulations 1997.

Renewable Energy**Dr Paul Monaghan:**[\[55151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to identify, promote and develop innovations in (a) wind, (b) wave, (c) tidal and (d) riverflow cold renewables.

Jesse Norman:

From 2013–2015, government and its agencies (including Innovate UK and the Research Councils) invested on average over £200m per year in support for low carbon innovation. This included support for identifying, promoting, and developing innovations in the wind and marine sectors, including for the Glasgow-based Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult and Supergen UK Centre for Marine Energy Research.

From 2016–2021, government has committed to increase the UK's energy innovation spend, such that by 2021 it will have doubled to over £400m per year. This funding will support innovation across the energy sector in regions across the UK, and details will be set out in due course. Through the new Energy Innovation Board, chaired by Sir Mark Walport, the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy will be collaborating with Innovate UK, the Research Councils, and other delivery partners across government, including members of Devolved Administrations, to co-ordinate energy innovation activities.

Science**Dan Jarvis:**[\[55305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts in other EU member states on UK participation in EU scientific programmes after the UK leaves the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 2 December 2016]: Post-exit participation in EU research programmes will be a matter for the negotiations which will follow the triggering of Article 50. We will work through the implications for future years as part of the wider negotiations.

■ Science: Research

Dan Jarvis:

[\[55826\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans the Government has to guarantee levels of funding for UK scientific programmes in the event that no agreement is reached on continued UK participation in EU scientific programmes after the UK leaves the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

The UK will maintain its status as a global centre for research and innovation. The Government has already committed to protect science funding with a total investment of £26.3 billion over the period FY 2016/17 – FY 2020/21. In addition, the Autumn Statement announced an extra £2 billion a year in research and development by the end of this Parliament.

UK businesses and universities should continue to bid for competitive EU funds while we remain a member of the EU and we will work with the Commission to ensure payment when funds are awarded. The Treasury will underwrite the payment of such awards, even when specific projects continue beyond the UK's departure from the EU.

Access to apply to Horizon 2020 and subsequent funding programmes after we leave the EU will be a matter for the negotiations that will follow the triggering of Article 50.

■ Shipping: Pay

Karl Turner:

[\[55824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Director of Labour Market Enforcement will have responsibility for enforcement of the (a) national minimum wage and (b) national living wage in the shipping industry.

Margot James:

The Director of Labour Market Enforcement will have a strategic remit that covers the whole of the labour market. It will therefore include direct employment as well as labour providers, and the whole of the spectrum of non-compliance, from accidental infringement to serious criminality.

The Director will produce an annual strategy which will set the strategic priorities for the work of three labour market enforcement bodies: the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate, the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, and enforcement of the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage by HMRC.

■ Small Businesses: Living Wage

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[55654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has to ensure that small manufacturing businesses have access to grants and other Government schemes to assist them with the proposed increase in the national living wage announced in the Autumn Statement 2016.

Margot James:

The Government appreciates that the introduction of the National Living Wage (NLW) may mean extra costs for small manufacturing businesses and is committed to ensuring that the National Living Wage works for businesses of all sizes.

The Government has increased the Employment Allowance by 50% from April 2016, giving employers a £3,000 employer National Insurance Contributions discount. This is estimated to benefit up to 500,000 businesses who, as a result, can employ four people full time on the current NLW and pay no National Insurance Contributions. The increase in the allowance is of greatest benefit to small businesses. We are also extending Small Business Rate Relief meaning 600,000 small businesses will pay no rates at all.

In addition, the cut in corporation tax from 20% to 17% by the end of the Parliament will benefit over a million firms of all sizes and give the UK the lowest rate of corporation tax in the G20.

■ Trade Marks**Barry Gardiner:**[\[55037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he plans to take to ensure that businesses in the UK continue to benefit from the activities of the EU observatory on trademark protection after the UK leaves the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

Negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU will consider all elements of our relationship with Europe including the EU Observatory. The Government continues to focus on achieving the best deal for the UK once we leave the EU.

CABINET OFFICE**■ Conflict, Stability and Security Fund****Richard Burden:**[\[55939\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to page 20 of his Department's report, entitled Rising to the challenge of ending poverty: the Bilateral Development Review 2016, published in December 2016, how the Government plans to expand the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund.

Ben Gummer:

The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) has a budget of £1.1billion, due to grow to £1.34billion by the end of 2019/20. As reflected in the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), the additional c.£200m will increase Government's capacity to prevent threats and build stability, as well as respond to crises more quickly and effectively. The CSSF will have more resources and expertise to address the drivers of transnational threats to stability such as extremism, illegal migration and serious and organised crime.

TREASURY■ **Air Passenger Duty: Northern Ireland**

Danny Kinahan: [\[55297\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 53935, on which occasions since his appointment he has discussed reducing air passenger duty with the Northern Ireland Executive.

Jane Ellison:

In line with the practice of successive administrations, details of ministerial discussions are not routinely disclosed.

■ **Business: Tax Allowances**

Jonathan Reynolds: [\[55513\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 4.15 of the Autumn Statement 2016, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of the changes to business investment relief relating to non-domiciled individuals.

Jane Ellison:

As announced in the Autumn Statement 2016 document, the changes to Business Investment Relief are expected to have a negligible Exchequer cost, as the scheme encourages non-domiciled individuals to bring money into the UK to invest in UK business that would otherwise would have been left offshore.

■ **Development Aid**

Alan Brown: [\[55132\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, to which (a) projects and (b) other measures the spending in 2017-18 and 2018-19 listed in table 2.1, line 30, of the Autumn Statement 2016 refers.

Mr David Gauke:

Line 30 of Table 2.1 refers to downward adjustments to the Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget, which were made to maintain spend at 0.7% of Gross National Income. The precise allocation of savings will be finalised in due course, and where possible, will be achieved through efficiencies and through stopping or scaling down the lowest value spend in budgets.

■ **Economic Growth**

Paul Flynn: [\[55372\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential implications for its policies of the finding by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in its Global Economic Outlook of November 2016 on the potential growth rate of the UK economy.

Simon Kirby:

In its Global Economic Outlook the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) acknowledged the resilience of the UK economy, and now forecast the UK to be the fastest growing major advanced economy in 2016.

At Autumn Statement 2016, the Chancellor set out the government's plans to boost potential growth in the UK economy. As part of this we will invest an extra £23 billion in areas that are key to raising productivity, including in infrastructure, R&D and housing. The OECD welcomed this additional investment, saying it "should support short-run economic activity and enhance long-term growth".

■ Economic Growth: North of England**Craig Whittaker:**[\[55598\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent steps he has taken to support economic growth in (a) Yorkshire and the Humber, (b) the North East and (c) the North West.

Mr David Gauke:

Creating an economy that works for everyone is a key priority of this Government. At the Autumn Statement, the government announced allocations worth £1.8 billion from the Local Growth Fund to all English regions, including £556 million to the North of England. This is in addition to the £2.8 billion the North has already received from the Local Growth Fund for expenditure on projects essential to local economic growth. The government is also investing £13 billion in transport across the North over the course of this parliament and launched a Northern Powerhouse strategy at this Autumn Statement, setting out the steps we will take to tackling key productivity barriers across the North.

■ Females**Jess Phillips:**[\[55227\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made an assessment of the economic value of women to the (a) transport, (b) digital communications, (c) research and development and (d) housing sectors.

Mr David Gauke:

Transport, housing, digital communications and research and development (R&D) are the areas targeted by the new £23bn 'National Productivity Investment Fund' announced at Autumn Statement 2016. This investment will support the UK economy, benefitting both men and women.

In line with the government's legal responsibilities and strong policy commitment to equality, Government (including HM Treasury) takes relevant gender angles into account in policy, including in relation to different sectors of the economy.

■ Flood Control: Finance

Greg Mulholland: [\[55176\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 3.25 of the Autumn Statement 2016, how much of the £170 million in flood defence and resilience measures will be spent in each region.

Mr David Gauke:

The £170 million announced at Autumn Statement 2016 has not yet been fully allocated. Of the funding that has been allocated:

- The South West will receive £19.5m: with £10m for railway resilience in Dawlish and £9.5m for Axe Valley.
- The Midlands will receive £16.7m for flood alleviation in Burton upon Trent.
- The Northern regions will receive £13.7m: £1.7m for Stainforth Dunston Hill Bridge Bank Flood Alleviation Scheme, £2m for a scheme to better protect homes from flooding in Otley, and £10m for railway resilience in Manchester subject to business case approval.

Further details on the allocation of the remaining funding will be announced in due course.

■ Income Tax

Stephen Timms: [\[55901\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many P800 adjustments issued to individual taxpayers were to correct an (a) over-payment and (b) under-payment of income tax in (i) 2012-13, (ii) 2013-14 and (iii) 2014-15.

Jane Ellison:

The information requested is as follows:

YEAR	OVERPAYMENTS (MILLIONS)	UNDERPAYMENTS (MILLIONS)
2012/13	3.70	1.95
2013/14	3.95	1.48
2014/15	3.49	1.56

■ Insurance Premium Tax

Phil Boswell: [\[55301\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the likely effect of the rise in insurance premium tax on lower-income individuals.

Jane Ellison:

Insurance Premium Tax is a tax on insurers so any impact on individuals depends on how and whether insurers pass on the rate increase in the form of higher premiums.

A Tax Information and Impact Note has been published and is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/insurance-premium-tax-increase-of-standard-rate>. If insurers pass on the full rate increase, this would cost households in the bottom income decile 19p per week (£9.63 per year).

Tim Farron:

[55536]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the effect the increase in insurance premium tax announced in the Autumn Statement 2016 will have on home insurance premiums for families affected by Storm Desmond.

Jane Ellison:

Insurance Premium Tax is a tax on insurers, so any impact on premiums depends on how far and whether they pass on the rate increase.

If insurers pass on the whole rate increase, it is estimated that this would add £7 per year to the average annual cost of combined buildings and contents insurance, or £3 to the average annual cost of contents only insurance.

The Government announced an extra £700 million investment in flood defence and resilience measures after Storm Desmond. The Government has worked with the insurance industry to create the Flood Re scheme which ensures that households in areas of high flood risk can access insurance.

Tim Farron:

[55572]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of how much the increase in insurance premium tax announced in the Autumn Statement 2016 will add to the (a) total and (b) average amount paid annually for home insurance in (i) England and (ii) Cumbria.

Jane Ellison:

Insurance Premium Tax is a tax on insurers, so any impact on premiums depends on how far and whether they pass on the rate increase.

If they pass on the full rate increase, it is estimated that this will add £7 to the average annual cost of combined buildings and contents insurance, or £3 to the average annual cost of contents only insurance. These figures are based on UK averages.

Phil Boswell:

[55820]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to assess (a) trends in the incidence of people purchasing insurance coverage and (b) levels of insurance coverage purchased after the rise in insurance premium tax announced in the Autumn Statement 2016.

Jane Ellison:

The Government does not have any plans to carry out such an assessment. Trends and the levels of insurance purchased are subject to a number of influences. These include

the price of insurance. Price is set by insurers and is subject to a wide range of factors, of which tax is just one part. Other factors include inflation, changing assessment of risk, the performance of insurers' investments and costs. It is therefore difficult to isolate and then analyse the impact of any one of these factors.

The Government has no evidence to suggest that this level of change to Insurance Premium Tax will lead to changes in the number of uninsured vehicles. The estimated number of uninsured vehicles in the UK has fallen from 2 million in 2005 to 1 million today.

■ National Insurance

Stephen Timms: [\[55900\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what comparable process to the P800 adjustment for income tax exists to correct National Insurance records.

Jane Ellison:

National Insurance records do not have a comparable process to the end of year P800 adjustments process for income tax. This is because National Insurance contributions (NICs) paid on the earnings of the employee are assessed for the period in which the earnings were paid (for example, weekly or monthly) for each separate employment. There is no annual correction as unlike income tax, NICs are not assessed on an annual basis across all sources, therefore no reconciliation is required at the end of the year.

When the details of the NICs paid are recorded onto an individual's National Insurance account, HM Revenue and Customs routinely performs checks on the data received and under or overpayments of NICs can be investigated and corrected.

■ National Productivity Investment Fund

Jess Phillips: [\[55226\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made an estimate of the number of jobs held by women which will be affected by the additional spending in the National Productivity Investment Fund announced in the Autumn Statement 2016.

Mr David Gauke:

The National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) will be targeted at four areas that are critical for productivity: transport, housing, digital communications and research and development (R&D). Investing in these areas will support the UK economy and benefit businesses and households, for instance by reducing congestion on the roads and increasing broadband speed and reliability. The £23bn of investment through the NPIF will have a positive impact on jobs for women and for men.

The government has a strong record on helping women to enter and progress in the labour market. The female employment rate increased by more in the most recent parliament than in the previous three combined.

Jess Phillips:

[\[55228\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to ensure that women play a role in increasing productivity in those sectors which receive additional spending through the National Productivity Investment Fund announced in the Autumn Statement 2016.

Mr David Gauke:

The government has a strong record on helping women to enter and progress in the labour market. The number of women in work has increased by over 1.2 million since 2010 to 14.9 million. The female employment rate increased by more in the most recent parliament than in the previous three combined.

The government's policies are helping more women than ever before get the support they need to work. The government's approach to this is economy-wide. For example, since September 2011, the Government has funded 15 hours a week of free childcare for all 3 and 4 year olds; and the government plans to go further: from September 2017, the Government will extend the free childcare entitlement to 30 hours a week for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds.

Jess Phillips:

[\[55229\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to set targets for women's employment to be achieved as a result of the National Productivity Investment Fund announced in the Autumn Statement 2016.

Mr David Gauke:

The government has no plans to set targets for women's employment to be achieved as a result of the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF). The NPIF will be targeted at four areas that are critical for productivity: transport, housing, digital communications and research and development (R&D). Investing in these areas will support the UK economy and benefit businesses and households, for instance by reducing congestion on the roads and increasing broadband speed and reliability. The £23bn of investment through the NPIF will have a positive impact on jobs for women and for men.

The government has a strong record on helping women to enter and progress in the labour market. The female employment rate increased by more in the most recent parliament than in the previous three combined.

■ Research: Finance

Greg Mulholland:

[\[55172\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much of the research and development funding set out in table 3.1 of the Autumn Statement 2016 will be spent in each region of the UK.

Mr David Gauke:

In the Autumn Statement the government announced an additional £2 billion of public spending on Research and Development by 2020-21. The additional funds will be delivered by funding bodies that operate nationwide and award funds on the basis of excellence, irrespective of where it is found. Where funding is devolved, the government

will ensure that the devolved administrations receive their fair share by applying the Barnett formula in the usual way.

■ **Revenue and Customs: Disclosure of Information**

Alison Thewliss: [\[55167\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many applications to HM Revenue and Customs for release of copies of employment history schedules are outstanding for processing.

Alison Thewliss: [\[55168\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many staff of HM Revenue and Customs are working on the release of copies of employment history schedules.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs currently has 35,961 items of employment history schedules work awaiting processing, and around 180 full time equivalent staff working on employment history schedules at this time.

■ **Small Businesses: Research**

Greg Mulholland: [\[55177\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 3.29 of the Autumn Statement 2016, what proportion of the additional investment into research and development will be allocated to small and medium-sized businesses.

Mr David Gauke:

The government is committed to supporting innovative businesses and research, and supporting technologies where the UK has a strong scientific and commercial advantage.

Small and Medium Enterprises will be eligible to apply to the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund for additional funds made available through the substantial increase to Innovate UK grant funding announced at Autumn Statement. Funding will be awarded through a competitive process, on the basis of national excellence.

■ **Social Services: Minimum Wage**

Paul Blomfield: [\[55814\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 30 November 2016 to Question 54284, what the level of non-compliance was that was found as a result of the investigations into the six social care companies; and if he will publish the HM Revenue and Customs' report on that investigation.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not comment on individual cases and has no plans to publish a report into its investigations into the six social care companies.

In 2015/16, HMRC launched a campaign of targeted enforcement into the social care sector, in which a number of providers – both large and small – were investigated for National Minimum Wage compliance. During that year HMRC identified over £650,000 in arrears for nearly 3400 workers in the sector.

■ Taxation

Diana Johnson:

[55285]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish (a) vehicle excise duty and (b) fuel duty revenues by NUTS 1 region for each of the last three fiscal years.

Jane Ellison:

Fuel duty is paid on hydrocarbon oil when it is released for consumption in the UK, either from a UK refinery or an excise warehouse. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not collect data about the location where the tax liability arose. HMRC therefore does not hold the data to produce reliable regional estimates.

Fuel duty receipts for the whole of the UK are published by HMRC, and are available in the Hydrocarbon Oils Bulletin:

<https://www.uktradeinfo.com/Statistics/Pages/TaxAndDutybulletins.aspx>

HMRC also publishes an estimate of fuel duty receipts for each of the countries in the UK, which is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/disaggregation-of-hmrc-tax-receipts>

National VED revenues are published in the annual Budget report. Figures for fiscal years 2014-15 and 2015-16 can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508193/HMT_Budget_2016_Web_Accessible.pdf

For fiscal year 2013-14, the figures are available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416330/47881_Budget_2015_Web_Accessible.pdf

The Government has no plans to publish either Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) or fuel duty revenues by NUTS 1 region.

■ Transport: Finance

Greg Mulholland:

[55173]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much of the roads and local transport funding set out in table 3.1 of the Autumn Statement 2016 will be spent in each region of the UK.

Mr David Gauke:

At Autumn Statement the government announced an additional £1.1 billion funding to relieve congestion and deliver upgrades on local roads and public transport networks. Further announcements on the allocation of this funding will be made by Department of Transport in due course.

Greg Mulholland:

[\[55175\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 3.17 of the Autumn Statement 2016, how many of the areas identified as key pinch points are located in each region of the UK; and what proportion of the additional £220 million investment will be spent in each region.

Mr David Gauke:

At Autumn Statement the government announced new funding to relieve congestion at key pinchpoints on the strategic road network. Further announcements on the location of pinchpoints and the allocation of this funding will be made by Department of Transport in due course.

■ **Treasury: Billing**

Tim Farron:

[\[55439\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what proportion of payments by his Department to small businesses are made on time and in accordance with the prompt payment code.

Simon Kirby:

HM Treasury currently does not distinguish between small and large businesses in relation to paying suppliers. The Government has a long standing policy commitment to pay 80% of undisputed invoices within 5 days, with the rest paid within 30 days. During 2015-16, HM Treasury paid 71.4% within 5 days and 97.5% within 30 days.

■ **Treasury: Public Appointments**

Diana Johnson:

[\[55483\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 4.9 of the Autumn Statement 2016, who the members are of the new Ministerial group chaired by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury which will oversee the delivery of priority infrastructure projects.

Mr David Gauke:

The membership of the group will be announced in due course.

■ **Universal Credit**

Debbie Abrahams:

[\[55850\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many full-time equivalent staff of HM Revenue and Customs worked on the design and implementation of universal credit in each year since its introduction.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs has employed the following full-time equivalents to support the design and implementation of Universal Credit:

PERIOD	AVERAGE FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS
2011/2012 (September to March)	37
2012/13	132
2013/2014	132
2014/15	101
2015/16	98
2016/17 (April to October)	85

Debbie Abrahams:

[55888]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the monthly average waiting time was related to calls to HM Revenue and Customs on universal credit in each year since its introduction.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs does not hold this information. The Department for Work and Pensions administers Universal Credit.

■ VAT: Motor Vehicles

Margaret Ferrier:

[55471]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when his Department will publish further information on the steps he plans to take to implement the undertaking contained in paragraph 4.50 of Autumn Statement 2016 to tackle exploitation of the VAT relief on adapted cars for wheelchair users.

Jane Ellison:

Draft legislation, the explanatory note and the tax information and impact note was issued on Monday 5th December as part of the usual Autumn Statement process. These can be found at the following links:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/574680/newbook_book.pdf (clause 43);

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/574679/Explanatory_Notes_-_draft_provisions.pdf (clause 43 and Schedule 14); and,

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/finance-bill-2017-draft-legislation-overview-documents/overview-of-legislation-in-draft> (section 4.3) respectively.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/finance-bill-2017-draft-legislation-overview-documents/overview-of-legislation-in-draft>

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**Housing: Construction**

Greg Mulholland: [\[55174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to paragraph 3.12 of the Autumn Statement 2016, how much of the £1.7 billion investment by 2020-21 intended for accelerated construction on public sector land will be spent in each region of England.

Gavin Barwell:

£1.7 billion of investment for Accelerated Construction was announced at the Autumn Statement. This will see up to 15,000 homes started on surplus public sector land this Parliament.

We are currently undertaking detailed project scoping. Further details about the programme will be made available on completion of this work.

John Mann: [\[55313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many housing developments in England have roads or sewerage requiring adoption after more than five years of occupation by residents.

Gavin Barwell:

The Department does not hold the information you request because, although the Building Regulations require new housing to have adequate drainage and access, there is no requirement for all roads or sewerage to be adopted as a matter of course. This is a matter for the developer.

Multiple Occupation

Mr Clive Betts: [\[55892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the estimated cost to local authorities is of the proposed change to standards for the mandatory licensing of houses of multiple occupation that his Department is consulting on.

Gavin Barwell:

Costs in administering and implementing the licensing regime can be funded through fees charged for consideration of applications for the grant of licences. There will, therefore, be no additional financial burdens on local housing authorities as a result of the implementation of the extension of mandatory licensing.

Owner Occupation

Royston Smith: [\[55426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what proportion of 18 to 30 year olds have become homeowners in the last five years.

Gavin Barwell:

The Department's English Housing Survey provides estimates of the proportion of owner occupiers by age including '16 to 24' years and '25 to 34' years. These are available in table AT1.4 at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/501068/2014-15_Section_1_Households_tables_and_figures_FINAL.xlsx

The figures show the numbers and proportions in each year. It is not possible to estimate the proportion that have become home owners in the last five years.

■ Parking: Fees and Charges

Jim McMahon:

[55023]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what representations his Department has received on overpayments to parking payment machines which do not give change.

Mr Marcus Jones:

To date, the Department for Communities and Local Government has not received any representations regarding overpayments to parking payment machines.

The government recognises the important role parking provision plays in successful town centres, and encourages all local authorities to provide flexible payment arrangements, including change from meters, to encourage more visitors into our town centres.

■ Planning Permission

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[55916]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department has given to planning inspectors on the weight given to infrastructure issues in new developments.

Gavin Barwell:

The National Planning Policy Framework and planning guidance is clear that Local Plans should consider what infrastructure is needed to support development, and how and when it can be provided. The cumulative impact of development, and the need for infrastructure to support it, are material considerations in deciding whether development is appropriate. The weight to be given to infrastructure issues is a matter for the decision taker to assess, taking into account the particular circumstances of each case.

■ Private Rented Housing: Antisocial Behaviour

Mr Clive Betts:

[55937]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to what extent local authorities will be allowed to publicise the details of banning orders in the private rented sector, including the names of the people to whom those banning orders apply.

Gavin Barwell:

Local authorities will be able to decide whether or not to publicise the details of banning orders. They will be best placed to know whether publication of information about banned landlords or property agents can be justified as necessary and proportionate to achieve the policy aim of successfully enforcing banning orders.

■ Right to Buy Scheme: Housing Associations

Diana Johnson: [\[55480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to paragraph 3.13 of the Autumn Statement 2016, if he will publish details of the working of the regional pilot of the Right to Buy for housing associations.

Gavin Barwell:

The government remains committed to the voluntary Right to Buy agreement reached with Housing Associations and the National Housing Federation, and the expanded regional pilot announced at Autumn Statement is evidence of that commitment. The pilot will allow us to test key features of the policy and provide important evidence to inform the design of the main scheme.

We are working closely with the Housing Association Sector on the design of the pilot and more information will follow once the detail has been developed.

■ Sleeping Rough

Greg Mulholland: [\[55179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to paragraph 5.12 of the Autumn Statement 2016, how much of the additional £10 million committed to the Rough Sleeping Fund will be spent in each region.

Mr Marcus Jones:

One person without a home is one too many. That is why we have made a £50 million Homelessness Prevention Programme available to local authorities all over England to provide an innovative approach to tackling homelessness, with prevention at its heart. This includes an additional £10 million announced at Autumn Statement for the Rough Sleeping Fund to support people at imminent risk of, or new to sleeping rough.

Bids to all of the funds in the Homelessness Prevention Programme are currently being assessed on the basis of the criteria set out in the funding prospectuses, and successful areas will be announced in due course.

■ Social Rented Housing: Regulation

Mr Clive Betts: [\[55938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the difference there will be in the powers that will be available to the proposed non-departmental public body for the regulation of social housing compared to those powers that were previously available to the Tenant Services Authority.

Gavin Barwell:

Legislation passed in the 2011 Localism Act gave the Social Housing Regulator (part of the Homes and Communities Agency) a stronger, more proactive role in economic regulation, and a more reactive approach to regulation of consumer standards than its predecessor; the Tenant Services Authority. The regulatory framework defines a clear remit with respect to consumer regulation; where a failure to meet consumer standards has caused, or may cause, serious detriment.

The Regulator's transition to an independent entity will not change its statutory powers or objectives. This is solely an administrative change.

■ Social Services: Children**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**[\[55943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to improve the quality of the spending data that local authorities report in relation to children's social work.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The data collected from local authorities about expenditure on Children's Social Care within the local government finance statistics is badged as a National Statistic by the UK Statistics Authority. The data published under the National Statistics label has been produced to the high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. National Statistics products undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer demands.

Outturn data is provided by local authorities after being audited by independent external auditors of the accounts. Figures are subjected to rigorous pre-defined validation tests both within the form itself, while the form is being completed by the authority and also by Department for Communities and Local Government as the data are received and stored. These validation tests are reviewed regularly for their level of efficacy.

■ Solar Power: Non-domestic Rates**Danny Kinahan:**[\[55466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether he plans to halt the proposed business rates increase for commercial solar installations.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Business rates policy in Northern Ireland is devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly. In England, business rates are based on valuations from the Valuation Office Agency and we do not intervene in their independent assessments. We will put in place a £3.6 billion transitional relief scheme for England to ensure that no ratepayer is unfairly penalised by the 2017 revaluation.

■ Sportsgrounds: Wakefield**Mary Creagh:**[\[55478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department has taken to monitor the construction of a community stadium on greenbelt land at Newmarket, in Wakefield Metropolitan district since December 2012; and if he will make a statement.

Gavin Barwell:

Once the Secretary of State has issued his decision on a case, he has no further role in the matter. He has not therefore taken any steps to monitor the implementation of this planning consent since it was issued by a previous Secretary of State on 5 December 2012. It is the responsibility of the applicant to decide whether or not to implement the consent and, if it does go ahead, the responsibility of the local planning authority to secure implementation in accordance with the conditions set out in the decision letter.

■ Travellers: Caravan Sites**Charlotte Leslie:**[\[55159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that the costs of cleaning up illegal Traveller sites are recovered from the perpetrators of damage caused.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The government is concerned about unauthorised encampments and the effect that they can have on communities. Local authorities and the police have a wide range of strong powers that enable them to take action and we want to see them working together to address this issue. A summary of the powers is published on the government's website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dealing-with-illegal-and-unauthorised-encampments> This summary includes the powers available to local authorities to clean up after unauthorised encampments. There are also associated powers for local authorities to recover the costs of cleaning up in certain circumstances. Where the perpetrators of fly-tipping can be identified, they can be prosecuted and fined for depositing waste illegally. Swift enforcement action against unauthorised encampments will reduce the opportunities for fly-tipping. Ordering of legal costs and/or damages is at the discretion of the Court.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Ministerial Policy Advisers****Tom Watson:**[\[55160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 53795, what the (a) name, (b) job title and (c) responsibility is of each of the unpaid advisers based in the Museums and ALBs' Directorate of her Department.

Matt Hancock:

There are no unpaid advisers in the Museums & ALB's Directorate.

Tom Watson:

[55161]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 53795, what the (a) name, (b) job title and (c) responsibility is of each of the unpaid advisers based in the Tourism and Heritage Directorate of her Department.

Tracey Crouch:

The only unpaid advisers in the Tourism and Heritage Directorate are the members of the Events Industry Board, who focus on implementing the Business Visits and Events Strategy; ways to improve and promote the UK Events sector; and act as a sounding board and point of dialogue between Ministers and the industry.

The 9 unpaid members are:

Nick de Bois - Chair

Michael Hirst OBE - Deputy Chairman and Chair of BVEP

Will Whitehorn - Chairman of SECC

Martin Lewis- Founder of Intellectual Capitals and Managing Director of CAT Publications

Mike Rusbridge - Formerly Chairman of Reed Exhibitions - attending in a personal capacity

Tracy Halliwell MBE - Director of Business Tourism and Major events - London and Partners

Chris Skeith - Chief Executive of AEO

Simon Hughes - Director of EVCOM

Ufi Ibrahim - CEO of British Hospitality Association

Further Details can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/events-industry-board#membership>

Tom Watson:

[55162]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 53795, what the (a) name, (b) job title and (c) responsibility is of each of the unpaid advisers based in the Libraries and Cultural Property Directorate of her Department.

Matt Hancock:

There are no unpaid advisors currently based in the Libraries and Cultural Property Directorate.

Tom Watson:

[55204]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 53795, what the (a) name, (b) job title and (c) responsibility is of each of the unpaid advisers currently based in the Digital Economy Unit of her Department.

Matt Hancock:

The only unpaid advisers within the Digital Economy Unit are a) the members of the Council for Digital Inclusion, whose are responsible for creating the right environment for motivating and enabling more people to make the most of the internet:

- Two Directors/Managing Directors from leading UK retail banks
- One Director at a leading telecoms, broadband & media provider
- One CEO of an accessibility charity
- One Commercial Director of a social housing organisation
- Two senior leaders from leading digital inclusion and skills charities
- One Senior leader from a local authority

And b) the Future Communications Challenge Group (FCCG), who advise DCMS on how the UK can lead in the development of 5G technology:

- One President of a Learned Society
- Four Professors of Electronic and Radiocommunications Engineering
- Staff member at an Innovate UK sponsored Catapult project
- Two Heads of R&D at telecoms companies
- One Vice President of an electronics components company
- One Head of Standards and Industrial Affairs with a communications device manufacturer
- One Chair of an International Radio body
- One Representative of a manufacturing trade body
- One CTO of a communications equipment manufacturer
- One Head of telecoms at an investment bank
- One Employee of a communications security company
- Two independent radiocommunications experts

In abiding by the DPA, to provide the name of each adviser would incur a disproportionate cost.

Tom Watson:

[55206]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 53795, what the (a) name, (b) job title and (c) responsibility is

of each of the unpaid advisers currently based in the First World War Centenary and Ceremonials Directorate of her Department.

Tracey Crouch:

The only current unpaid advisers within the First World War Centenary and Ceremonials Directorate are the members of the Centenary Advisory Group, who provide strategic oversight and challenge to the WWI Centenary programme; monitors delivery and progress and ensures that objectives remain current and appropriate. The group is made up of the following:

- The Prime Minister's Special Representative for the centenary of the First World War
- One author
- One academic
- Three former Chief's of Defence Staff
- Two historians
- One director general of a British charity
- Two MPs
- One former Chief of the General Staff
- One novelist
- One playwright
- Three peers
- One public relations and philanthropy expert
- One Dean
- One print media expert
- One former Defence Secretary
- One expert in leadership development and cultural change
- One history school teacher
- Special Representatives for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Tom Watson:

[55209]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 53795, what the (a) name, (b) job title and (c) responsibility is of each of the unpaid advisers currently based in the Government Art Collection of her Department.

Matt Hancock:

Details of the current unpaid advisers within the Government Art Collection can be found here: <http://www.gac.culture.gov.uk/advisory-committee.html>

■ Public Libraries: Swindon

Kevin Brennan: [\[55871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of whether recommendations of Swindon Borough Council in its report, Securing a sustainable future for Swindon's Library Service, published in November 2016, comply with the duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The Department is currently monitoring the situation in relation to Swindon Borough Council's proposals for its library service. Subject to any decisions the Council's Cabinet take, we will consider if further investigation is needed to determine whether there is serious doubt about the Council providing a comprehensive and efficient library service. I have met with the Hon Member for North Swindon and Swindon Borough Council's library portfolio holder to discuss the Council's proposals.

■ Sports

Karen Lumley: [\[55620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has had discussions with the Department for Education on making schools hubs for sport in the community.

Tracey Crouch:

Schools play an important role in the community, and ensuring that both school and community facilities are available and accessible is of mutual benefit to all.

Sport England's Use Our Schools resource encourages more schools to open up their facilities for community use and to help those already open to stay open. To develop its insight into the way schools use the resource and share it with other schools, Sport England is measuring levels of take up and engagement and will publish these in an impact report. DCMS and Sport England are working with the Department for Education to ensure that schools are aware of the relevant guidance.

■ World Heritage Sites: Scotland

Dr Paul Monaghan: [\[55396\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what measures she is taking to promote the Flow Country in Caithness and Sutherland as a future UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Tracey Crouch:

The Flow Country World Heritage nomination was examined at a Technical Evaluation panel in December 2015, where it was concluded that there is potentially a strong and clear case to be made for putting the site forward for World Heritage status. Further work is currently being undertaken to develop the nomination to a sufficient standard to make a convincing case for inscription, and DCMS will be happy to arrange a further technical evaluation once this has been completed.

DEFENCE■ **Afghanistan: Armed Conflict**

Imran Hussain: [\[55812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many NATO airstrikes took place in Afghanistan on 2 and 3 November 2016.

Mike Penning:

NATO does not conduct airstrikes in Afghanistan.

■ **Afghanistan: Military Aircraft**

Imran Hussain: [\[55712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether UK military aircraft have operated in the Kunduz province of Afghanistan since September 2016.

Mike Penning:

No UK military aircraft have operated in the Kunduz province of Afghanistan since September 2016.

■ **Armed Forces: Mental Health**

Craig Whittaker: [\[55597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what support his Department provides to (a) serving and (b) former members of the armed forces who have mental health problems.

Mark Lancaster:

The Government takes the mental health of the Armed Forces very seriously, and provides a wide range of support and treatments for those who need them. This includes pre and post-operational stress management training, a wide range of psychiatric and psychological treatments, and initiatives such as Trauma Risk Management. We are also working hard to reduce stigma attached to mental health issues and to encourage Service personnel to come forward.

Personnel leaving the Armed Forces who have had mental health issues during their Service are able to access a Ministry of Defence (MOD) Department of Community Mental Health for up to six months after discharge, to help them during the transition period. The MOD also has a Veterans and Reserves Mental Health Programme which provides mental health assessments for veterans deployed since 1982, and Reservists deployed since 2003.

Veterans' mental healthcare is primarily the responsibility of the NHS in England and Devolved Administrations. A Veterans' Transition Protocol ensures any Service person discharged with a diagnosed mental health illness is handed over appropriately to the civilian healthcare provider.

■ Guided Weapons

Dr Julian Lewis: [\[55499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his policy is on the maintenance of a surface to surface missile capability for Royal Navy ships; when the Harpoon missile is due to be withdrawn; when that missile's replacement will be ready to enter service; and for what reason there is no plan to fill the capability gap between those two events.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Royal Navy continuously reviews the capabilities required to deliver its tasking. As part of this process the Navy is working alongside other areas of the Ministry of Defence to consider options for Harpoon replacement when it goes out of service in 2018.

All Royal Navy ships carry a range of offensive and defensive weapons systems, but it would be inappropriate to comment on the details and capabilities of specific weapons systems carried by each of our ships as such disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ Iraq: Overseas Aid

Mr Nigel Dodds: [\[55568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what additional in-country assistance the Government has disbursed to Iraq since the Warsaw NATO Summit in July 2016.

Mike Penning:

The UK continues to assist Iraq in defeating Daesh. We have over 550 personnel in Iraq, assisting with training as part of the Global Coalition's Building Partner Capacity Programme. UK forces have helped to train over 30,000 Iraqi security forces personnel, including over 7,000 Kurdish Peshmerga. The RAF also continues to support the Coalition through participation in airstrikes. At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, the UK pledged £1 million to help NATO shape its in-country training and capacity building initiative; this money will enable NATO training to start in January 2017.

■ Military Aircraft: Procurement

George Kerevan: [\[55862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what lessons his Department learned from the Nimrod MRA4 and Chinook HC Mk3 procurement processes; and what procurement projects his Department uses as benchmarks for effectiveness.

Harriett Baldwin:

The problems that led to cancellation of the Nimrod MRA4 programme and the difficulties with Chinook Mk3 were rooted in the procurement practices of over 20 years ago. Since then a series of procurement reforms, building on an understanding of why projects such as Nimrod MRA4 and Chinook Mk 3 went awry, have produced a more robust equipment acquisition process that has led to improved project delivery performance as set out in the most recent annual NAO Major Project Reports.

Improvements to our procurement processes help to ensure we can maximise investment in the front line. Our Equipment Plan will invest £178 billion on equipment and support over the next decade.

■ Ministry of Defence: Procurement

Julie Elliott: [\[55803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the effect of changes in the value of sterling on his Department's procurement costs.

Harriett Baldwin:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 17 October 2016 to Question 48369 to the hon. Member for Dunfermline and West Fife (Mr Chapman).

Attachments:

1. 48369 - MOD Procurement [Hansard Extract 17 October 2016 , HOC 48369.docx]

■ Ukraine: Military Aid

Chris Stephens: [\[55906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether training has been provided by British service personnel in Ukraine to any members of (a) Azov special operations regiment and (b) the Aidar territorial defence battalion; and if he will make a statement.

Mike Penning:

British Service personnel in Ukraine have not provided any training to members of the Azov special operations regiment or the Aidar territorial defence battalion.

Our training mission in Ukraine, Operation ORBITAL, delivers defensive, non-escalatory training to the Ukrainian Armed Forces, reducing fatalities and casualties and building their capacity and resilience. Additionally, through our Defence Attaché and Special Defence Advisor in Kyiv, we provide training and support to the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence and the Ukrainian Armed Forces as part of our defence engagement programme.

EDUCATION

■ Children in Care: Housing

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck: [\[55946\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children subject to (a) looked after and (b) leaving care plans are living in unregulated settings such as bed and breakfast accommodation and houses of multiple occupation.

Edward Timpson:

The Department collects and publishes information on the types of placement/accommodation looked after children and care leavers are in. This information is available in the Statistical First Release 'Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016' at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2015-to-2016>. Information on placements for children looked after at 31 March 2016 is contained in table A2 and information on accommodation of care leavers can be found in tables F1b and F1d.

Further details on the definitions used in these tables are available in the children looked after return guide for local authorities, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-looked-after-return-2016-to-2017-guide>.

■ Children: Protection

Mr Laurence Robertson: [55831]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance the Government has issued to the police and local authorities to improve how they share information with each other for the purposes of (a) safeguarding of children and (b) other matters relating to public protection; and if she will make a statement.

Edward Timpson:

Proportionate and timely information is key to keeping children safe. In 2015, the Government published two key documents to support local practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers. These are: 'Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services', which sets out how information should be shared between the local authority, police and indeed other agencies, and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

These documents were published as part of a package alongside other key documents, including 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. Both documents make clear that if a child is at risk of harm or abuse, practitioners should share information.

■ Children's Centres: Closures

Dan Jarvis: [55895]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many Sure Start children's centres have closed in England in each year since 2010.

Caroline Dinenage:

Local authorities have a duty to ensure there are sufficient centres to meet local need; and a duty to consult where changes are planned to local children's centre provision.

As at 31 October 2016 there were 3,259 main children's centres and sites open to families and children providing children's centre services as part of a network. Children's centre records are maintained by local authorities and are made publicly available via the department's "EduBase portal" at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/edubase/home.xhtml>.

Based on the information supplied by local authorities the numbers of centres closed year by year is given in the table below:

CALENDAR YEAR	NUMBER OF CHILDREN'S CENTRES CLOSED BY YEAR
2010	0
2011	12[1]
2012	27
2013	33[2]
2014	85[3]
2015	156[4]

The totals for 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2015 have been adjusted since replies to previous questions 3237 <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2015-06-18/3237/> ; and 38640 <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-05-26/38640/>.

[1] The total number of children's centres closed in 2011 is three higher than previously reported due to a local authority reporting in 2016 that three centres listed as open on Edubase had been closed in 2011

[2] The total number of children's centres closed in 2013 is one higher than previously reported due to a local authority reporting in 2016 that a centre listed as open on Edubase had been closed in 2013

[3] The total number of children's centres closed in 2014 is two higher than previously reported due to a local authority reporting in 2016 that two centres listed as open on Edubase had actually closed in 2014

[4] The total number of children's centres closed in 2015 is 12 higher than previously reported due to five local authorities reporting closures that took place in 2015 in 2016.

■ Department for Education: Billing

Tim Farron:

[55430]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of payments by her Department to small businesses are made on time and in accordance with the prompt payment code.

Caroline Dinenage:

Prompt payment data for the DfE is published at the link below. These figures are for all suppliers, a split into small businesses is not available.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prompt-payment-data-for-dfe>

■ Multiple Sclerosis: Discrimination

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[55674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that people with multiple sclerosis are not discriminated against in the workplace; and if she will make a statement.

Caroline Dinenage:

Measures to prevent workplace discrimination exist in the Equality Act 2010 (the Act), for which my Department has lead responsibility.

We are committed to protecting people with disabilities in the workplace. The Act places obligations on employers in relation to disabled employees which ensure that workers who have chronic diseases or conditions (whether terminal or not), or debilitating illnesses, are fully protected from any unlawful treatment by their employers.

Multiple sclerosis is one of the specified disabilities in the Act which means anyone with this condition is automatically considered disabled and so protected from discriminatory treatment in employment.

In most other cases protection from discrimination would still be available where a worker's condition fits the definition of a disability set out in section 6 of the 2010 Act - i.e. "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". The Act defines long-term in this context as having lasted, or being likely to last for at least 12 months, or likely to last for the rest of the life of the person. 'Substantial' is defined as more than minor or trivial.

As a signal of our commitment to promoting employment among disabled people the Government recently launched the new Disability Confident Scheme. By working through the 3-level scheme employers can develop the tools they need to recruit, retain and develop more disabled staff, and can gain a badge and certificate to mark their achievements. The scheme also provides supporting advice, guidance and case studies to help employers on their Disability Confident journeys. Amongst other things the Scheme covers the need for employers to respond positively to requests for adjustments, including working flexibility.

■ Pre-school Education: Yorkshire and the Humber

Craig Whittaker:

[\[55593\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to reduce the difference in attainment between children under five years old in Yorkshire and the Humber and the national average for such attainment.

Craig Whittaker:

[\[55594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to reduce the difference in attainment between children under five years old from different socio-economic groups.

Caroline Dinenage:

On 20 October, the department published the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) results for the 2015 to 2016 academic year at a national and local authority level, which are available at: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-results-2015-to-2016. At a national level, 69.3% of children achieved a good level of development (GLD), which is an increase of 3 percentage points on 2015 (compared to 67.4% in Yorkshire and Humber, which is an increase of 2.8 percentage points on Yorkshire and Humber's 2015 data).

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and high-quality early education is key to future outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged children. That is why we are working hard to ensure parents and children - wherever they live in England - have access to high quality early years education places through the funded 15 hour entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds and for all three- and four-year-olds. At present, 84% of two-year-olds are taking up their entitlement in a good or outstanding setting (compared with 86% in Yorkshire and Humber) and 86% of all three- and four-year-olds take up their entitlement in a good or outstanding setting (compared to 83% in Yorkshire and Humber). The Early Years Pupil Premium provides over £300 per eligible child to improve outcomes for disadvantaged children and, from September 2017, working parents who meet the eligibility criteria will also have access to an additional 15 hours of funded early education.

Our early years funding formula includes an additional needs factor – to better target funding towards local authorities with a higher relative proportion of children with additional needs – and an area cost adjustment to reflect the different costs of providing childcare in different areas of the country. This will help to ensure that all children can access quality early education in their area.

The government is taking further steps to understand the regional attainment gap. In May 2016, the department commissioned a feasibility study to investigate the regional gap in early years at age 5, which made recommendations to undertake a further study through longitudinal analysis of the Millennium Cohort Study (MSC) to assess variation in attainment and evaluate the potential drivers of a regional gap. Acting on the feasibility report, the department has commissioned a study to build on the recommendations of the feasibility report, which will be able to help unpick the potential drivers on the regional attainment gap.

■ Schools: Milk**Martyn Day:**[\[55304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much milk is purchased by (a) nursery and (b) primary schools each year.

Edward Timpson:

We do not collect information on how much milk nursery or primary schools purchase. However, both the EU School Milk Subsidy Scheme and Nursery Milk Scheme reimburse schools and nurseries against the costs of providing milk to eligible children. In academic

year 2014/15, the School Milk Scheme provided subsidies towards 14,125.250kl of milk in England and the Nursery Milk Scheme reimbursed the cost of providing 92,977,223 pints of milk to children in nursery and reception classes. This is the latest year for which comparable figures are available for both schemes.

Further information about these schemes is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eligibility-for-the-school-milk-subsidy-scheme>

<https://www.nurserymilk.co.uk/how-to-claim-for-nursery-milk>

■ Social Services: Children

Mr David Lammy: [54207]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which children's social care regulations were (a) removed, (b) improved and (c) kept without change in 2011-12.

Mr David Lammy: [54288]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent research her Department has undertaken into the use in other countries with similar legal systems to the UK of legislative exemptions in children's social care.

Mr David Lammy: [54289]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which recommendations related to primary and secondary legislation in her Department's report entitled, *The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report*, published in May 2011, have been implemented.

Edward Timpson:

There is one recommendation relating to primary and secondary legislation in 'The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report' that is currently being implemented: Amending the existing statutory requirements for each Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to produce and publish an annual report for the Children's Trust Board.

The statutory requirement to produce and publish an annual report for the Children's Trust Board will be removed if, subject to the will of Parliament, provisions in the Children and Social Work Bill on local arrangements for safeguarding and promoting welfare of children become law. Of course, there are a range of other recommendations made by Professor Munro which don't relate to legislation that have already been implemented.

This includes removing the distinction between initial and core assessments in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* statutory guidance, and trialling freedoms from the timescales in that guidance.

The Department does not hold a central list of changes to children's social care regulations, but records of changes to regulations are publically available through the parliament website.

Children's social care systems around the world are underpinned by very different legal frameworks and there isn't a direct comparator. However, information about

international innovation and system reform in children's social care is available from academic sources and is used to inform policy.

■ Special Educational Needs

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[55944]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average waiting time was for a child to receive a special educational needs and disability assessment and diagnosis in the latest period for which figures are available.

Edward Timpson:

The information requested is not held centrally by the Department.

■ Special Educational Needs: Pupil Exclusions

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[55945]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children with special educational needs and disability (SEND) were excluded from school; and what the total number of days lost to fixed-term exclusions was for children with SEND in each of the last three years.

Edward Timpson:

The numbers of exclusions of pupils with special educational needs are available from the permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England statistical first releases, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-exclusions>

The number of days 'lost' to fixed-term exclusions for pupils with special educational needs is not held. Schools must arrange alternative provision from the sixth day of a fixed-period exclusion, and may do so earlier.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture: Subsidies

Tim Farron:

[55821]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will take steps to provide mental health services support to farmers who are experiencing depression or anxiety as a result of financial hardship caused by late payments.

George Eustice:

There are numerous charitable organisations that are available to help farmers as a result of financial hardship. If there are any claimants who are experiencing financial hardship they should contact the Rural Payments Agency who will make use of the Basic Payment Scheme Financial Support Payments process, in the interests of supporting farmers in financial need while they await payment on their 2016 BPS claim.

■ Air Pollution: Calderdale

Craig Whittaker: [\[55595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions her Department has had with Calderdale Council on improving air quality in Calderdale.

Craig Whittaker: [\[55596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions her Department has had with Calderdale Council on reducing the level of pollutants in the air quality management areas within that council's area.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

I have recently written to the leaders, chief executives and directors of public health of local authorities with air quality challenges across England, including Calderdale Council, to highlight the need to monitor progress on local improvements in air quality and ensure that the measures they are taking deliver results as soon as possible. I look forward to receiving Calderdale Council's response.

As part of the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Review and Assessment process, local authorities are required to submit an Annual Status Report (ASR) to Defra each year. Calderdale Council has consistently met its reporting obligations since 2009.

Calderdale Council's ASR for 2016 indicates that the Council declared seven Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) between 2007 and 2014 due to exceedances of the annual mean nitrogen dioxide objective. These AQMA are located throughout the borough covering areas surrounding busy road networks.

Defra's detailed appraisal of the ASR was sent to the Council in August. It set out recommendations to help improve air quality in its area. This included advice that the Council should aim to: revise its action plan published in 2009 as it only covered three of the seven current AQMA; produce its first Air Quality Strategy, as well as adopting the West Yorkshire Low Emissions Strategy; and make improvements to its reporting of progress on measures and to its air quality monitoring regime. The Council has subsequently indicated that its action plan is under review.

Between 2011 and 2016, the Defra LAQM Helpdesk has provided technical support to Calderdale Council on a range of issues including pollutant monitoring and source apportionment, biomass screening and AQMA administrative support.

■ Fishing Catches

Angela Smith: [\[55772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department plans to follow European Commission advice on adopting maximum sustainable yield for fish stock that has improved as a result of the data-limited precautionary approach.

George Eustice:

The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) have made significant efforts in recent years to assess stocks where analytical maximum sustainable yield (MSY)

assessments and estimates are not available and we support both developing MSY proxies in such cases, as well as moving towards full analytical MSY assessments for any stocks whenever supported by available science and evidence.

When a stock first moves from a data-limited assessment to an analytical MSY assessment, it can result in a large change in the advised Total Allowable Catch (TAC) due to the incorporation of additional evidence such as recruitment, both actual and predicted, rather than reflecting a real change in a stock's dynamics. Therefore, in some cases it may be appropriate to have a short-term staged transition towards MSY.

Angela Smith:

[55773]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many (a) fish stocks and (b) total allowable catches are fished (i) at or below and (ii) above maximum sustainable yield; and what progress her Department has made towards its strategy that all fish stocks are fished at maximum sustainable yield by 2020.

George Eustice:

We are making good progress towards sustainable fishing with more stocks than ever now being fished at Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY). 31 stocks of the 59 with full analytical assessment in the North East Atlantic (and surrounding waters) were fished in accordance with MSY in 2014, compared with just 19 in 2004[1].

Earlier this year, the UK's provisional assessment for 2016 indicated that 24 stocks for which the UK has quota will be fished at or below maximum sustainable yield (MSY). A significant majority of these will be fished (a) at MSY rather than (b) below it; information on the specific stocks has been placed in the House Library.

We will be seeking to increase the number of stocks being fished in accordance with MSY in 2017 at the Fisheries Council in December.

[1] Reports of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – Monitoring the performance of the Common Fisheries Policy (STECF-16-05) – CORRIGENDUM to STECF-16-03. 2016.

https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/43805/55543/2016-03_STECF+16-05+Monitoring+performance+CFP+CORRIGENDUM_JRC100945.pdf

■ Flood Control

Mary Creagh:

[55751]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to her oral contribution of 24 November 2016, Official Report, column 1004 if she will publish a list of projects including their locations that will be supported by the £15 million investment.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Natural flood management solutions are an important part of our approach to reducing flood risk. The recently announced £15m investment specifically for natural flood management schemes across England presents an important opportunity to further develop the evidence base around working with natural processes to reduce flood risk.

We are, therefore, thinking carefully about where these schemes are based, and so have not yet announced specific locations that will be supported by the fund.

The Environment Agency will be administering the £15m investment, and have already been working with Natural England, Forestry Commission and local partners to identify project proposals. Following the announcement of the fund they can now begin to work with partners to fully scope these opportunities, which will then need to be robustly assessed against a set of agreed criteria. Further details of the process for confirming projects and their locations will be announced in due course.

Rachael Maskell: [55843]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which flood defence and resilience projects are currently in (a) construction, (b) development and (c) pipeline phase.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The £2.5bn capital investment covers the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2021. A comprehensive list of projects is available at <https://www.gov.uk/search?q=Programme+of+flood+and+coastal+erosion+risk+management+schemes>. The list indicates whether the scheme is in the construction, development or pipeline phase. This programme is live and will continue to be updated.

■ Flood Control: Expenditure

Rachael Maskell: [55844]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much her Department has spent on flood defences in the last 12 months.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The GOV.UK website contains a detailed breakdown of funding for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England. The document can be found at the webpage for 'Central Government Funding for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in England'.

During the financial year 2015/6 we spent £710.8m. This is the most recent 12-month period for which data is available. The document will be updated with 2016/17 expenditure in the summer of 2017.

■ Floods: Insurance

Rachael Maskell: [55846]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress she has made on formulating a flood insurance scheme for businesses.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

While we have seen no evidence of a systemic problem for small businesses accessing affordable flood insurance, there is growing anecdotal evidence of problems in some areas.

We welcome the launch of British Insurance Brokers' Association (BIBA) insurance product which will provide flood insurance for many small businesses that have struggled to access it to date. We are also working with the insurance industry and the wider commercial sector to help businesses become more resilient to flooding, preventing water entering and speeding recovery when it does. The Government published the Property Flood Resilience Action Plan in October which sets out a number of actions that the businesses community are committed to taking forward.

We will continue to work to better understand the nature and extent of this problem and what we can do to help small businesses.

■ Ivory: Sales

Rachael Maskell: [\[55845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of the worked ivory sales in the UK market is post-1947 ivory.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) does not hold information on how much pre-1947 worked ivory is in circulation. There is derogation in the EC CITES Regulation for pre -1947 worked ivory which means that commercial use within the EU does not require documentation.

■ Ivory: Trade

Rachael Maskell: [\[55842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions she has had at (a) international, (b) EU and (c) UK forums on ending the trade in historic and antique ivory.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Officials discussed the closure of domestic ivory markets at the Conference of Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) that took place in Johannesburg from 24 September to 5 October. The issue has also been discussed at a number of EU-level CITES meetings.

In the UK, my predecessor Rory Stewart met, and officials have had a number of discussions with, representatives of the arts and antique sectors over the past 18 months to discuss issues surrounding the sale of ivory in the UK. Officials have also discussed the UK's manifesto commitment to press for a total ban on ivory sales during regular CITES meetings with UK non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as bilaterally with individual and groups of interested NGOs.

■ Slaughterhouses: Horses

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[55158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps are being taken to ensure the slaughter process in equine slaughterhouses is transparent.

George Eustice:

There are strict legislative welfare requirements in relation to the slaughter of horses. An Official Veterinarian of the Food Standards Agency is present at all times to ensure that these legislative requirements are maintained.

■ Thames Tideway Tunnel**Grant Shapps:**[\[55733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her policy is on the protection of (a) consumers and (b) the public purse from financial risks in the event that construction of the Thames Tideway Tunnel is finished behind schedule.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government is providing Tideway, which has responsibility for financing and delivering the Tunnel, with a contingent financial support package for some low-probability but high-impact risks that might arise during construction. These are risks that the private sector is unable or unwilling to cover at an acceptable cost to customers.

If called upon, the Government Support Package (GSP) may provide support in five different scenarios. The statement made to the House by my right hon. Friend, the member for North Shropshire (Owen Paterson) on 5 June 2014 (Official Record, Col. 11WS) gives fuller details of these scenarios. It is important to note that if these risks do not materialise, there will be no cost to the taxpayer. As part of the project's regulatory and commercial arrangements, Tideway is strongly incentivised to deliver the Tunnel on time and to budget.

The project has an agreed threshold (130% of the original budget) for cost overruns, whether from a delay or otherwise, which is financed by Tideway. The upper end of the current estimated customer bill impact range of £20-£25 per year during the construction phase reflects expenditure at that threshold (if that is reached). If the project is late, the incentives regime applies time-related regulatory adjustments that are borne by the investors.

If the cost threshold is reached then Tideway can apply to Ofwat for an increase in approved expenditure (and therefore customer charges), which Ofwat will determine (but may not necessarily agree) taking into account the estimated cost to complete the project, appropriate incentives, and the cost of the required additional capital based on market conditions at the time. Tideway may also make a call on the GSP for Government equity financing to enable the project to be completed, at which time the Government would become an investor in the project and would have increased rights of oversight until completion of the Tunnel. This would ensure that taxpayers' interests continue to be protected.

■ Total Allowable Catches

Angela Smith:

[\[55768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if her Department will support European Commission proposals on total allowable catch quotas in 2017 for data-limited stocks at the Fisheries Council meeting in December 2016.

George Eustice:

The UK supports the management of data-limited stocks on a case-by-case basis, informed by all available evidence including directional trends in fishing mortality, stock biomass and fishing effort. It will be on this basis that Government will consider the Commission's proposal on fishing opportunities for 2017 for data-limited stocks.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Insurance

Chris Leslie:

[\[55039\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, if he will take steps to ensure that negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU will support the UK's insurance industry so that it remains a significant UK export industry.

Mr Robin Walker:

We fully recognise the UK insurance industry's valuable contribution to our economy. As a Commons report found last year, the Financial and Insurance Services Sector contributed £124.4bn to the UK economy, and represented 8% of GVA.

The UK insurance industry is the largest in the world, and manages over £1.9 trillion of investments.

The industry is underpinned by a number of factors including a pool of liquidity in the UK and significant expertise built up over decades.

We have held a number of meetings with the insurance industry and DExEU and HMT recently held a roundtable with representatives of the financial services industry including leading insurers to ensure all views are reflected in our analysis of the options for the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.

The government is committed to ensuring the UK remains a world leader in this area.

■ Origin Marking: UK Trade with EU

Stephen Timms:

[\[55897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether he has made an assessment of the possibility of making exclusions to Rules of Origin regulations in any future free trade deal between the UK and the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

The question presupposes the nature of our future relationship with the EU, on which a decision has not yet been taken. As the Prime Minister has said: we want British

companies to have the maximum freedom to trade with and operate in the Single Market – and to let European businesses do the same here. We are not seeking to replicate any other model: we want a bespoke approach, which works for the UK.

Of course, we understand the importance of preferential rules of origin in the context of a Free Trade Agreement, but we are analysing all of the different options that are available to us.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Burma: Minority Groups

Stephen Gethins: [\[55047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the Burmese government on the rights of the Rohingya and other minorities in that country.

Alok Sharma:

I raised the issue of the Rohingya with the Burmese Minister for Construction on 29 November, as well as concerns relayed by a number of Parliamentary colleagues calling for the immediate resumption of humanitarian access to Northern Rakhine. I reiterated our call for an independent investigation into allegations of human rights abuses, to which the Government of Burma has made commitment. The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my noble Friend the Rt Hon. Baroness Anelay of St Johns, visited Burma from 9-12 November where she raised similar concerns. She also discussed the peace process, in which the UK plays a leading role on seeking an end to the long-running conflict between the military and ethnic armed groups. This included a call for unfettered access for those in need of humanitarian aid in conflict-affected areas.

■ Development Aid

Stephen Doughty: [\[55877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how much spending which counts as official development assistance spending was allocated to each recipient (a) country and (b) sector in each of the last six years.

Sir Alan Duncan:

All Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Official Development Assistance (ODA) expenditure is recorded in HMG's annual Statistics on International Development (SID) published by the Department for International Development (DfID). The most recent SID was published on the 17 November 2016 and can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572669/data-underlying-SID-2016A.ods This gives details of FCO (and other Government departments) expenditure both by country and by sector.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Billing

Tim Farron: [\[55432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what proportion of payments by his Department to small businesses are made on time and in accordance with the prompt payment code.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office aims to comply with the prompt payment code for all support. In the second quarter of this financial year (July-September), we paid 84.25 % of invoices within 5 days, and 95.45 % of invoices within 30 days.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Legal Costs

Stephen Gethins: [\[55254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how much his Department has spent on legal advice relating to the UK leaving the EU.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The FCO has not spent anything on external legal advice relating to the UK leaving the EU.

■ India

John Nicolson: [\[55474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the nature and content is of the files removed from the National Archive relating to the events of June 1984 at the Golden Temple at Amritsar.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Following concerns raised with ministers by the Sikh Federation UK (SFUK), the FCO re-examined its 1984 files from the National Archives to check whether they contained evidence to support the SFUK claims. The FCO found nothing to substantiate the SFUK concerns in these files, which have since been returned to the National Archives.

■ Prosperity Fund

Stephen Doughty: [\[55859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what official development assistance funding has been allocated to the Prosperity Fund for 2016-17 by (a) recipient country and (b) sector.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

For the first year of the fund, 2016-17, the Cross-government Prosperity Fund has allocated Official Development Assistance across a range of programmes, focusing primarily on countries, but also focusing on certain key sectors.

Countries

Approximately £39 million was allocated by country, broken down as follows:

AFRICA		AMERICAS	
Kenya	£651,000	Argentina	£76,000
Mozambique	£81,000	Brazil	£3.8 m
Nigeria	£752,000	Chile	£846,000
South Africa	£471,000	Colombia	£923,000
Southern Africa Region	£384,000	Mexico	£4.6 m
Africa Region	£769,000	Peru	£1.5 m
ASIA PACIFIC		EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA	
Burma	£407,000	EECA Region	£230,000
China	£9.8 m	Kazakhstan	
Indonesia	£634,000	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	
Malaysia	£584,000	Iran	£307,000
Philippines	£646,000	Jordan	£1.5 m
SE Asia Region	£946,000	Lebanon	£1.5 m
Thailand	£169,000	SOUTH ASIA	
Vietnam	£880,000	India	£5.4 m

Sectors

Just over £10 million was allocated to sectors and programmes for 2016/17 as follows:

- Anti-Corruption: £5m
- Commonwealth Marine Economies: £5.6m

Stephen Doughty:

[\[55868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he plans to (a) expand or (b) reduce the number of countries eligible for Prosperity Fund Projects in 2017-18.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Cross-government Prosperity Fund is primarily Official Development Assistance (ODA) and is open to all countries that remain ODA eligible under the OECD Development Assistance Committee classification. Detailed design of the Prosperity Fund is still ongoing, and in order to maximise impact, Ministers have agreed that the Fund should concentrate on countries with large numbers of poor people and that still face significant development challenges but which are also key for driving future global prosperity. Those countries will be kept under regular review throughout the duration of the Fund.

Stephen Doughty:

[\[55875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what proportion of official development assistance spending allocated to the Prosperity Fund in 2016-17 was provided to (a) companies, (b) non-governmental organisations, (c) educational institutions, (d) scientific institutions, (e) trade bodies and (f) financial or legal institutions headquartered or registered in (i) the UK and (ii) UK Overseas Territories.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The information required to answer this question is not held centrally and can only be collated accurately at a disproportionate cost to the department. Prosperity Fund allocations in 2016-17 were devolved to a number of government departments and across the FCO network. Each will use a range of partners to support the implementation of their projects in order to ensure impact and in line with programme best practice.

■ Serbia: Visits Abroad

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[55856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, which locations were visited using his official government car during his state visit to Serbia on 11 November 2016.

Sir Alan Duncan:

On 11 November 2016, using transport provided by the Serbian government and the embassy, the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) and his delegation attended a Remembrance Day event at Belgrade New Cemetery with Prime Minister Vucic, visited Kalemegdan Castle to record FCO video message about his visit to the Western Balkan, he also attended a closed meeting in Serbia's oldest bookstore to discuss press freedoms with authors, journalists and editors.

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[55857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what his official appointments were on (a) 11 November 2016 and (b) other days during his state visit to Serbia.

Sir Alan Duncan:

During his visit to Belgrade on the 10 and 11 November, the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) attended an event at the Serbian Parliament; attended a British Council digital and creative industries event; met British and Serbian business and economic decision-makers at a reception at the Ambassador's Residence; had dinner with Prime Minister Vucic and Foreign Minister Dacic, attended a closed meeting in Serbia's oldest bookstore to discuss press freedoms with authors, journalists and editors; attended a Remembrance Day event at Belgrade New Cemetery with Prime Minister Vucic; and visited Kalemegdan castle to record a Foreign and Commonwealth Office video message about his visit to the Western Balkans.

■ South Sudan: Non-governmental Organisations

Imran Hussain:

[\[55729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with which non-governmental organisations (NGO) and NGO forums in South Sudan his Department has links.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We recognise the critical role civil society organisations play in South Sudan, both in providing basic support to the population and in developing local level peace-building initiatives which are essential to addressing the longer term impact of the conflict. We work closely with many of these NGOs, sharing information and analysis, and providing support where appropriate.

■ South Sudan: Refugees

Imran Hussain:

[\[55728\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government has taken to ensure the safety of refugees in shelters in South Sudan and neighbouring countries.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

There are currently more than 200,000 Internally Displaced People being protected at UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) Protection of Civilians sites across South Sudan. Through our deployment to UNMISS UK troops will provide expertise, particularly in engineering, that will help make those Protection of Civilian sites more secure. Through DFID, we are also providing more than £20 million this financial year to the neighbouring countries of Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya to help support the more than one million South Sudanese refugees who are seeking refuge there.

■ UN Resolutions: Racial Discrimination

Chris Stephens:

[\[55858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the reasons were for the Government not supporting the motion in the UN General Assembly on 21 November 2016 condemning the glorification of Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Her Majesty's Government is firmly committed to tackling racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, but does not judge that endorsing UN General Assembly Resolution 70/140, passed on 21 November 2016, would have contributed positively to these goals. We consider Resolution 70/140 unbalanced and politically motivated. It does not address all contemporary forms of racism in a comprehensive way. Furthermore, it is too restrictive in its treatment of the right to freedom of expression and the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association which are enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. For these reasons the UK Government did not support the Resolution.

We hope that further amendments to the Resolution, to address these concerns, will make it possible to reach a consensus in the future.

HEALTH

■ Alcoholic Drinks: Consumption

Graham Evans:

[\[55293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will assess the main consequences of disparities between the UK Chief Medical Officer's low risk alcohol guidelines and comparative international guidelines.

Nicola Blackwood:

The United Kingdom Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines are linked to UK-specific consumption and harm data.

The aim of the guidelines is to ensure the UK public have the most up to date information to help them understand the risks alcohol may pose to their health and to make decisions about their consumption in the light of those risks.

It should be noted that comparisons between countries can be misleading because there are large variations in how different countries define 'low risk' drinking, and even how they define a standard drink.

■ Antibiotics: Drug Resistance

Andrea Jenkyns: [\[55415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the efficacy of *Bdellovibrio bacteriovorus* in tackling anti-microbial resistance.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department welcomes the recent research on the potential use of *Bdellovibrio bacteriovorus* in destroying antibiotic resistant bacteria, since such novel therapies may help to slow the development and spread of antimicrobial resistance.

The research demonstrates an unusual approach to tackling resistant bacteria, but it is too soon to assess the efficacy of this method in human therapeutic use, as it is still at an early stage. Nevertheless, it does offer a new potential mechanism for combatting resistant infections, which would be valuable given the lack of new antibiotics.

Depending on how the research progresses, we will consult with our expert advisory scientific committee to assess the application of such research for human therapeutic use.

■ Arthritis

Jim Shannon: [\[55278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have been diagnosed with (a) knee, (b) ankle, (c) foot, (d) hand and (e) neck arthritis in each of the last five years.

David Mowat:

This information is not collected.

■ Aston Hall Hospital: Offences against Children

Mrs Louise Ellman: [\[55902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress has been made with the investigation into historical allegations of abuse at Aston Hall, Derbyshire; and if he will make a statement.

David Mowat:

We understand that the police investigation into this matter remains on-going.

We are advised that a multi-agency strategic overview board, co-ordinated by the independent chairman of the Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board, and including the police and local healthcare authorities, meets regularly to review the response to the allegations made in relation to Aston Hall.

The current position remains that timescales for any system-wide Serious Case Review or Learning Review will depend on the outcome of current police enquiries.

■ Blood: Contamination

Diana Johnson: [\[55292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people resident in (a) Scotland are eligible for the English support scheme and (b) England are eligible for the Scottish support scheme for those people affected by contaminated blood.

Nicola Blackwood:

The current scheme administrators have advised that there are 26 infected individuals resident in Scotland who will be eligible for support through the English scheme and 31 infected individuals resident in England who will be eligible for the Scottish scheme.

■ Borderline Personality Disorder

Luciana Berger: [\[55909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many and what proportion of people diagnosed with borderline personality disorder received dialectical behaviour therapy in each year since 2010.

Nicola Blackwood:

This information is not held centrally.

■ Breast Cancer: Drugs

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[55095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what research his Department has funded into the potential relationship between bisphosphonates and instances of secondary breast cancer; and if he will make a statement.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) funds and supports research into all aspects of human health. In the last five years, the NIHR has supported delivery of nine studies on the use of bisphosphonates in the prevention or treatment of secondary breast cancer through the NIHR Clinical Research Network or an NIHR Biomedical Research Centre.

Heidi Alexander: [\[55299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish specific guidance for clinical commissioning groups on the use of bisphosphonates for preventing secondary breast cancer.

Nicola Blackwood:

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for decisions on commissioning health services to best meet the needs of their local population and support improvements in health and healthcare outcomes. CCGs are accountable for local prescribing policy decisions, such as the use of bisphosphonates for preventing secondary breast cancer, taking account of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines.

NICE is currently updating its guideline on *early and locally advanced breast cancer: diagnosis and management (CG80)*. The use of adjuvant bisphosphonates is one of the key areas that will be covered in the update which is expected in July 2018.

■ Compulsorily Detained Mental Patients

Peter Aldous: [55827]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people were in receipt of free aftercare under section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1983 in the most recent period for which figures are available.

Nicola Blackwood:

This information is not collected centrally.

■ Department of Health: Billing

Tim Farron: [55433]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of payments by his Department to small businesses are made on time and in accordance with the prompt payment code.

David Mowat:

Central government policy on prompt payments requires the Department pay at least 80% of all undisputed commercial invoices within five days, with the remaining undisputed invoices being paid within 30 days.

The Department publishes quarterly information on prompt payments to our suppliers within five, 10 and 30 days on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-of-health-prompt-payment-of-suppliers-data/department-of-health-prompt-payment-of-suppliers-data-2015>

Payments data captured by the Department does not separate the commercial payments into private companies and small/medium enterprises (SMEs) and to satisfy SME suppliers alone would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Eating Disorders: Young People

Alex Chalk: [55731]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps are being taken to ensure that young people diagnosed with eating disorders requiring in-patient treatment can be admitted to facilities close to home.

Nicola Blackwood:

In the Autumn Statement 2014 increased funding of £150 million over the next five years was announced to improve services for children and young people with mental health problems in England. Particular emphasis was placed on improving services for people with eating disorders. A prime focus of the work on eating disorders is about the improved provision of out of hospital care so patients are only admitted to a bed when clinically required.

NHS England has continued to commission additional specialised mental health beds to provide further capacity in areas where it is required. This includes 56 new Tier 4 beds, raising the total to 1,442, the highest this has been.

In addition, NHS England is undertaking a pre-procurement review of Tier 4 services to ensure that the provision of mental health beds across the country supports improved access and care close to home where possible.

■ Eyes: Diseases

Jim Shannon:

[\[55277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have been diagnosed with blepharitis in each of the last five years.

David Mowat:

This information is not collected.

■ Food: Sugar

Keith Vaz:

[\[55157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he plans to take to prevent an increase in the sugar content of food and drink products after the EU sugar quotas are lifted in 2017.

Nicola Blackwood:

As set out in the Childhood Obesity Plan, published in August 2016, Public Health England is working with all parts of the food industry to encourage businesses to remove 20% of sugar from the nine categories of foods that contribute most to children's diets by 2020 with an initial 5% reduction by August 2017. Progress will be regularly and transparently monitored.

The removal of European Union sugar beet quotas will allow British growers to move towards competing on a level playing field with other sugar producers around the world.

■ Gender Recognition

Mrs Maria Miller:

[\[55059\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to page 19 of the Government response to the First Report from the Women and Equalities Committee, Session 2015-16, on Transgender Equality, Cm 9301, published in July 2016, what steps NHS England has taken as part of its ongoing work to consider the uses of real-life experience for transgender people before genital surgery.

Mrs Maria Miller:

[\[55061\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to page 20 of the Government response to the First Report from the Women and Equalities Committee, Session 2015-16, on Transgender Equality, Cm 9301, published in July 2016, whether the final service specification for the children and young people's Gender Identity Development Service and

the final clinical commissioning policy for prescribing cross-sex hormones to young people have been (a) agreed and (b) published.

Mrs Maria Miller:

[\[55062\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to page 20 of the Government response to the First Report from the Women and Equalities Committee, Session 2015-16, on Transgender Equality, Cm 9301, published in July 2016, what progress has been made on the development of an action plan arising from the multi-agency symposium on a national and training plan in March 2016.

Mrs Maria Miller:

[\[55063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to pages 18 and 19 of the Government response to the First Report from the Women and Equalities Committee, Session 2015-16, on Transgender Equality, Cm 9301, published in July 2016, what steps NHS England has taken to strengthen governance arrangements to review within six months NHS compliance with the Equality Act 2010 in respect of services for transgender people.

Nicola Blackwood:

NHS England agrees with the Women and Equalities Committee's recommendations that the requirement to undergo real-life experience prior to surgery must not entail conforming to externally imposed preconceptions about gender identity. The proposed new service specifications for adult gender identity services will be clear that this requirement is not about qualifying for surgery, but rather preparing the patient to cope with the profound consequences of surgery. NHS England has convened a stakeholder engagement event on 5 January 2017 where stakeholders will have an opportunity to shape draft service specifications before they go out for wider public consultation.

The final service specification for the children and young people's Gender Identity Development Service and the final clinical commissioning policy for prescribing cross-sex hormones to young people were agreed and published in August 2016. Both documents were informed by a process of stakeholder engagement and public consultation.

At the most recent multi-agency symposium in October 2016, Health Education England presented an outline plan for the development of a programme of work which will make recommendations for the training and development of the future workforce in this field. It was agreed with stakeholders that this work will focus on new core competencies for staff working in gender identity services; professional standards for Continuing Professional Development; establishing new trainee placements within gender identity services; and recommendations for general awareness raising amongst National Health Service staff. It will also include engagement with patient groups and people who use gender identity services. Health Education England aims to deliver recommendations in the new year.

Following stakeholder engagement earlier in the year, NHS England implemented a new governance framework for its Clinical Reference Groups (CRFs), which exist to provide expert advice to NHS England on specialised services. A new CRF for adult gender

identity services was established in September 2016. Membership of the group includes those using NHS services for transgender people and clinicians and the Chair was appointed following an open recruitment process. The CRF has been asked to deliver draft service specifications for adult gender identity services in January 2017. These will be informed by a consideration of the Women and Equalities Committee's findings and recommendations and by a process of stakeholder engagement and public consultation. In October 2016, NHS England gave notice to all current providers of gender identity services in England that their contracts would be terminated in 2017 and that they will run an open national procurement process to identify providers to deliver against new contracts. Prospective bidders will be required to demonstrate compliance with the new service specifications, once agreed.

■ General Practitioners: Ashfield

Gloria De Piero:

[\[55904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many GPs were practising in Ashfield constituency (a) on the last date for which figures are available and (b) in 2010.

David Mowat:

The information is not available in the format requested.

The number of general practitioners (GPs), excluding registrars, retainers, and locums, in the former Nottinghamshire County Teaching Primary Care Trust (PCT) in 2010, and in each of the clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) that succeeded the PCT, in 2015 and 2016 is shown in the following tables:

	SEPTEMBER 2010	SEPTEMBER 2015	MARCH 2016
Headcount			
Nottinghamshire County Teaching PCT	414
NHS Mansfield And Ashfield CCG	..	108	99
NHS Newark And Sherwood CCG	..	73	75
NHS Nottingham North .. And East CCG	..	93	93
NHS Nottingham West .. CCG	..	67	64
NHS Rushcliffe CCG	..	70	78
Total of above CCGs	..	411	409

	SEPTEMBER 2010	SEPTEMBER 2015	MARCH 2016
Full Time Equivalent			
Nottinghamshire County Teaching PCT	360
NHS Mansfield And Ashfield CCG	..	94	87
NHS Newark And Sherwood CCG	..	63	68
NHS Nottingham North And East CCG	..	81	81
NHS Nottingham West CCG	..	55	53
NHS Rushcliffe CCG	..	66	74
Total of above CCGs	..	358	363

Source: NHS Digital

Notes:

1. Data as at 30 September 2010, 30 September 2015 and 31 March 2016.
2. Prior to 2015, figures are sourced from NHAIS GP Payments (Exeter) System. From 2015 onwards, figures are sourced from the workforce Minimum Dataset and include estimates for missing data. Figures from September 2015 and March 2016 are provisional experimental and are not comparable with previous years. GP Registered Patient data is taken from NHAIS GP Payments (Exeter) system for all years.
3. March data was collected and published in full on the workforce Minimum Dataset for the first time in March 2016. These figures have been included to provide the most up-to-date information.
4. In 2010, Ashfield constituency was contained within and serviced by Nottinghamshire County PCT. From 2013 onwards, Ashfield constituency has been within NHS Mansfield and Ashfield CCG. The four other CCGs which emerged from Nottinghamshire County PCT have been included in the data also to provide comparability with previous years.
5. '..' denotes not applicable.
6. Headcount Methodology: The latest headcount methodology means this data is not fully comparable with previous years, due to improvements that make it a more stringent count of absolute staff numbers. Further information on the headcount

methodology is available in the Census publication. Headcount totals are unlikely to equal the sum of components.

7. Full Time Equivalent refers to the proportion of full time contracted hours that the post holder is contracted to work. 1 would indicate they work a full set of hours, 0.5 that they worked half time.
8. Data Quality: NHS Digital seeks to minimise inaccuracies and the effect of missing and invalid data but responsibility for data accuracy lies with the organisations providing the data. Methods are continually being updated to improve data quality where changes impact on figures already published. This is assessed but unless it is significant at national level figures are not changed. Impact at detailed or local level is footnoted in relevant analyses.

Gloria De Piero:

[\[55914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the GP to patient ratio was in Ashfield constituency (a) on the last date for which figures are available and (b) in 2010.

David Mowat:

The information is not available in the format requested.

The number of general practitioners (GPs), excluding registrars, retainers, and locums, per 100,000 patients, in the former Nottinghamshire County Teaching Primary Care Trust (PCT) in 2010, and in each of the clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) that succeeded the PCT, in 2015 and 2016 is shown in the following table:

	SEPTEMBER 2010	SEPTEMBER 2015	MARCH 2016
Headcount			
Nottinghamshire County Teaching PCT	62.1
NHS Mansfield and Ashfield CCG	..	57.0	52.1
NHS Newark and Sherwood CCG	..	55.7	57.0
NHS Nottingham North and East CCG	..	61.9	61.9
NHS Nottingham West CCG	..	70.8	67.6
NHS Rushcliffe CCG	..	56.4	62.7
Total of above CCGs	..	59.6	59.2

Source : NHS Digital

Notes :

1. Data as at 30 September 2010, 30 September 2015 and 31 March 2016.
2. Prior to 2015, figures are sourced from NHAIS GP Payments (Exeter) System. From 2015 onwards, figures are sourced from the workforce Minimum Dataset (wMDS) and include estimates for missing data. Figures from September 2015 and March 2016 are provisional experimental and are not comparable with previous years. GP Registered Patient data is taken from NHAIS GP Payments (Exeter) system for all years.
3. March data was collected and published in full on the wMDS for the first time in March 2016. These figures have been included to provide the most up-to-date information.
4. In 2010, Ashfield constituency was contained within and serviced by Nottinghamshire County PCT. From 2013 onwards, Ashfield constituency has been within NHS Mansfield and Ashfield CCG. The four other CCGs which emerged from Nottinghamshire County PCT have been included in the data also to provide comparability with previous years.
5. '.' denotes not applicable.
6. Headcount Methodology: The latest headcount methodology means this data is not fully comparable with previous years, due to improvements that make it a more stringent count of absolute staff numbers. Further information on the headcount methodology is available in the Census publication. Headcount totals are unlikely to equal the sum of components.
7. Data Quality: NHS Digital seeks to minimise inaccuracies and the effect of missing and invalid data but responsibility for data accuracy lies with the organisations providing the data. Methods are continually being updated to improve data quality where changes impact on figures already published. This is assessed but unless it is significant at national level figures are not changed. Impact at detailed or local level is footnoted in relevant analyses.

Gloria De Piero:

[\[55915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many unfilled GP posts there were in Ashfield constituency (a) on the last date for which figures are available and (b) in 2010.

David Mowat:

The information requested is not centrally held.

■ Homeopathy

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[55657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what information his Department holds on how many hospital trusts use some form of homeopathic treatment in their services.

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[55658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department gives to NHS trusts on the allocation of their funds for homeopathic treatment; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[55667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential implications of his policies of the US administration's decision to require scientific evidence before confirming availability of the medical use of homeopathy.

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[55668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much funding the NHS has allocated for the use of homeopathic treatments in each year from 2011-12 to the current financial year.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department does not hold information on the number of hospital trusts that use some form of homeopathic treatment in their services or information on how much funding the National Health Service has allocated for the use of homeopathic treatments as requested.

The Department does not maintain a position on any particular complementary or alternative medicine treatments, including homeopathy. It is the responsibility of local NHS organisations to make decisions on the commissioning and funding of any health care treatments for NHS patients, such as homeopathy, taking account of safety, clinical and cost effectiveness and the availability of suitably qualified/regulated practitioners.

No assessment has been made of the United States administration's decision to require scientific evidence before confirming availability of the medical use of homeopathy on the Department's current policy.

■ Mental Health Services

Norman Lamb:

[\[55192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what consideration he has given to extending access, waiting time and recovery targets to non-Improving Access to Psychological Therapies NHS services.

Nicola Blackwood:

There are currently no plans to extend access, waiting time and recovery standards to non-Improving Access to Psychological Therapies services. Over the next three years, NHS England will be working with partners to develop a range of evidence-based treatment pathways and the supporting infrastructure required to enable their implementation. Each of the pathways will be designed to span the journey from 'referral to recovery'. The development of a community mental health care evidenced based treatment pathway (encompassing referral to recovery pathways for psychosis, personality disorder, bipolar affective disorder and severe and complex common mental health problems) will begin in 2017/18.

Norman Lamb: [55193]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many patients received treatment in (a) the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme and (b) non-IAPT NHS psychological therapy services in each of the last 10 years.

Norman Lamb: [55196]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the availability of non-Improving Access to Psychological Therapies NHS psychological therapy services in the last 10 years.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies Programme (IAPT) was rolled out as of 2008 so there is no data for 2006/07 or 2007/08.

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Entering Treatment	37,792 ¹	181,947 ¹	383,138 ¹	533,550 ²	599,873 ³	709,117 ³	815,665 ³	953,522 ³

¹ Data from 2008/09, 2009/10, and 2011/11 are summed from quarterly values in the *IAPT Three-Year Report; the first million patients*.

² Data from 2011/12 is a sum of quarterly data as an annual report was not published.

³ 2012/13 onwards is drawn directly from the Annual IAPT Reports.

The IAPT quarterly (2011/12) and annual publications (2012/13 onwards) contain counts of the number of referrals entering treatment and can be accessed from:

<http://content.digital.nhs.uk/iaptreports>

Non-IAPT psychological therapy data is not currently collected at a national level in the same way as IAPT data. This means there is not yet national data on the availability of non-IAPT psychological therapy – although psychological therapy should be available as a core part of secondary and tertiary mental health services and via health psychology services.

NHS England is working closely with Health Education England and NHS Digital to improve both the provision of psychological therapies and the data available to monitor this provision.

Norman Lamb: [55194]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the (a) health outcomes and (b) future receipt of support and treatment for patients who drop out of the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme before completing the treatment.

Norman Lamb: [55197]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what support is offered to patients who complete the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme but do not recover.

Norman Lamb:

[\[55198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps are being taken to minimise the number of patients who drop out of the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme before completing the treatment.

Nicola Blackwood:

It is for local commissioners to ensure that services are meeting the needs of their local population which includes providing support for people who do not complete Improving Access to Psychological Therapies treatment or need further support after treatment. When people have had high quality Improving Access to Psychological Therapies treatment and still experience symptoms their general practitioner should work with them on next steps which may include further psychological therapy or medication. There are many reasons why a patient may be referred to an Improving Access to Psychological Therapies care provider but not finish a course of treatment. For example, the patient may decline to attend an initial appointment offered, an initial assessment may determine that the patient is not suitable for Improving Access to Psychological Therapies services, or a patient may start a course of treatment but then decide not to continue. Local commissioners and providers should work to minimise the number of people who agree to treatment but do not then take it up. Many people are referred on to other services that can treat their specific needs more appropriately. Improving Access to Psychological Therapies is not for everyone and it was introduced to provide an alternative to medication to treat depression and anxiety.

Norman Lamb:

[\[55242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to page 40 of Implementing The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health, published by NHS England in July 2016, what progress has been made in the development of a five-year data plan; and whether he plans to ensure that professional organisations and charities have an opportunity to provide input into the development of that plan.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department has been working with NHS England, NHS Digital, Public Health England and others to develop a mental health five-year plan for data. We intend to publish an over-arching plan in due course. A range of charities, professional organisations, people with lived experience and their families have already provided input to develop the over-arching plan, as well as being engaged in developing elements of the work to deliver improved collection and use of mental health data. This will be an ongoing process, as the plan develops and individual elements are developed.

Oliver Colvile:

[\[55512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the implications for his Department's policies are of the Crisp Commission Report on mental health; and if he will make a statement.

Nicola Blackwood:

As a result of the recommendations from the Crisp Commission and the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health, the Government set a national ambition in April 2016

to eliminate inappropriate out of area placements (OAPs) for adult acute inpatient care by 2020/21.

To ensure progress towards this ambition in 2016/17, the Department asked that areas put in place local action plans to achieve reductions in OAPs during 2016/17. NHS England will seek assurance that plans are in place, as well as demonstrable reductions, through the Clinical Commissioning Group Improvement and Assessment Framework. In addition, NHS Improvement will ensure best practice is shared more widely.

On the wider Crisp Commission recommendations, NHS England is working with the National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health at the Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych) to develop an evidence-based treatment pathway for adult acute mental health care (including older adults), covering both inpatient and community settings from referral through to discharge, so that adult acute inpatient care can be used effectively for patients who need it. A national quality assessment and improvement scheme developed by the RCPsych will be launched during 2017/18, with the aim of improving acute care to meet the pathway standards during 2018/19.

NHS England has committed to publish a formal response to the Commission's report shortly.

Luciana Berger:

[\[55910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether NHS Digital holds information on the number of people who have (a) been referred to and (b) started in each of the different types of therapy offered by the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme; and whether NHS England publishes that information.

Nicola Blackwood:

NHS Digital holds and publishes the number of referrals to Improving Access to Psychological Therapies received which can be found in monthly and annual publications.

Data about the first recorded therapy type are also held by NHS Digital, and counts of the number of referrals finishing treatment split by the first therapy type recorded were published for the first time in the 2015-16 annual publication.

Luciana Berger:

[\[55911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many Improving Access to Psychological Therapies appointments there were in each clinical commissioning group area in each year since 2010; and how many such (a) assessment and (b) treatment appointments for each consultation medium were conducted in each such year.

Nicola Blackwood:

This information is not available in the requested format.

■ Mental Health Services: Children

Norman Lamb: [\[55042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many young people aged 17 or under of each age were treated in adult mental health wards in 2015-16.

Nicola Blackwood:

I refer to the answer I gave on 22 November 2016 to the hon. Member for Liverpool, Wavertree (Luciana Berger) to Question [53618](#).

■ Mental Health Services: Finance

Norman Lamb: [\[55195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what funding has been provided for Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) and non-IAPT psychological therapy services in each of the last 10 years.

Nicola Blackwood:

A breakdown of funding for Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) and non-Improving Access to Psychological Therapies services over each of the last 10 years is not available.

In the spending review period 2010-15, the IAPT programme received over £460 million of Government investment.

In 2015-16, in addition to other commissioner investment, NHS England invested £10 million on IAPT services from within their overall funding allocation. A further £20 million has been invested nationally in this financial year, 2016-17, as set out in *Implementing the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health*.

In February 2016 a further £1 billion by 2020-21 for mental health was announced to take forward recommendations in the Mental Health Taskforce Review – this will allow IAPT to reach 1.5 million people in need of support from psychological therapies each year.

NHS England does not allocate funding to commissioners on a programme basis. Commissioners work within their overall allocations to set their expenditure plans. They are required to take account of national targets like the mental health investment standard (formerly known as Parity of Esteem) and IAPT services access targets, alongside their local needs based assessment work.

■ Mental Health Services: Staff

Nicky Morgan: [\[55098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has considered the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on delivering the required growth of the mental health workforce in England set out in the Five Year Forward View.

Nicola Blackwood:

Department of Health officials are working together with officials at the Department for Exiting the European Union to ensure that the workforce implications for the National Health Service and care sectors are considered as part of the discussions around leaving the EU.

Nicky Morgan:[\[55113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish the number of NHS England's mental health workforce by nationality.

Nicola Blackwood:

Published National Health Service Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS) data already provides information on the nationality of the mental health workforce.

However, this data is self-reported and many members of staff choose not to specify their nationality or are not asked to.

■ **NHS Low Income Scheme: Asylum****Luciana Berger:**[\[55908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how long it has taken to process HC2 forms for asylum seekers from receiving application to issue by number of weeks in each year since 2010.

David Mowat:

Where UK Visas and Immigration makes an assessment that asylum seekers qualify for support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, it issues HC2 certificates, conferring entitlement to Help with Health Costs via the NHS Low Income Scheme.

Asylum seekers who are not supported by UK Visas and Immigration can apply, via a HC1 application form, to the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) for a HC2 certificate.

We do not have information on how long it has taken UK Visas and Immigration to issue HC2 certificates to asylum seekers. For the NHSBSA, since 2010 over 99% of all HC1 claims, including those made by asylum seekers, have been processed within 15 days. The table below provides the relevant percentage rates for each full financial year since 2010.

% HC1 APPLICATIONS PROCESSED WITHIN 15 DAYS

2010/11	99.90%
2011/12	99.88%
2012/13	99.74%
2013/14	99.82%

% HC1 APPLICATIONS PROCESSED WITHIN 15 DAYS

2014/15	99.96%
2015/16	99.97%

■ **NHS Trusts: Private Patients**

Justin Madders: [\[55034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much in fees from overseas private patients was (a) collected by and (b) remain outstanding to NHS trusts in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department does not hold data on the amounts collected as fees from overseas private patients.

Since 2013-14, the Department has been collecting data on the amount invoiced by National Health Service trusts and NHS foundation trusts, together with amounts recovered and written off for NHS treatment of overseas patients entitled to be treated as NHS patients under the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 2015.

■ **NHS: Finance**

Justin Madders: [\[55029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what effect recent changes in the rate of sterling have had on the finances of the NHS.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The vast majority of income and costs of National Health Service budgets are denominated in pounds sterling. There are a number of reasons for changes in NHS finances, and, as ever, specifically identifying the impact of exchange rate changes is not routinely undertaken.

Justin Madders: [\[55032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the potential surplus or deficit in the NHS Provider sector in each of the next five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Government's expectation is that the National Health Service will deliver financial balance in each year of the current Spending Review period (2016-17 to 2020-21). This expectation is made clear in the Government's mandate to NHS England for 2016-17 and the mandate is produced annually.

■ NHS: Sustainable Development

Justin Madders: [\[55035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of sustainability and transformation plans that he has received which will achieve the savings targets identified.

David Mowat:

The Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) submitted on 21 October 2016 demonstrate tangible progress in addressing this financial gap referred to in the NHS Five Year Forward View.

Providers and commissioners are currently in the process of agreeing two-year operating plans and contracts for financial years 2017-19. Once agreed, these plans will form the basis for the first two years of implementation of the STPs.

■ Occupational Health

Ian Lavery: [\[55091\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the recent report from the all-party parliamentary group on occupational safety and health entitled Occupational medical workforce crisis, what steps he plans to take to ensure the occupational medicine workforce meets future demands for effective occupational health services.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Health Education England (HEE) is responsible for ensuring that there is sufficient future supply of staff to meet the workforce requirements of the English health system, taking in to account issues such as demographic changes.

In arriving at its annual workforce plan for England, HEE consults with local employers, professional bodies and stakeholders. As part of this work it will consider reports such as the one produced by the all-party parliamentary group on occupational safety and health.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of employers to ensure they have sufficient staff to provide safe and effective care.

■ Royal Brompton Hospital: Paediatrics

Gordon Henderson: [\[55163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many admissions there were to the paediatric intensive care unit at the Royal Brompton Hospital in the last 12 months for which figures are available; what proportion of those admissions were cardiac cases; and what plans his Department has to replace elsewhere in London (a) paediatric intensive care beds and (b) the specialist children's lung disease service which will close at the Royal Brompton Hospital as a result of NHS proposals to decommission congenital heart disease services at that hospital.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The numbers of admissions to the paediatric intensive care unit at the London site of the Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust, which took place during 2015 – the most recent 12 month period for which figures are available - and the proportion of those admissions that were cardiac cases, are shown in the table below:

CARDIOVASCULAR	RESPIRATORY	OTHER	TOTAL	CARDIAC CASES
581	57	32	670	87%

Source : Paediatric Intensive Care Audit Network

NHS England has not yet made any decisions following its review of congenital heart disease services. It will run a service change process, including a public consultation, on the proposals for change which it announced in July 2016. In the meantime, NHS England is working with the hospital trusts that may be affected to assess the impact of implementing the proposals.

This will include consideration of the impact on paediatric intensive care unit (PICU) services. Should the proposals proceed to implementation, NHS England would expect those hospitals accepting additional congenital heart disease patients to expand their PICU capacity accordingly. Any wider regional implications for PICU services will be considered by NHS England's paediatric critical care review, which is currently underway.

There are alternative providers of specialist paediatric respiratory services in London. NHS England will work with those providers and the Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust to consider how those services might be affected and how the potential implementation of changes could best be managed.

■ Strokes

Greg Mulholland: [\[55134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to encourage clinical commissioning groups to commission psychological support for stroke survivors.

Greg Mulholland: [\[55135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to encourage better access to early supported discharge for stroke patients.

Greg Mulholland: [\[55136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what support his Department is providing to clinical commissioning groups to improve provision for post-acute stroke care.

David Mowat:

NHS England's National Clinical Director for Stroke is working with the strategic clinical networks, urgent and emergency care networks, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and Sustainability and Transformation Plan areas on how stroke care, including post-acute care, is best delivered to their local communities.

The Cardiovascular Disease Outcomes Strategy and the National Stroke Strategy both recognise that stroke services which incorporate psychological care deliver the best outcomes for stroke survivors. The National Stroke Strategy recommends that stroke survivors should be routinely screened for mood and cognition after their stroke. In addition, the latest national clinical guideline for stroke, published by the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) in October 2016, sets out that that psychological therapy is an important component of stroke care. The guideline can be found at:

<https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/guidelines-policy/stroke-guidelines>

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's quality standard on stroke also reflects the importance of psychological care for stroke survivors.

However, NHS England recognises that access to psychological support is still not consistently available for all stroke survivors who need it. It is exploring how to improve the use of existing resources to ensure that stroke survivors receive the psychological and emotional support they need. One of these resources is the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme, which is rolling out services across England offering interventions for people with depression and anxiety disorders. Many areas now have these programmes.

There has been a significant growth in the availability of early supported discharge (ESD) teams over recent years. Over 80% of CCGs now commission ESD and 74% of hospitals have access to these services.

Although this is encouraging progress, NHS England recognises there is more to do. In collaboration with the RCP stroke programme and the strategic clinic networks, it is working with CCGs to support areas where improvement is needed.

■ Surgery

Norman Lamb:

[55790]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department and NHS England plan to take to prevent clinical commissioning groups from rationing treatments by restricting routine surgery for patients who smoke or are clinically obese.

David Mowat:

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for commissioning services to meet the requirements of their population, including obese patients and smokers. In doing so, CCGs need to ensure that the services they provide are fit for purpose, reflect the needs of the local population, and are based on the available evidence and take into account national guidelines.

Major surgery poses much higher risks for severely overweight patients and those who smoke. So local general practitioner-led CCGs are entirely right to ensure these patients first get support to lose weight and try and stop smoking before their operation. Reducing obesity and cutting smoking not only benefits patients but saves the National Health Service and taxpayers millions of pounds.

This does not and cannot mean blanket bans on particular patients, such as smokers, getting operations, which would be inconsistent with the NHS Constitution.

■ **Surgery: Vale of York**

Heidi Alexander: [\[55506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect on patients of the decision taken by Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group to place restrictions on routine surgery for patients who smoke or are clinically obese.

Heidi Alexander: [\[55507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how NHS England plans to ensure that patients are not put at risk by the decision taken by Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group to place restrictions on routine surgery for patients who smoke or are clinically obese.

Nicola Blackwood:

Each individual Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is accountable for commissioning the care that will provide the best possible outcomes for their patients in line with their legal duties and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance. As such, it is the responsibility of Vale of York CCG to make an assessment of what impact on patients its decisions will have.

Vale of York CCG has made clear that every patient's case will be considered in the light of their own particular circumstances and on the basis of clinical need.

■ **Tobacco**

David T. C. Davies: [\[55414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he plans to publish a new tobacco control plan.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government is developing a new tobacco control plan, which will build on previous success and will be published shortly.

HOME OFFICE

■ **Antisemitism**

Jim Shannon: [\[55265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 3 November 2016 to Question 50110, whether her Department had made an assessment of the potential merits of requiring the collection of data on the presumed religion or belief or other key characteristics of alleged or suspected perpetrators of religiously or racially motivated attacks.

Sarah Newton:

The police have made great strides in collecting data on hate crime and from April 2016 they have started to collect data for religiously motivated crimes on the basis of the victim's religion (or perceived religion).

We need to ensure that any additional burdens that are placed on the police in relation to hate crime can be justified in terms of improving their response to such crimes and the support they give to victims. We would also need to ensure that any additional data collected was accurate and could be used constructively.

■ **Asylum: Children****Michelle Thomson:**[\[55508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effect on the number of children who can enter the UK of the provisions of her Department's guidance, Implementation of section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 in France.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The guidance builds on the principles set out by the Home Secretary on 24 October. The criteria are intended to ensure that we are focusing on the most vulnerable children. We will be considering all those aged 12 and under, all children referred to us by the French authorities assessed as being at a high risk of sexual exploitation, and those nationalities most likely to qualify for refugee status in the UK, aged 15 or below. In doing this we are also establishing whether it is in each child's best interests to come here. Since 10 October, we have transferred over 300 unaccompanied minors to the UK from France and, as the Home Secretary told Parliament on 24 October, we expect several hundred more children to be brought to the UK in the coming days and weeks.

■ **Asylum: Housing Benefit****Jim McMahon:**[\[55110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has conducted an assessment of the potential effect of reductions in housing payments for asylum seekers.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Asylum seekers are not provided with payments to cover their housing costs. If they are destitute and do not have adequate accommodation they are provided with free, furnished accommodation by the Home Office. Utility bills are also covered by the Home Office and a cash allowance is provided to cover their other essential living needs, including food, clothes and toiletries. The level of the allowance, currently set at £36.95 per week, is reviewed each year to ensure that it is adequate.

■ Entry Clearances: Married People

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[55758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her Department's policy to allow special considerations on the income threshold for the non-EEA partner of a British citizen if that partner is from a country experiencing war or conflict.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

In all cases where an application under the family Immigration Rules fails to meet the minimum income threshold or other requirement, the decision maker will consider whether there are exceptional circumstances to warrant a grant of leave outside the Rules.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[55759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take into account the implications for UK citizens with non-EEA partners of the effect of periods of maternity leave on the ability of those citizens to meet the income threshold in her decisions on immigration cases.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Paragraphs 13(i) and 16 of Appendix FM-SE to the Immigration Rules ensure that a person is not disadvantaged by a period of maternity leave in meeting the minimum income threshold to sponsor a non-EEA partner to come to or remain in the UK.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[55760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her Department's policy on the minimum income requirement for UK citizens with non-EEA partners of using evidence provided by those citizens of their partners' earning potential when making immigration decisions.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The earning potential of the non-EEA national partner is no guarantee that they will find work in the UK. Those with an appropriate job offer here can apply under Tier 2 of the Points Based System. Non-EEA national partners coming to the UK under the family route must be capable of being independently supported by their sponsor or by their joint savings or non-employment income.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[55761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential effect of applying regional income thresholds to UK citizens with non-EEA partners on the ability of those citizens to bring their partners to the UK.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The minimum income threshold of £18,600 for sponsoring a non-EEA national partner to come or remain here applies across the UK. The level of the income threshold, which aims to prevent burdens on the taxpayer and promote integration, was set following advice from the independent Migration Advisory Committee and reflects the income at which a family settled here generally cannot access income-related benefits. The

Committee, in its November 2011 report, could see no clear case for differentiation of the income threshold between UK countries and regions and noted several arguments against such an approach. These included that a family living in a wealthy part of a relatively poor UK country or region could be subject to a lower income requirement than a family living in a deprived part of a relatively wealthy one. The Government agrees with that assessment and applying a single minimum income threshold across the UK has been found to be lawful by the courts.

■ Forced Marriage Unit

Mr Mark Hendrick: [\[55552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what protocols are in place for the Forced Marriage Unit to provide information to local constabularies about people referred to them.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The UK is a world-leader in the fight to stamp out the brutal practice of forced marriage, with our joint Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) which leads efforts to combat it both at home and abroad. We made forced marriage a criminal offence in 2014 to better protect victims and send a clear message that this abhorrent practice is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the UK.

The FMU acts in an advisory capacity and, where there is an imminent risk of serious harm or threat to life to the victim, will refer cases to the police and other statutory agencies as appropriate.

■ Hate Crime

Paul Flynn: [\[55203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of hate crime were reported in each month of 2015.

Paul Flynn: [\[55224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of hate crime have been reported in each month of the last 12 months for which data is available.

Sarah Newton:

The Home Office collect and publish statistics on the number of hate crimes recorded by the police on an annual basis. In 2015/16, the most recently published data, the police recorded 62,518 hate crimes in England and Wales. The statistical bulletin, which includes data for earlier years, can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2015-to-2016>

This Government is committed to tackling hate crime. The UK has one of the strongest legislative frameworks in the world to tackle hate crime. We are working across

Government with police, (including National Community Tensions Team), the Crown Prosecution Service and community partners to send out a clear message that hate crime will not be tolerated and we will vigorously pursue and prosecute those who commit these crimes.

■ Home Office: Billing

Tim Farron:

[\[55434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of payments by her Department to small businesses are made on time and in accordance with the prompt payment code.

Sarah Newton:

Although the Home Office publishes aggregated performance data in the annual report and accounts, it is not possible to extract a figure that shows only the prompt payments to small businesses. Home Office officials cannot identify which suppliers are classed as a small business.

■ Home Office: Departmental Responsibilities

Dr Paul Monaghan:

[\[55296\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the implications of the UK leaving the EU on her Departmental responsibilities.

Sarah Newton:

The Department for Exiting the EU (DExEU) is working closely with all Government departments to ensure that the full range of opportunities are taken and risks mitigated across every area of Government policy.

A central unit has been established to coordinate EU exit work across the Home Office and act as a central contact for DExEU. Units across the Home Office are also feeding into this work.

■ Immigration Controls

Mr David Hanson:

[\[55051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Border Force operatives were deployed at (a) airports and (b) ports in each year since 2010.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I am sorry but this information is not held centrally and could only be acquired at disproportionate cost.

Mr David Hanson:

[\[55058\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average waiting time at the UK border was for (a) British, European Economic Area (EEA) and Swiss passengers and (b) non-EEA passengers in (i) each year since 2010 and (ii) each month since 2010.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I am sorry but this information is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Dr Paul Monaghan:

[\[55294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of applying different immigration rules to Scotland and other constituent parts of the UK.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Immigration remains a reserved matter and we will consider the needs of the UK as a whole.

Brendan O'Hara:

[\[55417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of applying different immigration rules to Scotland and other constituent parts of the UK.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Immigration remains a reserved matter and we will consider the needs of the UK as a whole.

■ Passports: Concessions

Hywel Williams:

[\[55133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the merits of changing the eligibility criteria so that people aged over 80 years are entitled to apply for a free passport.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The current concessionary passports were introduced in October 2004 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War the following year; and recognise the contribution made to the war effort by people aged 16 or over at its conclusion. There are no plans to extend the criteria upon which free passports are issued.

■ Refugees: Europe

Dr Paul Monaghan:

[\[55295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support refugees (a) in the UK and (b) elsewhere in Europe.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The UK has a proud history of providing protection to those who need it, in accordance with our international obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

All those granted refugee status in the UK are given access to the labour market and benefits, and are encouraged to access organisations that can assist with integration.

The Home Office provides integration loans, which are designed to help new refugees to integrate into UK society by offering support towards housing costs, employment and training.

The Government has prioritised supporting refugees in their region of origin and the countries that host them through aid and development funding and is at the forefront of international efforts to end the Syrian crisis.

We have committed to resettling up to 20,000 individuals under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and 3,000 individuals under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme over the lifetime of this Parliament.

In Europe, the UK is a leading Member State contributing both financial and practical support for refugees through the European Asylum Support Office and bilaterally with countries such as France, Greece, and Italy.

This support includes: resources to assist with processing arrivals; £34 million contribution to Greece's humanitarian response (enabling provision of essential tents, blankets, and sleeping bags); a £10 million Refugee Children Fund for Europe; £1.5 million for humanitarian and research activities in Italy; and naval support for vessels in distress.

The Government accepted an amendment during the passage of the Immigration Act 2016 to bring a specified number of unaccompanied refugee children from Europe to the UK.

Since 10 October, we have transferred over 300 unaccompanied children to the UK from France.

■ Theft

Jim Shannon:

[\[55272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to raise awareness of potential measures to reduce the risk of shoplifting and pick-pocketing in the Christmas period.

Sarah Newton:

The Modern Crime Prevention Strategy, published in March 2016, sets out our analysis of the key drivers of crime, and how we are using this to inform our approach to tackling crime, including theft which incorporates both shoplifting and pickpocketing. The Modern Crime Prevention Strategy specifically mentions our work with the National Retail Crime Steering Group to support effective partnership working between retailers and the police to prevent crime including shoplifting. At busy times, such as the run up to Christmas, we would encourage both retailers and the public to be particularly alert to the risks of crime and to take necessary precautions. Where any offences are committed, we would encourage retailers and the public to report them to the police.

■ Torture

Lady Hermon:

[\[54400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will take steps to ensure that officials of her Department responsible for assessing the medical reports of victims of torture facing deportation have qualifications in forensic medicine; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

All members of staff who make decisions involving the assessment of medical reports receive training in how to consider the impact of a report on an immigration decision. They are not clinicians and are not expected to question the clinical findings made by qualified doctors in a medical report.

They will analyse reports, looking at who conducted the report, their qualifications, methodology used and clinical recommendations or observations as well all other evidence provided when making the decision.

No one who is found to be at risk of torture in their country of origin will be returned.

■ Undocumented Migrants: Employment

Tim Farron:

[\[51882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many fines have been issued to companies for employing illegal immigrants since 2010; what the total amount of those fines was; and of those fines, how much has been collected.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The information you requested for the financial years 2009/10 to 2015/16, and for the current financial year to the end of September, set out in the table.

FINANCIAL YEARS	NUMBER OF INITIAL PENALTIES ISSUED	TOTAL VALUE OF INITIAL PENALTIES ISSUED	VALUE OF PENALTIES COLLECTED
2009/10	2339	£23.2m	£4.3m
2010/11	1899	£17.2m	£6.9m
2011/12	1341	£11.4m	£6.5m
2012/13	1270	£10.8m	£6.3m
2013/14	2149	£16.7m	£5.4m
2014/15	1974	£29.6m	£7m
2015/16	2594	£46.2m	£12.5m
2016/17 (up to 30/09/16)	1549	£24.0m	£8.5m

Please note the figures are for penalties levied at the initial decision stage which may be reduced, cancelled, increased or reissued at the objection or appeal stage.

Please also note that the collection figures are not cohort based statistics and therefore do not represent payment against penalties issued in a particular year.

The figures show the number of civil penalties issued to all businesses in the periods set out in the table. This includes public and private limited companies, sole traders, partnerships and franchises.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Commonwealth Development Corporation

Stephen Doughty: [\[55648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department's Partnership Principles apply to the Commonwealth Development Corporation.

Rory Stewart:

The Partnership Principles are largely focused on our assessment of, and work with, partner governments and are not directly relevant to CDC, which invests in the private sector not governments.

In countries where DFID has a country office, CDC and DFID liaise, consult, and share knowledge in a mutually agreed manner on the sectors and/or industries in those countries, states or territories which have the greatest developmental need.

Stephen Doughty: [\[55649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the value and nature was of each example of fraud and corruption identified by her Department's internal audit of the Commonwealth Development Corporation Group's internal audit mechanisms in Commonwealth Development in each of the last six years.

Rory Stewart:

CDC has their own internal audit function which reports to the Board. As noted in the recent NAO report four cases were referred jointly to CDC and DFID, and CDC consulted informally with DFID on a further three allegations.

One of these cases – the allegations regarding ECP made in 2010 – is in the public domain. We cannot comment on other allegations.

Stephen Doughty: [\[55650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, when the evaluation contract for the Commonwealth Development Corporation Group outlined in the 2015 business case for recapitalisation will be set.

Rory Stewart:

In addition to independent evaluations of CDC's impact that have been and will be undertaken, DFID are currently in the design stages of a complex new fifteen-year study

to generate more detailed longitudinal data on the development impacts of CDC investments. We are the first Government ever to conduct such an in-depth study into their development finance institution. In order to assure we get the best value for money, this study will go through a comprehensive and competitive tendering process. It is anticipated that this study be tendered for in the first half of 2017.

Stephen Doughty:

[\[55702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what requests for capital funding were received by her Department from the Commonwealth Development Corporation/CDC Group in each of the last six years.

Rory Stewart:

In 2014, CDC provided DFID with an Offering Memorandum setting out the case for and requesting additional capital in the amount of £735m. In accordance with the Share Subscription agreement signed in July 2015, DFID has provided CDC with two tranches of additional capital funding: £450 million in 2015 and a further £285 million in 2016. In total these amount to £735 million.

■ Commonwealth Development Corporation: Staff

Stephen Doughty:

[\[55690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many staff at the Commonwealth Development Corporation Group (a) have been recruited, (b) resigned, (c) were dismissed, (d) were transferred to work at another part of HM Government and (e) were signed off on long-term sick leave or other equivalent leave of absence in each of the last six years.

Rory Stewart:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Recruited	8	12	29	38	44	55
Total number of staff	47	49	65	97	128	161
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Resigned	7	9	8	5	12	17
Dismissed	0	0	1	0	0	1
Transferred	0	0	0	0	0	0

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Signed off on long-term absence (i.e. sickness of +20 days)	3	3	2	5	4	3

■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Elections

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[55643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department plans to provide financial or technical assistance to the Democratic Republic of Congo to ensure that elections in line with the 2006 constitution take place.

James Wharton:

DFID has supported the current election process in the Democratic Republic of Congo since 2015, focussing on increasing democratic representation of women and youth, protecting human rights defenders and broadening the Catholic Church's electoral observation activities. In early 2016, DFID announced that additional funding of £6.6million could be made available to support the Electoral Commission in updating the electoral register. These funds are available if and only if the Congolese authorities show political will to hold free and fair elections.

■ Department for International Development: Billing

Tim Farron:

[\[55435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what proportion of payments by her Department to small businesses are made on time and in accordance with the prompt payment code.

James Wharton:

Central Government Departments aim to pay 80% of undisputed and valid invoices within 5 days, with the remainder paid within 30 days.

In 2015-16 the Department for International Development paid 81.01% of such invoices within 5 days, and 99.44% within 30 days.

We have published our overall payment performance data at www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfid-payment-performance-2015/dfid-payment-performance-2015-quarterly

To support prompt payment further, since June 2015 all central Government departments have been required to accept unstructured e-invoices - invoices which can be sent in by email. We are also working towards greater use of structured e-invoices -

these are invoices that can be processed automatically thereby reducing payment times and errors.

■ Overseas Investment

Stephen Doughty:

[\[55695\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the total value of Commonwealth Development Corporation investments was in each of the last six years in (a) private fee-paying education, (b) private fee-paying healthcare, (c) mineral extraction, (d) palm oil and related products, (e) real estate and (f) energy projects involving fossil fuels.

Rory Stewart:

The following represent the total value of CDCs investments in each of the following sectors as at each year end. They are not annual investment figures

(a) private fee-paying education (total portfolio value per sector as at year end)

GBP VALUE £M	PERIOD					
Industry Group	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Education	46.1	57.2	71.5	62.2	56.6	56.9
Total portfolio value	1933.2	1913.3	2246	2504.2	2926.3	2999.2
% of total portfolio value	2.4	3.0	3.2	2.5	1.9	1.9

(b) private fee-paying healthcare by (total portfolio value as at year end)

GBP VALUE £M	PERIOD					
Industry	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Healthcare - Health care providers & services	44.0	45.6	50.5	66.7	104.9	117.9
Total portfolio value	1933.2	1913.3	2246	2504.2	2926.3	2999.2
% of total portfolio value	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.7	3.6	3.9

(c) mineral extraction by (total portfolio value as at year end)

GBP VALUE £M	PERIOD					
Industry	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Extractive industries - Metals & mining	37.2	51.0	43.3	17.7	12.2	9.3
Total portfolio value	1933.2	1913.3	2246	2504.2	2926.3	2999.2

GBP VALUE £M	PERIOD					
% of total portfolio value	1.9	2.7	1.9	0.7	0.4	0.3

(d) palm oil and related products (total portfolio value as at year end)

GBP VALUE £M	PERIOD					
PQ Type	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Palm Oil	8.8	2.0	1.7	9.8	6.0	20.4
Total portfolio value	1933.2	1913.3	2246	2504.2	2926.3	2999.2
% of total portfolio value	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.7

(e) real estate (total portfolio value as at year end)

GBP VALUE £M	PERIOD					
Industry Group	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Real Estate	117.5	149.6	147.2	166.5	154.3	147.7
Total portfolio value	1933.2	1913.3	2246	2504.2	2926.3	2999.2
% of total portfolio value	6.1	7.8	6.6	6.6	5.3	4.9

(f) energy projects (total portfolio value as at year end)

GBP VALUE £M	PERIOD					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Fossil Fuel	81.5	105.5	107.0	145.7	274.4	250.0
Total portfolio value	1933.2	1913.3	2246	2504.2	2926.3	2999.2
% of total portfolio value (fossil fuels)	4.2	5.5	4.8	5.8	9.4	8.3

CDC has no investments in coal fired power projects.

■ Overseas Investment: India and South Africa

Stephen Doughty:

[\[55689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the total value was in each of the last six years of Commonwealth Development Corporation investments in (a) India and (b) South Africa by (i) state and (ii) economic sector.

Rory Stewart:

India

i) Disbursements in India by state

The percentage of CDC's disbursement going to the poorest states in India (classified as 'A' states under CDC's development impact grid) has risen from 8% in 2009-11 (before CDC adopted a new strategy in 2012), to 30% 2012-14, to 42% in 2015.

AMOUNT DISBURSED

State in India	2009- 2011	2012-2014	2015
Assam	459,014	445,898	
Bihar	4,006,784	6,873,457	
Chhattisgarh	2,426,168	1,014,484	1,741,145
Jammu & Kashmir	90,684	4,367	
Jharkhand	153,963	227,322	1,254,654
Madhya Pradesh	1,055,762	8,616,980	18,220,511
Nagaland	68,013	3,275	
Odisha	2,665,999	5,140,926	996,051
Rajasthan	28,016	14,788,169	11,202,038
Tripura	17,059,696		
Uttar Pradesh	7,410,434	11,451,417	11,921,586
West Bengal	4,147,664	14,372,807	4,076,014
Meghalaya	100,777	64,812	
Mizoram	68,013	3,275	
Andhra Pradesh	69,193,376	7,910,934	524,070
Himachal Pradesh	201,568	108,890	161,243
Karnataka	21,385,167	28,669,264	14,457,966

AMOUNT DISBURSED

Kerala	3,984,212	495,743	1,062,647
Telangana	2,301,142		
Chandigarh	1,410,680	125,060	65,852
Delhi	3,741,321	10,797,123	10,082,935
Goa	779,865	167,817	
Gujarat	1,506,022	13,990,969	6,898,106
Haryana	9,951,775	16,546,866	3,859,030
Maharashtra	66,635,038	36,870,050	23,360,223
Pondicherry	75,262	503,164	
Punjab	1,223,827	15,647,394	
Tamil Nadu	15,666,838	21,641,697	22,515,359
Uttarakhand	1,250,854	785,023	1,300,230
Grand Total	212,814,857	202,727,105	174,472,815

Footnote - The above shows annual disbursements allocated state by state by CDC Development Impact team based on expected use of funds. This % is indicative for the portfolio valuation, as Indian companies do not account on a state-by-state basis.

ii) Economic Sector by total portfolio value (£m)

SECTOR	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Agribusiness & Food	5.4	4.2	10.2	11.0	20.6	24.7
Consumer Services	22.7	25.4	30.5	45.5	54.1	43.2
Education	4.9	4.7	7.5	8.7	10.7	10.0
Extractive Industries	11.6	5.7	4.7	3.7	4.7	1.9
Financial	50.9	44.9	69.9	82.6	138.6	209.9
Health care	153.5	52.5	59.9	65.1	118.8	138.8
Industrials	88.9	99.4	96.8	87.3	96.0	107.2

SECTOR	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Information & communications technology	27.3	27.9	30.0	26.7	32.2	32.1
Infrastructure	132.5	129.5	129.1	116.8	119.9	105.3
Real Estate	17.1	21.6	23.2	19.5	17.4	15.9
Grand Total	514.8	415.8	462.1	467.0	613.0	689.1

South Africa

i) Total value of investments by state

South African companies do not account value on a state-by-state basis. CDC does not assess its South African investments by State.

ii) Economic Sector by total portfolio value (£m)

SECTOR	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Agribusiness & Food	5.7	5.6	5.7	7.6	10.3	10.2
Consumer Services	32.5	31.9	35.2	29.9	32.6	5.9
Extractive Industries	12.8	4.5	6.0	5.8	7.4	7.1
Financial	56.7	61.1	67.4	67.4	19.4	21.2
Health care	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.0	0.0
Industrials	104.5	99.5	97.5	70.5	50.5	27.7
Information & communications technology	3.8	16.3	19.2	19.8	23.2	18.8
Infrastructure	3.9	5.6	41.0	143.8	135.0	90.6
Real Estate	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		
Grand Total	220.4	225.1	272.7	345.5	278.4	181.5

■ Pakistan: Education

Jim Shannon:

[\[55333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what funding the Government provides to the government of Pakistan to help improve educational standards in that country; and whether any such funding is provided to assist in ensuring positive portrayal of minority groups in school curricula.

James Wharton:

DFID provides funding to the provincial governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to help improve educational standards. Our investments help raise standards by increasing teacher and student attendance, improving school facilities, and improving children's learning outcomes. In Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa DFID is also supporting government to revise textbooks and replace any content that promotes prejudice and discrimination against religious or other minorities.

Jim Shannon:

[\[55334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, when her Department last made representations to the government of Pakistan on discriminatory material used in schools in that country.

Jim Shannon:

[\[55338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the implications for her policies are of the findings of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom on the presence of discriminatory and inciteful material in text books in schools in Pakistan.

James Wharton:

We are concerned about any reports of abuses against religious minorities in Pakistan. The annual report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom identified 'discriminatory' content against minorities in provincial textbooks in Pakistan. DFID's work directly addresses this concern. DFID is supporting the Governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to raise the quality of education, including through reviewing and replacing text books. Both Provinces are implementing Pakistan's 2006 reformed curriculum which includes new text books and lesson plans. Independent evaluations of the reformed curriculum have confirmed it to be based on the values of democracy, pluralism, and peace. DFID has regular reviews with both Provincial governments to consider programme progress, including the use of new teaching plans, textbooks and tests.

Jim Shannon:

[\[55339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of trends in the number of young people from minority backgrounds leaving school early in Pakistan on account of discrimination.

James Wharton:

According to UNESCO, Pakistan has the second highest number of out of school children globally, which includes children who have never gone to school and those who

drop out early. DFID Pakistan's education programmes work with the provincial governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to increase enrolment and reduce the number of children out of school. We are concerned about every child that is out of school, whatever the reason. DFID's national education campaign, Alif Ailaan, highlights and campaigns on key educational issues such as out of school children and learning outcomes for the poor and most marginalised.

■ Pakistan: Equality

Jim Shannon: [\[55336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether any Government aid is provided to the government of Pakistan in connection with strengthening its powers under Article 25(1) of that country's constitution.

James Wharton:

UK government aid is not provided directly to the government of Pakistan to strengthen its powers under Article 25(1) of their constitution. However, a number of UK aid programmes support progress on equality under the law in Pakistan. For example the Consolidating Democracy Programme works with parliamentarians and political parties on issue-based politics, including the equality of all citizens under the law. The Rule of Law Programme focuses on access to justice for all. DFID's AAWAZ (aawaz means "voice" in Urdu) Voice and Accountability Programme supports civil society organisations to work with the Government of Punjab on the Protection of Women Against Violence Bill (2015), to ensure that perpetrators of violence are brought to justice.

■ Pakistan: Minority Groups

Jim Shannon: [\[55332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what role Government aid plays in helping the government of Pakistan strengthen legal protections for minorities in that country.

James Wharton:

The UK Government raises human rights issues and the rights of minorities on a regular basis at the highest levels in Pakistan and we ensure our development assistance targets the poor, regardless of race, religion, gender, social background, or nationality. One of the four principles set out in the UK-Pakistan Partnership Principles Assessment is a commitment by Pakistan to respect human rights and the UK uses this engagement to advocate for enhanced legal protections for minorities in line with Pakistan's constitution and its international obligations. The Partnership Principles Assessment provides the basis for regular bilateral assistance talks between the UK and Pakistan.

■ Pakistan: Religious Freedom

Jim Shannon:

[55331]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what role Government aid plays in assisting the government of Pakistan fulfil its duties under Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

James Wharton:

The UK Government is firmly committed to promoting and protecting the right to freedom of religion or belief. The UK raises human rights and the rights of minorities on a regular basis at the highest levels in Pakistan and we ensure our development assistance targets the poor, regardless of race, religion, gender, social background, or nationality. The UK Aid funded AAWAZ (aawaz means "voice" in Urdu) Voice and Accountability Programme supports work to foster tolerance and social cohesion between different religious groups. The UK also supports interfaith dialogue in Pakistan to promote a culture of respect for others' religion or belief.

■ Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Richard Burden:

[55929]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether and when her Department plans to publish its review of aid to the Occupied Palestinian Territories separately to its Bilateral Aid Review.

James Wharton:

The Secretary of State is conducting a full examination of DFID's programme in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). The outcomes of the examination will be reflected in our published description of the DFID country programme in due course.

■ Syria: Refugees

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[55705]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what estimate she has made of the level of (a) financial and (b) material support delivered by her Department to civilians fleeing conflict in Syria in each of the last six months; and if she will make a statement.

James Wharton:

In each of the last six months for which we have available data, DFID has disbursed the following financial assistance to implementing partners to deliver support in financial year 2016/2017 to Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey who have been forced to flee Syria. In Turkey our support is now being fully channelled through the EU Facility for Refugees. We have not provided any separate material or in-kind assistance to implementing partners. In addition, to date 61% of our funding for projects in Syria has been channelled via UN agencies.

	JORDAN	LEBANON	TURKEY
June	£16.5m	£13.6m	-
July	£560k	£170k	£945k
August	£1.6m	£28k	-
September	£13.3m	£14.5m	-
October	£853k	£2m	£84m
November	£9.7m	£39.1m	-

■ Syria: Water

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[55776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment she has made of the level of access for civilians in the city of Aleppo to clean water; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

In the East of Aleppo city, DFID partners assess that the supply of water is sporadic and the quality inadequate as a result of damage arising from the ongoing Regime offensive. To help address this, DFID implementing partners have supported repairs to water networks and generators and provided water purification tablets and jerry cans. In the West of Aleppo city, where there has been less damage to the water system, supply is assessed as adequate.

■ UN High-level Panel on Access to Medicines

Dr Alasdair McDonnell: [\[55941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the UN High-Level Panel on Access to Medicines report published in September 2016, what progress her Department has made with other governments on establishing a global agreement on research and development.

James Wharton:

Through the World Health Assembly (WHA), member states have discussed practical steps for greater coordination of research, including the establishment of a global health observatory for monitoring and tracking research. Progress on the observatory and the establishment of a Global Expert Committee for Health Research and Development will be discussed with the WHO in early 2017.

Dr Alasdair McDonnell: [\[55942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking on implementing the recommendations in the UN High-Level Panel on Access to

Medicines report published in September 2016; and what the timescale is for that implementation.

James Wharton:

DFID supports the aims of the UN High Level Panel on Access to Medicines, but we note that this panel of experts could not reach consensus. The World Health Organisation has analysed the barriers that limit access to medicines, and developed a Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property. It is, therefore, well-placed to consider, with partners, which of the Panel's recommendations add value.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[55925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to his oral evidence to the European Scrutiny Committee of 26 October 2016, for what reasons the Government did not make time for a debate on the Canada/EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement on the floor of the House in November 2016.

Mark Garnier:

My Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade has pledged to hold a full debate on the floor of the House of Commons on the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). It is important to note that the European Parliament vote on this agreement was initially expected on 14 December, but has now been delayed until 2 February next year. Decisions with respect to the timing of a debate are for the business managers in the House of Commons.

■ EU External Trade

Barry Gardiner:

[\[55020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether he has had any discussions with Cabinet colleagues on the potential for the EU having to pay compensation to countries with which it has trade deals as a result of the shrinking of the market when the UK leaves the EU.

Mark Garnier:

Cabinet colleagues regularly discuss a whole range of trade issues with the aim of delivering the best results for the UK.

■ Overseas Trade: Israel

Michael Tomlinson:

[\[55475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the current value is of UK-Israel bilateral trade; and what steps he plans to take to retain and strengthen the UK's trade relationship with Israel following the UK leaving the EU.

Mark Garnier:

Israel is an important trade partner for the UK. Bilateral trade in goods and services between the UK and Israel was £3.9 billion in 2015 (**Source: Pink Book 2015**).

With strong cooperation across multiple sectors the Department for International Trade is actively engaged in promotion activities to build UK exports across a range of sectors.

We will of course be making sustained efforts to retain and strengthen further these strong trade links with Israel when the UK leaves the EU.

JUSTICE■ **Asylum: Appeals****Dr Tania Mathias:**[\[52425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 31 October 2016 to Question 50355 on asylum: Appeals, what estimate her Department has made of the average cost to the public purse of an asylum appeal, including all corporate overheads in the (a) First-tier and (b) Upper-tier Tribunal in the last 12 months.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The First-tier Tribunal and Upper Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chambers) are administered by HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS). HMCTS has estimated the average unit cost of an asylum appeal in the First-tier including all corporate overhead as £1840 in financial year 2015/16. The average unit cost of any appeal to the Upper Tribunal including all corporate overhead is estimated as £3443 in financial year 2015/16.

Cost estimates provided are the latest available.

■ **Bedford Prison****Richard Burgon:**[\[52180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) band 3-5 officers, (b) operational support grade officers and (c) other grades have been employed at HMP Bedford in each year since 2010.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

INFORMATION ON STAFF IN POST WITHIN HMP BEDFORD REQUESTED FOR 31 MARCH FROM 2010 TO 2013 IS CONTAINED IN THE ATTACHED TABLE. INFORMATION FROM 2014 ONWARDS IS PUBLISHED IN THE NOMS WORKFORCE STATISTICS BULLETIN AVAILABLE ON THE GOV.UK WEBSITE.

NOMS Staff in Post By Grade at HMP Bedford, 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2013

	31-Mar-2010	31-Mar-2011	31-Mar-2012	31-Mar-2013
Band 3-5 Officers	136	141	140	146

INFORMATION ON STAFF IN POST WITHIN HMP BEDFORD REQUESTED FOR 31 MARCH FROM 2010 TO 2013 IS CONTAINED IN THE ATTACHED TABLE. INFORMATION FROM 2014 ONWARDS IS PUBLISHED IN THE NOMS WORKFORCE STATISTICS BULLETIN AVAILABLE ON THE GOV.UK WEBSITE.

Band 2 / Operational Support	33	30	30	33
Other grades	73	70	72	71
Total	241	240	242	250

■ Cremation: Babies

Diana Johnson: [\[55041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will take steps to support an inquiry by Hull City Council into the loss of the ashes of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North's constituent Andrea Tarcey's triplets in 2006.

Diana Johnson: [\[55099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the inquiries undertaken by (a) Hull City Council and (b) the NHS in Hull into issues arising from the loss of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North's constituent, Claire Clappison's son Hayden's ashes in 2003.

Diana Johnson: [\[55100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the inquiries undertaken by (a) Hull City Council and (b) the NHS in Hull into issues arising from the loss of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North's constituent, Tina Trowhill's son William's ashes in 1994.

Diana Johnson: [\[55101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the inquiries undertaken by (a) Hull City Council and (b) the NHS in Hull into issues arising from the loss of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North's constituent, Linda Spring's son Raymond's ashes in 1996.

Diana Johnson: [\[55102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the inquiries undertaken by (a) Hull City Council and (b) the NHS in Hull into issues arising from the loss of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North's constituent, Mandi Reeve's twins Scott and Sean's ashes in 1996.

Diana Johnson: [\[55103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the inquiries undertaken by (a) Hull City Council and (b) the NHS in Hull into issues arising from the loss of the constituent of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North Andrea Tarcey's triplets' ashes in 2006.

Diana Johnson: [\[55104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the inquiries undertaken by (a) Hull City Council and (b) the NHS in Hull into issues arising from the loss of the constituent of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North Adele Thornton's daughter Chelsea's ashes in 2000.

Diana Johnson: [\[55105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the inquiries undertaken by (a) Hull City Council and (b) the NHS in Hull into issues arising from the loss of the constituent of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North Helen Dawson's son Jake's ashes in 2005.

Dr Phillip Lee:

On the question of an inquiry by Hull City Council into the loss of the ashes of Andrew Tarcey's triplets I refer the Hon Member to my answers to PQ 554722, 54723, 54724, 54725, 54726, 54727 and 54728.

The information the government has received from Hull City Council indicates that it has responded thoroughly to the enquiries it has received from parents, including Andrea Tarcey, Claire Clappison, Tina Trowhill, Linda Spiring, Mandi Reeves, Adele Thornton and Helen Dawson. Hull City Council has explained that engagement with the relevant NHS Trusts was not necessary in these cases as the Council itself had the paperwork, which it provided to the parents.

■ Employment Tribunals Service: Fees and Charges

Catherine McKinnell: [\[55092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the net income from employment tribunal fees was for the (a) first and (b) second quarter of 2016-17.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The net fee income for employment tribunals fees in the first and second quarter of 2016-17 is set out in the table below.

Net Fee Income 2016-17	Q1	Q2
Employment Tribunals	£1.97m	£1.99m

It cannot be right that hardworking taxpayers should pick up the entire bill for employment disputes in tribunals and it is only fair that those who can afford to do so should make some contribution to the cost of the service.

To protect vulnerable workers, there is a system of fee remissions under which fees may be waived in part or in full, for those who qualify.

■ Immigration: Appeals

Paul Blomfield:

[53356]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the gender composition of tribunal users of the First-tier Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber) in each of the last four years.

Sir Oliver Heald:

BY USING THE RECORDED TITLE (MR, MRS ETC) ON OUR CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WE ASSESS THAT THE GENDER COMPOSITION OF TRIBUNAL USERS IN THE FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL (IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM CHAMBER) IN EACH OF THE LAST FOUR YEARS AS PER THE TABLE BELOW. WHERE A TITLE HAS NOT BEEN STATED ON THE APPEAL FORM, OR IS GENDER-NEUTRAL, THE FIGURES ARE RECORDED AS NOT KNOWN:2012-132013-142014-152015-16FEMALE41,96243,86538,46928,874MALE54,12453,99950,75839,535NOT KNOWN3,5792,9512,2221,297

■ Ministry of Justice: Brexit

Ian Blackford:

[907694]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans she has to discuss with the devolved administrations the implications for her policies of the UK leaving the EU.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The Prime Minister met the First Ministers of the devolved administrations in October and was clear that we must work together on EU Exit.

The Justice Secretary is hoping to meet with Justice Ministers from each of the devolved administrations in due course.

Furthermore, Ministry of Justice officials have had meetings with their counterparts from the Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive to discuss the UK's exit from the EU and will be seeking to set up a similar meeting with officials from the Welsh Government, shortly.

■ Ministry of Justice: Procurement

Tim Farron:

[53200]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many times her Department has (a) terminated a contract, (b) imposed a penalty and (c) denied permission for a company to tender on the grounds of grave professional misconduct since November 2015.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

The Public Contracts Regulations (2015) include a mandatory requirement for contracting authorities to exclude companies from public contracts where they have been convicted of certain criminal offences including conspiracy, corruption, bribery and fraud. Potential bidders may also be excluded from participating in the tender process on certain grounds at the discretion of the contracting authority. These grounds include circumstances where they have been convicted of an offence (not attracting mandatory exclusion) relating to the conduct of his business or profession; or been found guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means that the contracting authority can demonstrate.

■ **Offenders: Gender Recognition**

Mrs Maria Miller:

[\[55065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to page 24 of the Government response to the First Report from the Women and Equalities Committee, Session 2015-16, on Transgender Equality, cm 9301, published in July 2016, and page 3 of the Review on the care and management of transgender offenders, published in November 2016, what the timescale is for the introduction of a new NOMS-wide instruction on the management of transgender offenders.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The National Offender Management Service's instruction 'The Care and Management of Transgender Offenders' was released, alongside a wider Review completed by the Ministry of Justice and official statistics on Wednesday 9 November 2016. This is a NOMS-wide policy which covers prisoners serving custodial sentences and those offenders subject to statutory supervision in the community. The Instruction comes into operation on the 1 January 2017.

Mrs Maria Miller:

[\[55066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to page 24 of the Government response to the First Report from the Women and Equalities Committee, Session 2015-16, on Transgender Equality, cm 9301, published in July 2016, what progress her Department has made in establishing an advisory group on transgender people in custody or subject to community supervision.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The NOMS Advisory Board for transgender offenders has been established following the recent publication of the conclusion of the review. The Board will monitor the implementation of the updated National Offender Management Service policy on the care and management of transgender offenders, which includes transgender and non-binary offenders in prison custody and those subject to statutory supervision in the community. The Board will report annually to Ministers on progress with implementing the up-dated policy.

■ Pentonville Prison

Emily Thornberry:

[51348]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what improvements have been made to overall conditions at HMP Pentonville since July 2015; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

As the Justice Secretary has made clear, safety in prisons is fundamental to the proper functioning of our justice system and a vital part of our reform plans.

We have announced £1.3bn to modernise the estate, as well as £100m to increase staffing, including £14m to recruit over 400 staff into our ten most challenging prisons.

We are also putting in place a range of new safety measures to tackle the use of illegal drugs, drones and mobile phones and improve security across the estate. This includes the use of over 300 trained sniffer dogs, as well as upgraded CCTV facilities and the roll-out of body worn cameras across the estate.

Since July 2015 Pentonville have delivered improvements in conditions relating to the residential accommodation; services for prisoners and daily activities.

Improvements have also been made in regards to security, with metal detection devices being used for all movement off the wings and improved mobile phone detectors utilised across the prison.

■ Pregnancy: Discrimination

Catherine McKinnell:

[55112]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what account her Department plans to take of the findings of BIS Research Paper No. 235, on pregnancy and maternity-related discrimination and disadvantage, published in July 2015, in its review of employment tribunal fees.

Sir Oliver Heald:

We are considering the Joint Report of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Equality and Human Rights Commission on [Pregnancy and maternity-related discrimination and disadvantage](#) as part of the review of fees in the Employment Tribunals. We expect to publish the conclusions of the review in due course.

■ Prison Service: Training

Luciana Berger:

[55907]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of operational prisoner officers at each band have received mental health awareness training; what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of that training in reducing self-harm and suicides in prisons; and if she will make it her policy to ensure that all operational prison officers receive that training.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

All new Prison Officers receive Mental Health Awareness training as part of their Prison Officer Entry Level Training (POELT). All establishments provide mental health training for

Prison Officers. The 'Introduction to Mental Health' course and 'Introduction to Safer Custody' course are delivered locally for all operational Prison Officers Band 3, 4 and 5.

■ Prisoners: Bank Services

Mr David Hanson: [\[55056\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners have access to savings accounts for income earned from employment while they are in prison.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Information could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

■ Prisons: Employment

Mr David Hanson: [\[55057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners are engaged in employment paying the living wage.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Information on prisoners' wages is not collected centrally, and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

■ Secure Training Centres

Christina Rees: [\[53552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the limit is on the number of children held at (a) Medway, (b) Oakhill and (c) Rainsbrook secure training centres.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The table below sets out the number of places commissioned by the Youth Justice Board at Medway, Oakhill and Rainsbrook Secure Training Centres:

STC	COMMISSIONED PLACES
Medway	67
Oakhill	80
Rainsbrook	76

■ Serious Crime Act 2015

Justin Tomlinson: [\[55928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, on what date she plans for the commencement of section 67 of the Serious Crime Act 2015.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The Government is committed to commencing section 67 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 and will do so as soon as possible.

■ Wills

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[55155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of designating will writing as a reserved legal activity.

Sir Oliver Heald:

In 2013 the Legal Services Board (LSB) recommended that will writing be made a reserved legal activity, so that only authorised persons under the Legal Services Act 2007 could provide this service. The then Lord Chancellor, however, considered that the evidence provided in the LSB report did not adequately demonstrate that reservation was the best solution to the identified problems in the will writing market, or that other measures had been sufficiently exhausted in seeking to address these problems. This remains the Government position.

We will consider any recommendations from the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) when they publish their Legal Services Market Study.

■ Witnesses: Protection

Craig Williams:

[\[907698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps the Government is taking to protect vulnerable witnesses when they testify in court.

Sir Oliver Heald:

We are committed to helping vulnerable and intimidated witnesses give their best possible evidence so that offenders are brought to justice.

A range of measures exist to help reduce the anxiety of going to court. These include giving evidence away from the court room, from behind a screen or via an intermediary.

We announced on 15 September that the pre-recording of cross examination of vulnerable victims and witnesses away from the court room will be rolled-out to all Crown Courts from early 2017.

Options for improving protections for the vulnerable in the family justice system are now being considered as part of work on wider family justice strategy.

■ Young Offender Institutions: Restraint Techniques

Christina Rees:

[\[53549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many times children have been restrained for good order and discipline in young offender institutions, by establishment, in each month since March 2015.

Dr Phillip Lee:

Information for 2015/16 is not yet available. It will be published in on gov.uk in due course.

■ Young Offenders

Christina Rees: [\[53744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many times children under the age of 18 have been re-categorised and transferred to adult prisons in the last year for which figures are available.

Dr Phillip Lee:

It is not usual practice for young people under the age of 18 to be re-categorised and transferred to the adult estate. In exceptional circumstances, a young person can be moved to the adult estate prior to reaching 18 years of age due to violent or disruptive behaviour which is putting other young people and/or staff at risk. Such moves are extremely rare and take place in line with an agreed approval process which requires sign-off by both the Chief Executive of the Youth Justice Board and the Deputy Director of Custody Young People's Estate.

In the last year, one young person under the age of 18 was moved to a Young Offender Institution accommodating young adults aged 18 to 21.

Kate Green: [\[54358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average custodial sentence length for children and young people in (a) Secure Training Centres, (b) Young Offender Institutions and (c) Secure Children's Homes was in each of the last three years.

Dr Phillip Lee:

Information on sentence lengths is published regularly on gov.uk. These statistics cannot be broken down by the sectors within the youth secure estate where offenders are subsequently placed.

■ Youth Offending Teams

Rushanara Ali: [\[907693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps she plans to take to maintain the capacity of the Youth Offending Service to help reduce youth crime.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The youth justice system needs urgent reform and we have been clear that we must do more to improve safety and help young offenders turn their lives around.

We will be setting out our plans for reform before Christmas.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland

Mr Nigel Dodds: [\[55367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what representations he has received on the reorganisation of electoral offices in Northern Ireland.

Kris Hopkins:

Since the publication of the Consultation on the Future Delivery of Electoral Services was published, I have met a range of stakeholders across Northern Ireland to discuss the issues raised, including MPs, district councils, trade union representatives and those involved in the administration of elections.

■ Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland: Staff**Mr Nigel Dodds:**[\[55368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent discussions he has had with the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer on staffing levels in electoral offices in Northern Ireland.

Kris Hopkins:

Staffing levels within the Electoral Office are a matter for the Chief Electoral Officer.

However, my officials and I have regular discussions with the Chief Electoral Officer, and I am aware of the Voluntary Exit Scheme that is currently underway.

■ Northern Ireland Office: Departmental Responsibilities**Catherine West:**[\[54756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many projects in operation in his Department are related to the UK's exit from the EU.

Kris Hopkins:

My Department is working closely with other departments across Whitehall, in particular the Department for Exiting the European Union, as well as with the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure that Northern Ireland's needs and interests are taken into account in preparing for the UK's exit from the EU. The Government is united in its ambition to deliver a successful withdrawal from the EU and a new relationship with Europe.

SCOTLAND**■ Opencast Mining: Scotland****Alan Brown:**[\[55829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to the Answer of 30 November 2016 to Question 54983, for what reasons he has not provided information on funding from the public purse on enabling open cast restoration works to be undertaken within (a) Scotland and (b) East Ayrshire; what future funding provision the Government has for enabling such works; and if he will make a statement.

David Mundell:

Further to my answer of 30 November on this issue, the UK Government has made clear that it is willing to work with those affected on options for addressing unrestored opencast mines in Scotland. Environmental liabilities are a devolved matter and the Scottish Government has lead responsibility on funding provision for these matters.

TRANSPORT■ **High Speed 2 Railway Line**

Mrs Cheryl Gillan: [\[55822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish an independent review of tunnel costings relating to High Speed 2 (HS2) and the Colne Valley viaduct that was provided by the promoter to the House of Lords HS2 Select Committee; and what the name of the organisations and qualifications of those conducting that independent review were.

Andrew Jones:

The independent review of the HS2 Ltd tunnel costings relating to HS2 Colne Valley viaduct, which was commissioned by the Secretary of State for Transport, was conducted by the Department for Transport's lead non-executive director, Ed Smith CBE, FCA, CPFA, Hon DUniv, Hon LLDs.

A copy of the independent review report, which is entitled 'Independent Review of HS2 Ltd Cost Estimates contained in the Hillingdon Working Group Report', has been placed in the libraries of both Houses.

■ **High Speed 2 Railway Line: Sheffield Station**

Mr Clive Betts: [\[55936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the number of High Speed 2 (HS2) trains that could be timetabled each hour during the day if Sheffield city centre station is chosen for HS2 operating at its current capacity; and whether his Department plans to increase capacity at that station.

Andrew Jones:

Our current assumption is that up to two high speed trains an hour, to and from London, would be able to serve Sheffield station without the need for extra capacity, if the proposals on which we are currently consulting for the HS2 route in South Yorkshire are confirmed. We are also investigating routing up to two further HS2 services from Birmingham to Leeds through Sheffield. This would require an additional northern junction which is also covered in the current consultation.

■ **Wales and Borders Rail Franchise**

Chris Elmore: [\[55093\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the levels of customer satisfaction of passengers of the Wales and Border rail franchise.

Paul Maynard:

The standard assessment of the level of customer satisfaction for train companies across Great Britain is undertaken independently by Transport Focus.

Transport Focus undertake a National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) every six months. The latest results (Spring 2016) for Arriva Trains Wales reported overall satisfaction levels of 82%, unchanged from the result six months earlier.

Details are on the Transport Focus website, a link to the summary results is as follows:

<http://d3cez36w5wymxj.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/30101622/NRPS-At-a-Glance-Arriva-Trains-Wales-Spring-20161.pdf>

WALES

■ Apprentices: Wales

Jo Stevens:

[55889]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what representations he has received from the Welsh Government on the effect of the apprenticeship levy on Wales.

Alun Cairns:

We have worked closely with the Welsh Government to ensure fair and transparent funding and, as far as possible, to develop a system for administering the levy which complements the skills and apprenticeship policies of each of the devolved administrations.

Last month, HM Treasury announced that £128m will be allocated to Wales in the first year of the levy alone. It is up to the Welsh Government to decide what proportion of this is allocated to funding apprenticeships and skills policy.

Jo Stevens:

[55890]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what assessment he has made of the effect of the apprenticeship levy on Wales.

Alun Cairns:

There has been a long standing commitment that Wales will get its fair share from this levy. Last month, HM Treasury announced that £128m, £133m and £138m will be allocated to Wales in the first, second and third years of the levy respectively. On top of this, the UK Government has committed additional funding for Wales of £13.7m in the first and £6.2m in the second year to ensure that Wales receives its fair share of any under spend that occurs in the adjustment period.

Skills policy is a devolved matter in Wales, and therefore it is up to the Welsh Government to decide what proportion of this funding is allocated to apprenticeships and skills policy.

■ Economic Growth: Wales

Paul Flynn:

[55373]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what assessment his Department has made of the potential implications for the Government's policies on Wales of the finding by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in its Global Economic Outlook of November 2016 on the potential growth rate of the UK economy.

Alun Cairns:

The news that the OECD has revised up its UK growth forecast for this year and next is welcome. I believe it demonstrates the strength and its resilience of the economy since the British people decided to leave the European Union.

I also recognise that there are challenges ahead as mentioned in the report from the OECD. In view of this the UK Government has responded by announcing an extra £400m in capital projects for Wales and seeing through the commitment to raise the personal tax allowance to £11,500 to improve the lot of working people. On top of this, the UK Government is no longer seeking to deliver a surplus in 2019-20 and will do all it needs to ensure growth continues in Wales and across the country.

■ Living Wage: Wales**Paul Flynn:**[\[55375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what assessment his Department has made of the potential implications for the Government's policies on Wales of the recommendation by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in its Global Economic Outlook of November 2016 that caution was needed in increasing to the living wage on account of the potential effect on employment of such increases.

Alun Cairns:

This Government will make sure the economy works for everyone across the UK, including in Wales.

To help achieve this, the Government is accepting the recommendations of the independent Low Pay Commission to increase the National Living Wage to £7.50 from April 2017. The Low Pay Commission took into account the state of the economy and labour market in their recommendations.

The National Living Wage has been set so that it reaches 60% of median earnings in 2020, and will have no impact on employment.

■ UK Trade with EU: Wales**Jo Stevens:**[\[55849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for leaving the European Union on the (a) value to Wales of access to the single market and (b) financial cost of paying to maintain that access after the UK has left the EU.

Alun Cairns:

I have regular meetings with the Secretary of State for the Department for Exiting the European Union, as well as attending the Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations. My Department is working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union to ensure we get the best possible deal for Wales and the UK as a whole. Recently I welcomed the Secretary of State to Wales where we attended the CBI Wales Annual dinner and visited SPTS Technologies in Newport.

Jo Stevens:

[55855]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what estimate he has made of the economic value to Wales of the UK's membership of the single market.

Alun Cairns:

I recognise many businesses in Wales trade with the single market and my Department is working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union to ensure we get the best possible deal for Wales and the UK as a whole.

Leaving the EU will lead to new opportunities for businesses in Wales as we build on our strengths as an open, dynamic, trading nation.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Gender Recognition

Caroline Lucas:

[55807]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, with reference to the Government's response to Recommendation 10 of the Women and Equalities Committee Report on Transgender Equality, Cm 9301, through what mechanisms she plans to listen to and monitor people's experiences of discrimination, harassment or victimisation; and if she will make a statement.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government regularly engages with transgender organisations to receive feedback and insight into the community. We also listen to testimony and monitor evidence, such as court cases and reports, to improve our understanding and insight.

This is part of our commitment to understand the needs of the transgender community, in order to tackle the discrimination and inequality they face.

Caroline Lucas:

[55808]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, with reference to the Government's response to Recommendations 4 to 8 of the Women and Equalities Committee Report on Transgender Equality, Cm 9301, over what timeframe she plans to monitor the implementation of alternative gender recognition processes in other jurisdictions; which such jurisdictions she plans to monitor; and if she will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas:

[55809]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, with reference to the Government's response to Recommendations 4 to 8 of Women and Equalities Committee Report on Transgender Equality, Cm 9301, if she will set out a timetable for the review of the Gender Recognition Act to determine whether changes can be made to improve it in order to streamline and demedicalise the gender recognition process; and if she will make a statement.

Caroline Dinenage:

We have committed to a review of the Gender Recognition Act to streamline and demedicalise the gender recognition process, which will include an examination of how alternative gender recognition schemes operate in other countries.

We have begun our programme of work on reviewing the gender recognition process, and we will provide an update on the Government's progress in 2017.

■ **Government Equalities Office: Disability**

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[55500\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the findings of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities inquiry concerning the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, published on 6 October 2016.

Caroline Dinenage:

We have carefully noted the Committee's findings and recommendations, some of which were also raised by the Lords Select Committee on the Equality Act 2010 and Disability in its report to Parliament in March.

The recommendations concern un-commenced provisions in the Equality Act 2010. The Coalition Government did not commence a number of provisions in the Act because of concerns over excessive regulation and potential cost to business. We are considering the future of these provisions, each of which raise different issues around regulatory complexity, implementation, compliance costs, and new burdens for both private and public sectors.

In the case of Section 36 of the Act - the duty to make reasonable adjustments to the common parts of leasehold properties – the Government Equalities Office is reviewing, with other involved Departments, the scope for implementation while ensuring that any new burdens placed on government departments and local authorities as a result of implementing these provisions, are carefully assessed. We will report on the outcome of this in due course.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ **Child Poverty Unit: Staff**

Dan Jarvis:

[\[55841\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 7 November 2016 to Question 51676, on Child Poverty Unit: staff, if he will give a breakdown of the staff numbers provided by civil service pay grade in each of the last five years.

Damian Hinds:

The information requested is not available.

■ **Children: Maintenance**

Chris Stephens:

[\[55905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 4 November 2016 to Question 51323, what the monthly receipts to the public purse were from (a) fees charged for applications to the Child Maintenance Service (CMS), (b) collection fees for

paying parents using the CMS collect and pay service, (c) collection fees for receiving payments using the CMS collect and pay service and (d) enforcement fees levied on paying parents in each month from April to November 2016.

Caroline Nokes:

I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Stretford and Urmston on 24th November 2016 [53614].

Information on fees in the financial year to date will not be available until audit of the 2016/17 Client Funds Account has been completed.

■ **Children: Poverty**

Dan Jarvis:

[55894]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether it is the policy of the Government to eliminate child poverty.

Damian Hinds:

The Prime Minister is clear that tackling poverty, disadvantage, and delivering real social reform, is a priority for this Government.

■ **Department for Work and Pensions: Complaints**

Debbie Abrahams:

[55852]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many times paperwork related to complaints to his Department have been lost in each of the last six years.

Caroline Nokes:

This information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ **Employment and Support Allowance: Ashfield**

Gloria De Piero:

[55913]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people living in Ashfield constituency receive employment and support allowance in the work-related activity group.

Penny Mordaunt:

The information available for the number of Employment and Support Allowance claimants in the Work Related Activity Group, by Parliamentary Constituency, is published and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dwp-statistics-tabulation-tool>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-tabulation-tool-guidance>

■ Employment and Support Allowance: Supported Housing

Peter Aldous: [\[55788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of employment and support allowance claimants live in supported housing.

Caroline Nokes:

The information requested is not available.

Peter Aldous: [\[55789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of people who live in supported housing are in receipt of employment and support allowance.

Caroline Nokes:

The information requested is not available.

■ Personal Independence Payment: South West

Johnny Mercer: [\[55127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many appointments for claimants applying for personal independence payments have been rearranged or cancelled at the request of a person other than the claimant in (a) Plymouth and (b) the South West in the last 12 months.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Department does not publish data on the number of Personal Independence Payment assessments cancelled and re-arranged. To check the validity of the data would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Social Security Benefits

Dan Jarvis: [\[55848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will estimate the effect of the forecasts in the Office for Budget Responsibility's Economic and Fiscal Outlook, November 2016, on his Department's estimates of the financial effect on recipients of working age benefits of the freeze on those benefits.

Caroline Nokes:

The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 has frozen the majority of working-age benefits for four tax years, from 2016-17 to 2019-20. These benefit rates will therefore remain the same.

These reforms to working-age benefits are part of the Government's commitment to incentivise work for those who can in a high-wage, low-tax economy. This includes increasing the National Living Wage to £9 an hour by 2020, cutting income tax for over 30 million people and the roll-out of UC. These reforms are working, with employment at historic high levels.

We are also committed to supporting those who cannot work, and those with additional needs. Our triple lock guarantee has meant that the basic State Pension is now over

£1,100 a year higher than in 2010. Benefits for the additional costs of disability, and for carers, are exempt from the benefit freeze and will continue to be up-rated in line with the rise in prices.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disqualification

Margaret Ferrier:

[55470]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 29 November 2016 to Question 54545, if he will make it his Department's policy to collect data on the number of people subject to a benefit sanction who have used food banks at any time over the duration of that sanction.

Damian Hinds:

The department does not have access to these data.

■ Social Security Benefits: Hearing Impairment

Mrs Louise Ellman:

[55840]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent representations he has received on the appropriateness of his Department's assessments for hearing impaired people; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Department and our Assessment Providers work with a wide range of organisations representing disabled people, including those who are deaf or have a hearing impairment to make improvements to the service provided. For example, Action on Hearing Loss is a member of the Disability Charities Consortium who I meet with on a regular basis. Recent activity includes strengthening processes for booking British Sign Language interpreters and engagement with the British Deaf Association which has led to a joint review of deaf awareness material for health professionals carrying out assessments.

■ Social Security Benefits: Terminal Illnesses

Richard Arkless:

[55891]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, which terminal illnesses will be exempted from the reassessment process for benefits.

Penny Mordaunt:

Terminally ill people claiming Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Universal Credit (UC) via the fast track procedure rather than the normal assessment process, will be reassessed depending on when it is considered most appropriate for the claimant to have their next contact with the Department.

As announced on 1 October, we will stop requiring people with the most severe, lifetime conditions to be repeatedly assessed for ESA and UC. Over the coming months we will work with our health assessment provider, medical professionals and other

stakeholders to develop a set of criteria to switch off re-assessments for people with the most severe health conditions or disabilities.

■ Supported Housing

Mr Roger Godsiff: [55927]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 12 September 2016 to Question 45122, when the Government now plans to make the announcement on the way forward for supported housing.

Caroline Nokes:

The Secretary of State made a Commons Written Statement on 21 November which can be accessed online from the following link:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2016-11-21/HCWS273/>

■ Universal Credit

Debbie Abrahams: [55851]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessments his Department has made of the potential effect of reductions to universal credit on the number of children in (a) relative and (b) absolute child poverty in each year to 2020.

Damian Hinds:

This Government is absolutely committed to delivering a country that works for everyone – not just the privileged few. The Prime Minister has been clear that tackling poverty and disadvantage, and delivering real social reform, will be a priority for this Government. Evidence shows that two of the biggest drivers of child poverty are long-term worklessness and low earnings.

Universal Credit is designed to strengthen incentives for parents to move into and progress in work and evidence shows that under Universal Credit claimants move into work significantly faster and stay in work longer than under the old system. In addition, Universal Credit now provides for 85% of childcare costs giving parents the opportunity to work and earn more, so they can support their families and improve the life chances of their children. We have also announced a 2% reduction in the Universal Credit single taper meaning more support for hardworking families.

Debbie Abrahams: [55887]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many full-time equivalent members of staff his Department has employed to work on the design and implementation of universal credit in each year since its introduction.

Damian Hinds:

Over this period around 600 people, consisting of direct employees and contractors, have been working on the Universal Credit Programme.

■ **Universal Credit: PAYE**

Stephen Timms:

[55898]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department takes steps relating to the PAYE RTI data it receives from HM Revenue and Customs to safeguard universal credit claimants from data error.

Damian Hinds:

A number of processes are in place to deal with inaccurate data from employers. DWP and HMRC analysts continually monitor the RTI data received, looking for trends, patterns and causes. Both Departments then work together with employers and partners such as software developers and payroll bureaux to improve the quality of the data. This work supplements the bacs payment validation process.

■ **Winter Fuel Payments: Ashfield**

Gloria De Piero:

[55912]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many pensioners in Ashfield constituency were subject to a decrease in winter fuel payments as a result of the expiration of the top-up in 2011; and what the average such decrease was.

Richard Harrington:

Winter Fuel Payments are made at rates of between £100 and £300 depending on household circumstances. In the March 2010 Budget, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer announced an additional one-off payment for winter 2010/11 of £100 for over-80s households and £50 for all other households eligible for the Winter Fuel Payment.

National Statistics on the number of recipients of Winter Fuel Payments, broken down by Parliamentary constituency and age group, are published for each year between 2009/10 and 2015/16 at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/winter-fuel-payments-caseload-and-household-figures>.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ 28-29 November -Post-Council Written Ministerial Statement – Competitiveness Council

Minister of State for Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Joseph Johnson): [\[HCWS321\]](#)

The Competitiveness Council met recently in Brussels. Baroness Neville-Rolfe represented the UK at the Council on 28 November (internal market) and I represented the UK on the 29 November (research).

Day One

The Council on day one had a full agenda with key decisions concluded on Geoblocking, the Single Market Strategy and the Unified Patent Court.

The internal market day of the Council began with the approval of legislative and non-legislative A items. On the approval of the EU annual budget the UK abstained.

The first agenda item was a discussion on Geoblocking introduced by Commission Vice-President Andrus Ansip. Following a discussion, Member States, including the UK, accepted the text of the proposed Regulation and the Council agreed a general approach.

The next item was a debate on the Single Market Strategy and Start-up Initiative introduced by Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Elżbieta Bieńkowska. The UK intervened to strongly support the Single Market Strategy and welcomed, alongside a number of Member States, an Irish sponsored like-minded letter calling for greater ambition on services (which we had also signed). A number of Member States welcomed the Commission's work on start-up and scale-up, highlighting in particular problems around access to finance.

In a change to the order of proceedings the Council then took two further items before lunch. Firstly, Commissioner Bieńkowska presented the annual report on the work of the SME Envoy network. She reported the work had been particularly useful in preparing for the Commission's Start-up and Scale-up Initiative published the previous week. The Council took note of the report.

The Presidency then highlighted the outcome of a conference on the collaborative economy following the debate on the collaborative economy at the previous Competitiveness Council in September. Commissioner Bieńkowska said the Commission was now considering various issues where national law might conflict with its recent guidance and might issue a series of pilot letters in the near future.

Over lunch, Ministers were joined by the President of the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA), Dieter Zetsche. Commissioners Bieńkowska and Oettinger led a wide-ranging discussion on the future of the automotive industry. The

UK highlighted the work being undertaken in the UK by the Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles, and outlined the planned investment of £100m which was announced by the Chancellor in the Autumn Statement.

The next agenda item concerned a discussion of the significance of industrial Policy in the Commission's work programme in 2017. Several Member States called on the Commission to demonstrate support for European Industry by producing a Communication on an EU Industrial Strategy in 2017. The UK highlighted the importance of delivering the actions in the Single Market and Digital Single Market Strategies, and set out the approach being taken to deliver the UK's own Industrial Strategy.

The Commission then introduced the Competitiveness Check-up on skills. Member States largely agreed with the Commission on the challenges, in particular on digital skills.

The next item was a discussion on the Unitary Patent and Unified Patent Court (UPC). The UK confirmed its intent to proceed with ratification, and anticipated this being completed according to the existing preparatory timetable. The UK was clear that this decision did not pre-empt our objectives in the forthcoming negotiations and is without prejudice to the UK's future position on the jurisdiction of the CJEU once we have left the EU. This news was welcomed by Commissioner Bieńkowska and several Member States, who all emphasised the importance of having the UK in the UPC and bringing the Court into force as soon as possible in the first half of 2017.

The Presidency then presented the state of play of the proposal to improve the type approval and market surveillance of motor vehicles. Commissioner Bieńkowska said that further progress had not been made, despite the political commitments following the controversies around Volkswagen last year. The UK intervened to support the Commission and to push for a greater level of ambition from the Council.

The next item was a discussion on proposed regulation of consumer protection laws. The Presidency highlighted the substantial work that had been undertaken on this file, and reiterated its aim to reach a negotiating mandate as soon as possible. The Commissioner for Justice Consumers and Gender equality Věra Jourová supported the Presidency in seeking to reach a mandate. The UK intervened to stress that this was an important and complex file which needed to return to Competitiveness Council under the Maltese Presidency for a political discussion.

The next item was a presentation of the Commission's Notice on the Biotechnological directive introduced by Commissioner Bieńkowska. The Notice aimed to clarify the relationship between patents and plant breeders' rights. The UK did not intervene.

Commissioner Oettinger opened a discussion of the Commission's proposals for reforming EU copyright laws. The Commissioner explained the need to provide a modernised copyright framework for the digital age, reflecting the changes to storage, distribution and consumption of content in recent years. The UK welcomes efforts to modernise the EU copyright framework and is consulting with interested stakeholders.

The Hungarian delegation then presented information on the competitiveness aspects of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility Marianne Thyssen noted that balanced economic growth was necessary for social progress. Some Member States intervened to emphasise that the Pillar should not be legally binding on Member States.

The Council concluded with a presentation by the Maltese on priorities for their upcoming Presidency. In relation to the Competitiveness Council, these priorities primarily concern the deepening of the Single Market and making progress on the Digital Single Market.

Day Two

Day two began with a debate on the Commission's recently published Space Strategy for Europe. The Commission is aiming for this to be broad and inclusive, reaffirming Europe's place as a global space power. All Member States welcomed the EU's strategy. It is a good fit to UK priorities for growing the space sector.

A number of space issues were raised in the discussion. The Ariane 6 programme was highlighted as important, with some Member States reminding the Commission of the need for cost effectiveness to avoid unreasonable cost increases. It was felt important that the EU-ESA relationship takes advantage of their respective competences. There was also a call to assist those Member States who currently have limited engagement with the sector.

The UK intervened to welcome the space strategy, recognising that EU systems could be used for defence and security objectives, but they had to remain civil systems under civilian control. The UK also highlighted the opportunities to our commercial sectors, and that space weather and the security of space systems were risk areas that needed to be properly understood.

Council Conclusions on early stage researchers were adopted without amendment.

The last substantive agenda item was the Commission's report on the implementation of the strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation. The discussion highlighted examples of the benefits of international cooperation. The UK stressed three key points – the need for EU research funding to remain focussed on excellence and open to the world; that the UK would continue to collaborate with the Commission on science diplomacy in countries where relations were strained; and third, called for the Commission to ensure that the rules were updated to address problems which had led to a reduction in third country participation (eg liability clauses). This message was echoed by several Member States.

A number of Member States were supportive of PRIMA, a 400M€ programme that seeks to promote food security and water supply in the Mediterranean and is a priority for the incoming Maltese Presidency. Bonus 2, a programme on marine research, was also raised as a positive example of potential multilateral collaboration over shared challenges.

For AOB items, the Commission discussed the launch of an open science policy platform, which will look at best practice, develop EU-wide guidelines for open science delivery and promote open science. This work may inform how the 'open science' agenda is implemented in the FP9 programme (The successor to Horizon 2020). Many Member States were supportive.

Next, the Commission gave an overview of their proposed 1bn€ funding programme for Quantum technologies. This was followed by an announcement that the 'Accelerating Clean Energy' communication will be published on 1 December.

The Presidency then gave a read out from a conference focussed on the European bio-economy that took place in October in Bratislava.

Finally, the Commission welcomed the Portuguese delegation's presentation on developing an infrastructure to promote North-South Atlantic research collaboration.

The meeting concluded with a presentation from the upcoming Maltese Presidency on their priorities in research (including the PRIMA initiative).

TREASURY

■ ECOFIN: 6 December 2016

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Philip Hammond):

[\[HCWS325\]](#)

A meeting of The Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) will be held in Brussels on 6 December 2016. EU Finance Ministers will discuss the following items:

Early morning session

Ministers will be briefed on the outcomes of the 5 December meeting of the Eurogroup and the Commission will present an update on the current economic situation.

Investment Plan for Europe

Ministers will discuss proposals for the Investment Plan for Europe and be asked to reach a general approach on the Commission's proposal to amend the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) legislation as part of the planned extension beyond its original 2015-2018 lifetime. Ministers will also discuss draft council conclusions on measures to tackle bottlenecks to investment identified under the Third Pillar of the Investment Plan for Europe.

Anti-Tax-Avoidance Directive 2

Ministers will be asked to agree a general approach to the EU Commission's proposals on the Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive (ATAD2).

Enhanced cooperation in the area of Financial Transaction Tax

Ministers will receive an update on the proposal for a Council Directive implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax.

Banking Union: Risk Reduction Measures

The Council Presidency will present its new proposals, published on November 23, to revise the capital and resolution frameworks for banks and large investment firms, which will be followed by an exchange of views.

Anti-Money Laundering Directive

The Council Presidency will provide an update on the discussions for proposal for a Directive on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing.

Current Financial Service Legislative Proposals

The Council Presidency will provide an update on current legislative proposals in the field of financial services.

VAT digital package

The Commission will present on the Digital Single Market VAT Package.

Deepening the Economic and Monetary Union: Follow-up on the 5 Presidents' Report

The Commission will provide information on the 5 Presidents' Report.

Improving the Predictability and Transparency of the Stability and Growth Pact

Minister will endorse draft Council conclusions on improving the Predictability and Transparency of the Stability and Growth Pact.

Report on Strategic Issues in the Area of Customs by the High Level Group of Customs Directors General

Ministers will be informed about the outcome of the pilot meeting of the High Level Group of Directors General for customs policy, taxation and customs cooperation on 25 October 2016.

European Semester 2017

The Commission will present to Ministers on the publication of the 2017 Annual Growth Survey (AGS) and Alert Mechanism Report (AMR), followed by an exchange of views.

Implementation of the Banking Union

Ministers discussed the current state of play regarding implementation of Banking Union within the Eurozone.

Fight against the Financing of Terrorism

The Commission will give a presentation on the fight against the Financing of Terrorism.

Capital Markets Union

The Commission will provide information on the Capital Markets Union.

DEFENCE**■ Chemical Weapons Convention - Declaration of Protective Programme**

Minister of State (Ministry of Defence) (Mike Penning): [\[HCWS323\]](#)

My right hon. Friend the Minister of State in the House of Lords (Earl Howe) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The UK's chemical protection programme is designed to protect against the use of chemical weapons. Such a programme is permitted by the Chemical Weapons Convention, with which the United Kingdom is fully compliant. Under the terms of the Convention, we are required to provide information annually to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. In accordance with the Government's commitment to openness, a copy of the summary that has been provided to the Organisation outlining the UK's chemical protection programme in 2015 has been placed in the Library of the House.

NORTHERN IRELAND**■ Northern Ireland Security Situation**

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (James Brokenshire): [\[HCWS324\]](#)

This is the tenth statement on the security situation in Northern Ireland and my first statement to Parliament as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. It covers the threat from Northern Ireland Related Terrorism, rather than from international terrorism, which members will be aware is the responsibility of my Rt Hon Friend the Home Secretary, who updates the House separately.

In the six months since my predecessor's last statement, the same small number of dissident republican terrorist groupings have continued their campaign of violence. Their support remains limited, despite their attempts to seek legitimacy in a wider society which continues to reject their use of violence. Dissident republican terrorists reject the peace process and the progress and benefits which it has brought to Northern Ireland.

The terrorist threat level in Northern Ireland from Northern Ireland Related Terrorism remains unchanged at SEVERE (an attack is highly likely). Most people are not affected by this threat, but where terrorism, paramilitary style attacks and community attacks endure, so too will our efforts to tackle them. There will be no let-up in our efforts to ensure that terrorism never succeeds.

In Northern Ireland, these terrorists have targeted the brave people who serve the community day in, day out, including the police, prison officers and the military. Dissident republicans are relatively small, disparate and factional groupings, but they are also determined and have lethal intent. The last statement to this House highlighted the tragic death of prison officer Adrian Ismay, who was attacked and killed by dissident republicans. These attacks often also have potential to injure members of the public who live and work alongside the intended victims. There have been three further attempted attacks on security personnel since then in which, thankfully, no one was seriously injured.

Our strategic response

PSNI and MI5 are unstinting in their work to counter the threat of violence. Numerous dissident republican attacks have been prevented, often through vital support provided by members of the community. Since my predecessor last reported, PSNI has recovered a large amount of terrorist materiel in Northern Ireland including firearms, high explosives, chemicals and a range of improvised explosive devices. Continued close working with security partners in Ireland has resulted in further significant disruptions and I pay tribute to An Garda Síochána who have diligently pursued terrorists in Ireland with impressive effect. We are all safer for their efforts and because of the strong cross-border working relationship that exists on all security matters.

Similar joint working between PSNI and police in Great Britain led to the arrest and charge of an individual, living in GB, with offences connected to dissident republican terrorism. This enabled the recovery of a significant amount of terrorist materiel in England linked to Northern Ireland Related Terrorism. Legal proceedings are now underway. So far in Northern Ireland this year, there have been 103 arrests, 17 individuals charged under the Terrorism Act and 5 recent convictions linked to terrorist activity. There have been 4 national security attacks in comparison to 16 attacks in 2015 and 40 in 2010. Although there has been a reduction in the overall number of national security incidents so far this year, terrorist attack planning continues with lethal intent and capability as the murder of Adrian Ismay underlines. Vigilance in the face of this continuing threat remains essential.

This Government's commitment to tackling Northern Ireland Related Terrorism remains a high priority. This is supported through the provision of £160m in this Parliament, of Additional Security Funding to the Police Service of Northern Ireland to tackle the SEVERE and enduring threat. On top of this, cross-government spending on counter-terrorism will increase by 30% in real terms over this Parliament.

GB Threat Level

The threat level to Great Britain from Northern Ireland-related terrorism was raised in May to SUBSTANTIAL (an attack is a strong possibility). Although dissident republicans are overwhelmingly focused on carrying out attacks in Northern Ireland, there remains a need to be alert, aware and vigilant.

Paramilitary Activity

Paramilitary activity continues to undermine communities in Northern Ireland. Both republican and loyalist paramilitary organisations carry out violent criminal attacks against people in their own communities. So far this year there have been 6 paramilitary related deaths, 17 casualties of paramilitary style shootings and 57 casualties of paramilitary style assaults. These acts are cowardly, unjustified and damage communities. It is this Government's clear view that paramilitary activity was never justified in the past and cannot be justified today.

Tackling paramilitary activity

This Government is strongly supporting efforts to tackle paramilitarism and organised crime in Northern Ireland. PSNI invests significant resources into both the prevention and

investigation of paramilitary activity and we have pledged £25m of funding through the Fresh Start Agreement to help ensure that the relevant agencies are appropriately resourced to fulfil that commitment. Tackling paramilitary activity is an important step in terms of delivering Fresh Start Agreement commitments and provides an opportunity to make a real difference to people's lives.

The NI Executive published an action plan on tackling paramilitary activity, criminality and organised crime in July 2016. This follows the Paramilitary Panel's recommendations which provide for a strategic approach to the disbandment of paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, including improving criminal justice outcomes in terrorist cases. The Government is working closely with the Northern Ireland Executive to promote progress towards ending paramilitary activity through a range of measures and securing faster and more effective outcomes in terrorism cases.

A Joint Agency Task Force, established under the Fresh Start Agreement to enhance law enforcement co-operation, aimed at tackling organised crime and criminality including that linked to paramilitarism, brings together the expertise of law enforcement agencies involved in tackling organised crime gangs who seek to exploit the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland. UK and Irish Governments' Ministers have recently held positive talks to discuss co-operation between the An Garda Síochána and the PSNI in relation to the progress made by the Joint Agency Task Force.

The Independent Reporting Commission will be charged with reporting on progress towards ending paramilitary activity, including on implementation of measures taken by the UK Government, the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government. The Treaty between the UK Government and the Irish Government, formally establishing the IRC, was signed on 13 September 2016. We aim to have the IRC established by early 2017.

Conclusion

The SEVERE level of threat from violent dissident republicans remains. Good progress has been made but there are still those who wish to attack police, prison and military officers, and some of Northern Ireland's communities live under the constant threat of paramilitarism. Through the excellent work of PSNI, MI5 and security partners including An Garda Síochána, we will continue to bring those who would damage our society to justice, and protect our infrastructure and people from harm. I would like to thank them for their service to the people of Northern Ireland. There never has been, and there never will be any place for terrorism or paramilitary activity in Northern Ireland. We must all play our part in ensuring that Northern Ireland continues to flourish, free of any such pernicious activity.

TRANSPORT

■ Rail update

Secretary of State for Transport (Chris Grayling):

[\[HCWS322\]](#)

Britain's railways are crucial to our economic future, and we have seen significant growth in passenger numbers in the twenty years since privatisation. This growth brings challenges, and the impact of disruption can be immediate, significant and wide ranging.

Our railways need to adapt and change in order to be able to cope with the growth that they have already experienced, and that which lies ahead. We're spending huge amounts trying to tackle the challenge – with new and longer trains and more capacity being introduced across the country. The Shaw Report made a series of recommendations for change, including that Network Rail devolve responsibility to the route level. I support the principles of the Shaw Report, and I support Network Rail's reform programme, but there is much more to do.

I intend to press ahead with a recommendation put to the Department five years ago by Sir Roy McNulty, when he reported to Philip Hammond on how to make the railways run better and more cost-effectively. I will do this initially at an operational level. In order for all those involved to be incentivised to deliver the best possible service for the passenger, I expect the new franchises – starting with South Eastern and East Midlands – to have integrated operating teams between train services and infrastructure. I will also be inviting Transport for London (TfL) to be more closely involved in developing the next South Eastern franchise, through seconding a TfL representative to the franchise specification team.

We will continue to develop the model for greater alignment of track and train as further franchises are renewed – including the option of joint ventures. In the meantime, my Department is also publishing an update to the rail franchising schedule which I am placing in the libraries of the House.

I also want to bring new skills into the challenge of upgrading our railways. I will begin by looking at the reopening of the link from Oxford to Cambridge, to support a range of opportunities including housing, science, technology and innovation. I am going to establish East West Rail as a new and separate organisation, to accelerate the permissions needed to reopen the route, and to secure private sector involvement to design, build and operate the route as an integrated organisation. This East West Rail organisation will be established early in the New Year and chaired by the former Chief Executive of Chiltern Rail, Rob Brighouse.

Along with reform of the investment planning process to take better account of the needs of passengers and freight shippers, and extensive work across the industry to improve skills and diversity, these reforms will set the railway on a firmer footing for the future. We can and we will make sure our rail network plays its part in making this a country that works for everyone. I will bring forward a new strategy for rail in due course which will provide greater detail on our plans.