



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 18 October 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:55 P.M., 18 October 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

■ Biofuels: Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

Nigel Adams: [\[46160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the relative merits of changing the (a) subsidy structure and (b) tariff rate with reference to the administration of the non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive for biomass combined heat and power generators.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has made changes to the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) Scheme Regulations 2011, and these amendments came into force on 1 August 2016.

The changes were made to ensure appropriate value for money for the taxpayer. The decision to make the changes was informed by market intelligence, scheme data and consultation responses.

Nigel Adams: [\[46162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he will allow combined heat and power biomass plants pre-accredited under the Renewable Heat Incentive that are in-build but not yet in receipt of full accreditation to remain eligible under the rules of the scheme which prevailed at the time of the initial investment.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has made changes to the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) Scheme Regulations 2011, and these amendments came into force on 1 August 2016.

The changes therefore apply to all new biomass-Combined Heat and Power plant with an accreditation date on or after 1 August 2016.

■ Carbon Emissions

Alex Cunningham: [\[46864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect on investment in energy intensive industries of increased regulatory uncertainty around carbon emissions policy.

Jesse Norman:

Investment decisions are driven by a range of factors. Government has regular discussions with energy intensive industries (EIs) about carbon emissions policy and other aspects of climate change and energy policy.

The Government is taking actions to help eligible EIs offset the cost of energy and climate change policies and provide greater certainty around electricity prices. We are also working collaboratively with EI sectors to develop action plans which will support industry's transition to a low-carbon future.

■ Carbon Sequestration

Alex Cunningham: [\[47791\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the Government plans to formally respond to Lord Oxburgh's report on carbon capture and storage in the UK, published on 12 September 2016; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

The Government will consider closely the findings and recommendations made in the report, 'Lowest Cost Decarbonisation for the UK: the critical role of carbon capture and storage', published by the Lord Oxburgh- led Parliamentary Advisory Group on CCS.

Government will be setting out its future approach to CCS in due course.

Alex Cunningham: [\[47813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his Department's policy is on carbon capture and storage for coal and gas; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

We will continue to work with industry going forward and will set out our future approach to carbon capture and storage in due course.

■ Coal

Philip Davies: [\[47742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much coal the UK carbon fibre industry has used per annum in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available.

Philip Davies: [\[47754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much coal the UK has used for non-power generating purposes in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available.

Jesse Norman:

(a) The table below gives the amount of coal used for non-power generating purposes:

	UK COAL DEMAND FOR NON-ELECTRICITY GENERATING PURPOSES ⁽¹⁾ (THOUSAND TONNES)
2006	10,156
2007	10,158
2008	10,577
2009	9,037
2010	9,827

	UK COAL DEMAND FOR NON-ELECTRICITY GENERATING PURPOSES ⁽¹⁾ (THOUSAND TONNES)
2011	9,658
2012	9,141
2013	10,139
2014	10,021
2015	8,174

(1) Includes coal used for heat generation, coke manufacture, blast furnaces, patent fuel manufacture, energy used in coal extraction and final consumption by industry, transport, domestic and other users.

Source: Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES) table 2.4 available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/solid-fuels-and-derived-gases-chapter-2-digest-of-united-kingdom-energy-statistics-dukes>

(b) BEIS does not hold data at that level. BEIS cannot disaggregate coal used by the carbon fibre industry from coal used by all industries.

Alex Cunningham:

[47814]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much coal the UK used for non-power generating purposes in each of the last 10 years.

Jesse Norman:

The table below gives the amount of coal used for non-power generating purposes:

	UK COAL DEMAND FOR NON-ELECTRICITY GENERATING PURPOSES ⁽¹⁾ (THOUSAND TONNES)
2006	10,156
2007	10,158
2008	10,577
2009	9,037
2010	9,827
2011	9,658
2012	9,141
2013	10,139
2014	10,021

UK COAL DEMAND FOR NON-ELECTRICITY GENERATING PURPOSES ⁽¹⁾ (THOUSAND TONNES)

2015	8,174
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Source: Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES) table 2.4 available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/solid-fuels-and-derived-gases-chapter-2-digest-of-united-kingdom-energy-statistics-dukes>

BEIS does not hold data at that level. BEIS cannot disaggregate coal used by the carbon fibre industry from coal used by all industries.

(1) Includes coal used for heat generation, coke manufacture, blast furnaces, patent fuel manufacture, energy used in coal extraction and final consumption by industry, transport, domestic and other users.

Alex Cunningham:

[\[47856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much coal the UK carbon fibre industry used in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available.

Jesse Norman:

The table below gives the amount of coal used for non-power generating purposes:

UK COAL DEMAND FOR NON-ELECTRICITY GENERATING PURPOSES ⁽¹⁾ (THOUSAND TONNES)

2006	10,156
2007	10,158
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2011	9,658
2012	9,141
2013	10,139
2014	10,021
2015	8,174

Source: Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES) table 2.4 available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/solid-fuels-and-derived-gases-chapter-2-digest-of-united-kingdom-energy-statistics-dukes>

BEIS does not hold data at that level. BEIS cannot disaggregate coal used by the carbon fibre industry from coal used by all industries.

■ **Coal: Colombia**

Philip Davies: [\[47741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what representations he has (a) received from and (b) made to the Colombian government on the amount of coal mined in Colombia by children and young people aged under 16; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not engaged with the Colombian government on this issue. Departmental officials have had discussions with NGOs and industry bodies regarding coal mining in Colombia but have not been made aware of evidence to support these claims. We are aware that Colombia has laws in place to prevent child labour; if there is evidence to the contrary we would encourage the Hon Member to share it with officials.

Alex Cunningham: [\[47855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with his counterpart in Colombia on reducing the incidence of children and young people aged under 16 working in coal mines; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not engaged with the Colombian government on this issue. Departmental officials have had discussions with NGOs and industry bodies regarding coal mining in Colombia but have not been made aware of evidence to support these claims. We are aware that Colombia has laws in place to prevent child labour; if there is evidence to the contrary we would encourage the Hon Member to share it with officials.

■ **Conditions of Employment: Young People**

Phil Boswell: [\[47237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what workplace protection is in place for young people under the age of 25 to protect them from exploitation by their employer.

Margot James:

In 2015, the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) launched new advice for employers to help ensure they are fully aware of their obligations in respect of young workers. There are key protections for young workers in the following areas:

- Amount of time off each week: younger workers are entitled to two days off per week (over 18 years of age) in the Working Time Regulations;
- Pay rate: most workers over school leaving age (16+) will be entitled to receive the National Minimum Wage or the National Living Wage.

- Hours worked: younger workers will not normally work more than 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week;
- Work-based training: young people must stay in education or training at least part-time, until they are 18 years old. Work-based training such as apprenticeships needs to be more than 20 hours a week; and
- Night work: under 18 year olds are not usually allowed to work at night but exceptions can apply in some circumstances. Any employer has a duty to familiarise themselves fully with the guidance on this.

■ **Consumer Advice, Protection, Standards and Enforcement for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Independent Review**

John Healey: [\[48622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, for what reasons the publication of the Bonfield Review, due to be published in March 2016, has been delayed; and when he expects that review to be made available.

Margot James:

The report of the Independent Review of Consumer Advice, Protection, Standards and Enforcement for UK home energy efficiency and renewable energy measures is in the course of completion and will be published in due course.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: EU Law**

Gareth Thomas: [\[48169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which agreed EU directives have not yet been transposed directly into UK law; and if he will make a statement.

Margot James:

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. During this period the government will continue to negotiate, implement and apply EU legislation.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is responsible for transposition of the following agreed Directives: 2013/30/EU, 2013/55/EU, 2013/53/EU, 2014/33/EU, 2014/34/EU, 2014/29/EU, 2014/30/EU, 2014/35/EU, 2014/31/EU, 2014/32/EU, 2015/13/EU, 2014/53/EU, 2014/68/EU, 2014/95/EU, 2014/104/EU, 2015/2302/EU, 2015/2436/EU, 2014/87/EU, 2013/59/EU.

■ **Electricity: Meters**

Dr Paul Monaghan: [\[47770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many households in Scotland with dynamically teleswitched meters receive their electricity supply from Scottish Power under its Comfort Control tariff.

Dr Paul Monaghan:

[47771]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many households in the Highland area of Scotland with dynamically teleswitched meters receive their electricity supply from Scottish Hydro Electric.

Jesse Norman:

We do not hold information on how many households in Scotland with dynamically teleswitched meters receive their electricity supply from Scottish Hydro Electric or Scottish Power.

In Ofgem's response to CMA Notice of Remedies published in August 2015 (available online at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/561e1fbaed915d39bc000013/Ofgem_revised_with_additional_material.pdf), it was estimated that there were 160,000 households across Great Britain with dynamically teleswitched meters in operation at the end of 2014.

■ Energy: Prices

Alison Thewliss:

[46781]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to ensure that consumers are adequately informed about the option to switch to gas and electricity tariffs with zero standing charge.

Jesse Norman:

Tariffs with zero standing charge generally have a higher unit charge than tariffs with a standing charge, as the cost to supply is only recovered when energy is used. This tariff may benefit low energy using households but not others. Under the terms in the supply licence, suppliers must provide individual customers with details of their cheapest tariff and an estimate of annual savings. Customers can shop around for the best energy deal that suits their needs by using a price comparison company that operates in accordance with the Confidence Code, a code of practice managed by Ofgem for accredited price comparison companies.

Kate Green:

[47965]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with energy suppliers on tariffs for customers who do not elect to pay for services online.

Jesse Norman:

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Ministers will be meeting energy supply companies in due course to discuss a range of issues.

Under the terms of the supply licence, suppliers are required to offer customers a wide choice of payment methods, and this must include payment by cash and payment in advance through a prepayment meter.

■ EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Helen Goodman: [\[47106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it is his policy to continue to take part in the EU negotiations on phase IV of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme while the UK remains a member of the EU.

Jesse Norman:

The UK will continue to be a member of the EU for a period after Article 50 has been invoked. This means that we will continue to participate in the EU ETS and engage in the negotiation and decision-making process for Phase IV of the System.

■ European Regional Development Fund

Gareth Thomas: [\[48165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much funding the UK received from the European Regional Development Agency in (a) total, (b) each action region of the UK and (c) each local authority area in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement.

Margot James:

The UK was allocated €7.8 billion from the European Regional Development Fund for the period 2007-16. This was broken down between the different parts of the UK for each year as follows:

€M	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
England	545.3	515.9	485.2	453.0	414.6	427.7	436.3	Nil	985.8	507.8
Wales	177.9	181.5	185.1	188.8	192.6	196.5	200.4	189.2	193.0	196.9
Scotland	80.5	77.6	74.6	71.5	68.1	64.6	61.0	64.1	65.4	66.7
Northern Ireland	41.3	42.1	42.9	43.8	44.7	45.6	22.5	41.4	42.2	43.1

Within England, the European Regional Development Fund for 2007-2013 was administered on the basis of NUTS 1 regions (as defined by the European Statistical Office). The breakdown for each year was as follows:

€M	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
North West	156.8	138.5	119.5	99.6	78.9	80.4	82.0
Yorkshire & the Humber	127.1	110.8	93.7	76.0	57.5	58.7	59.8
North East	50.5	51.5	52.6	53.6	54.7	55.8	56.9

€M	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
East Midlands	36.1	36.8	37.6	38.3	36.5	39.9	40.7
West Midlands	53.8	54.9	56.0	57.1	58.2	59.4	60.6
East of England	14.9	15.2	15.5	15.8	16.2	16.5	16.8
London	24.5	25.0	25.5	26.0	26.5	27.0	27.6
South East	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.4	1.4	3.5	3.6
South West	16.8	17.1	17.4	17.8	18.2	18.5	18.9
Cornwall & Isles of Scilly	61.6	62.8	64.1	65.4	66.7	68.0	69.4

For the 2014-2020 period, England's share of the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund was allocated across Local Enterprise Partnership areas (see list of allocations at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307492/bis-14-772-uk-allocations-eu-structural-funds-2014-2020-letter.pdf). Local partners decided how the total in each area should be split between the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund.

■ Hinkley Point C Power Station

Barry Gardiner:

[46694]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, for what reasons his Department has not renegotiated the Contract for Difference for Hinkley Point C; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

[Holding answer 10 October 2016]: The commercial terms of the Hinkley Point C contract, including the strike price and protections for consumers, have remained as announced in autumn 2015..

As announced on 15 September 2016, the overall package includes additional commitments from EDF to safeguard against changes of ownership of the developer which have been brought into force through an exchange of letters.

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[47639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to prioritise the sourcing of UK-made components and materials for the construction of Hinkley Point C.

Jesse Norman:

The Department has been clear with EDF as the developer of Hinkley Point C, as well as all other potential new nuclear developers in the UK, that we expect substantial involvement of UK industry in their projects. Government has taken steps through the Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre, with the support of Nuclear Industry Association and the National Skills Academy for Nuclear, to develop UK skills and capabilities, and to identify manufacturing opportunities. This has contributed to UK firms being in a good position to supply components and materials for new nuclear construction. The UK content figure has steadily increased as we have worked with the UK supply chain to help them succeed in winning contracts and EDF now expects 64% of the value of Hinkley Point C to be spent in the UK.

■ Land Registry: Privatisation

John Healey:

[\[48623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his oral contribution of 10 October 2016, Official Report, column 81, on the Neighbourhood Planning Bill and the Land Registry, for what reasons he has chosen not to privatise the Land Registry.

Margot James:

Government has always made clear the importance it attaches to land registration and the Land Registry in supporting an effective and functioning property market. As my Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government said on 10 October, whilst measures for the privatisation of Land Registry will not form part of the Neighbourhood Planning Bill, any decision on privatisation of Land Registry will be for the Government to make in the future. Following the close of the consultation on moving operations of Land Registry to the private sector Government is carefully considering its response, taking into account consultation responses received. It is only right that new ministers take the time to look at all the options before making a decision on the best way to proceed.

■ National Measurement System

Callum McCaig:

[\[47442\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of the budget for the National Measurement System was spent through (a) NEL Ltd, (b) the National Physical Laboratory and (c) LGC over the last five years.

Margot James:

The National Measurement System (NMS) is funded by BEIS, on behalf of Government as a whole, through a portfolio of programmes encompassing a wide range of scientific disciplines.

The budget distribution across the NMS programmes was informed by the NMS Strategy 2009-2016.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
NPL*	£39.2M	£39.4M	£39.3M	£39.3M	£40.3M
LGC	£6.7M	£6.8M	£6.9M	£7M	£7.1M
NEL	£3.6M	£3.5M	£3.5M	£3.4M	£3.5M
NMO	£1M	£1M	£1M	£1M	£1M **
NGML	£75k	£75k	£75k	£75k	£75k
Int. Subs	£900k	£900k	£900k	£900k	£900k

** Figure quoted for NPL is adjusted to reflect the rent returned to the department by NPL.*

***Now included within BEIS operating costs.*

■ Parental Leave

Jess Phillips:
[\[48131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to promote and enable partners to share parental leave.

Margot James:

Shared Parental Leave and Pay came into effect in December 2014 for the parents of children due or placed for adoption from 5 April 2015. The Coalition Government ran a multi-channel campaign comprising of PR, digital and advertising activity aimed at parents and their employers leading up to the scheme coming into effect. The scheme received national press coverage at the time of introduction and subsequently, and was also promoted through a number of stakeholder focussed events, targeted at parents, employers and HR professionals.

Information and advice on shared parental leave is available on GOV.UK and through Acas.

■ Paternity Leave

Jess Phillips: [\[48132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what research his Department has recently undertaken into the potential benefits of increasing paternity leave for men.

Margot James:

In 2011, the Coalition Government consulted on a number of options to modernise employment entitlements relating to families. This led to the introduction of Shared Parental Leave and Pay for working parents; and the provisions in the Children and Families Act 2014 which enable Ministers to make Regulations to extend paternity leave and increase the rate of pay.

■ Pay

Paul Blomfield: [\[47962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what verification process is used by HM Revenue and Customs to ensure that the level of arrears paid to workers using the self-correction process by employers found to be non-compliant with the (a) national minimum wage and (b) national living wage is a true reflection of the amount the workforce is owed.

Margot James:

Where HM Revenue and Customs instructs employers to self-correct, the employer must declare details of the arrears subsequently paid to workers. HMRC perform checks before accepting that pay has been corrected.

HMRC take the circumstances of individual employers into account when instructing to self-correct. If the value of the arrears repaid does not reflect what HMRC expect based on the facts of the case, they can open an investigation to ensure that workers receive what they are owed. Where employers need assistance determining the value of the arrears owed, HMRC will work with them to ensure they get it right.

HMRC's assurance process involves performing a sample check that arrears have been paid correctly. Workers are selected and contacted by telephone and correspondence to confirm that they have received the arrears they are owed, in the amount that the employer has reported.

Paul Blomfield: [\[47967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 29 September 2016 to Question 44820, whether any subsequent action is taken by HM Revenue and Customs against employers named and shamed for non-compliance with the national minimum wage and national living wage to check that they have changed their business practice and are continuing to pay their workforce legally.

Margot James:

HM Revenue and Customs does not have a formal process for revisiting previously non-compliant employers.

However, HMRC responds to 100% of worker complaints, including into employers where arrears have previously been found. As well as responding to complaints, HMRC also maintains a risk-led targeted enforcement programme which involves proactively investigating employers in high-risk sectors.

HMRC will always take action where they believe an employer is not paying the National Minimum Wage/National Living Wage to ensure that every worker receives what they are legally entitled to.

■ Post Office: Finance

Julie Elliott:

[\[48529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the outcome of the discussions that are due to take place between the Government and the Post Office on a funding package from 2018 onwards will be subject to parliamentary scrutiny.

Margot James:

Post Office Limited is currently preparing its funding ask and strategy for consideration by its Board and then Ministers. We expect the Post Office to continue to need funding beyond 2018, and we will be working with Post Office Limited over the coming months to establish the required funding levels.

All planned Departmental spend is subject to Parliamentary scrutiny via the Supply Estimate process.

■ Pregnancy: Discrimination

Jim Shannon:

[\[48150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to address levels of discrimination in the work-place for women who are pregnant.

Margot James:

Pregnancy and maternity-related discrimination in the workplace is both unlawful and unacceptable, and has no place in today's society. That is why the former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) jointly commissioned independent research to better understand the issues so that appropriate steps can be taken to address the situation.

The Government is committed to tackling pregnancy and maternity discrimination and we are taking action as promised in our response on 22 March 2016 to recommendations made by the EHRC. We are working with a range of partners including EHRC and Acas to promote opportunities for women, including pregnant women and new mothers; to ensure that female talent is recognised and rewarded; and to make more employers aware of their legal obligations.

■ Regional Growth Fund

Gareth Thomas: [\[48163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will bring forward proposals for a further round of Regional Growth Funding; and if he will make a statement.

Margot James:

Following the 2015 Spending Review no future rounds are proposed. The economic context has changed since 2011 when the first round of the Regional Growth Fund (RGF) was launched. The economy has recovered significantly and the employment rate has now reached record levels. The RGF is already achieving its task to deliver jobs and sustainable private sector led growth to areas previously dependent on the public sector.

■ Social Services: Pay

Paul Blomfield: [\[47961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much has been paid to social care workers by employers since HM Revenue and Customs introduced the self-correction process for recovering arrears for workers paid below the (a) national minimum wage and (b) national living wage.

Margot James:

In the period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2016 HMRC identified National Minimum Wage arrears totalling £981,514 as a result of investigations into social care employers.

The National Living Wage was introduced from April 2016. Data for 2016/17 is not yet available.

■ Tidal Power: Finance

Catherine West: [\[47450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what level of funding his Department has allocated to schemes that encourage investment in tidal energy in each of the last five years.

Catherine West: [\[47451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what level of funding his Department has allocated to schemes that encourage investment in wind energy in each of the last five years.

Catherine West: [\[47452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what level of funding his Department has allocated to schemes that encourage investment in wave energy in each of the last five years.

Catherine West:

[47462]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much his Department has allocated to schemes to encourage investment in solar energy in each of the last five years.

Jesse Norman:

Over the past five years, solar photovoltaic (PV), wind, wave and tidal electricity projects have received support from either the Renewables Obligation (RO) or the Feed-in Tariff (FITs).

Expenditure through the Renewables Obligation in 2011/12 to 2015/16 can be broken down by power generation technology shown in the table (£million in nominal prices). Solar PV and some small-scale onshore wind are also supported by the Feed In Tariff scheme, but costs are not available disaggregated by technology. Total support is shown below (£million).

RO (£MILLION)	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
Onshore wind	£482.6	£557.1	£755.6	£786.8	£803.0
Offshore wind	£371.1	£698.5	£988.7	£1,108.0	£1,429.7
Solar PV	£0.1	£0.9	£34.9	£133.9	£264.8
Wave & Tidal	£0.1	£0.4	£0.4	£0.1	£0.2
TOTAL RO	£1,457.7	£1,991.3	£2,599.3	£3,114.2	£3,743.2
TOTAL FITs	£151	£506	£691	£866	£1,110

Renewables Obligations: Source Ofgem:

www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/rol/contacts-publications-and-data/publications-library-renewables-obligation

www.ofgem.gov.uk/publication-and-updates/renewables-obligation-ro-annual-report-2014-15

www.renewablesandchp.ofgem.gov.uk/Public/ReportManager.aspx?ReportVisibility=1&ReportCategory=0

FITs: Source Ofgem:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/fit/contacts-guidance-and-resources/public-reports-and-data-fit/levelisation-reports>

The Contracts for Difference Scheme opened for delivery from 2015/16 onwards. No projects started deploying in 2015/16 so no payments were made.

■ Working Hours: EU Law

Stephen Timms: [\[48602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he plans to take to safeguard the provisions of the EU Working Time Directive once Article 50 has been triggered.

Margot James:

This Government has clearly stated that we do not need to be part of the EU to have strong protections for workers' rights, and that we will not roll back EU rights in the workplace. The steps to be taken to safeguard the provision of various pieces of employment legislation, including the Working Time Directive, are still being decided, as part of a much wider legislative piece of work.

CABINET OFFICE**■ Civil Servants**

Paul Flynn: [\[48527\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, (a) how many former Civil Servants have taken up employment in roles that directly relate to their work for the Government since May 2015 and (b) how many of those Civil Servants are working in the private sector.

Ben Gummer:

Information about appointments taken up by former Senior Civil Servants after leaving government is published either on the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (ACoBA) website, or on the relevant Department's gov.uk page.

■ Employment

Jim Shannon: [\[48154\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate his Department has made of the net change in the number of jobs in the UK since 23 June 2016.

Chris Skidmore:

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply.

Attachments:

1. UKSA response to 48154 [PQ48154 v.03 (1) (1).pdf]

■ Public Sector: ICT

Adam Afriyie: [\[47976\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of using blockchain and distributed ledger technologies in the public sector.

Ben Gummer:

Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLT) and blockchain are exciting new developments. The Government is open minded about their potential, along with other emerging technologies, to help better meet user needs. At this stage more research is needed in order to determine their potential uses and whether the technologies are appropriate as a vehicle for public service delivery. The Government will be guided by the Chief Scientific Adviser's 2016 report on the topic available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/distributed-ledger-technology-beyond-block-chain>

■ Unpaid Work**Phil Boswell:**[\[47058\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what statistics are held by the Government relating to incidences of unpaid trial shifts since May 2010 relating to (a) individuals not claiming benefits and (b) people under 25 years old.

Chris Skidmore:

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response to PQ47058 [PQ 47058 V.03 (1) (1) (2).pdf]

TREASURY**■ Concentrix: Cheshire****Justin Madders:**[\[47712\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people in (a) Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency and (b) Cheshire West and Chester have had a tax credit claim stopped by Concentrix; and how many such claims were subsequently reinstated by HM Revenue and Customs.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not hold the data broken down specifically by constituency areas. HMRC is currently focused on resolving the outstanding cases but will be preparing regional analysis, which will be available in due course.

■ Concentrix: Rutherglen and Hamilton West**Margaret Ferrier:**[\[47730\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many tax credits claims have been reinstated by HM Revenue and Customs as a result of (a) adjustments and (b) cancellations by Concentrix in the Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency.

Margaret Ferrier:

[\[47731\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many complaints HM Revenue and Customs has received about Concentrix from residents in the Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency since that company has been under contract with his Department.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not hold the data broken down specifically by constituency areas. HMRC is currently focused on resolving the outstanding cases but will be preparing regional analysis, which will be available in due course.

■ **Concentrix: West Midlands**

Brendan O'Hara:

[\[47860\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many outstanding applications for mandatory reconsideration of a tax credit decision by Concentrix there are in (a) Warley constituency, (b) Sandwell and (c) the West Midlands.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not hold the data broken down specifically by constituency areas. HMRC is currently focused on resolving the outstanding cases but will be preparing regional analysis, which will be available in due course.

■ **European Banking Authority**

Hilary Benn:

[\[47909\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the economic effect on the UK of the UK withdrawing from the European Banking Authority.

Simon Kirby:

On 23 June the British people voted to leave the EU and the Government will deliver on their verdict. We will continue to undertake the policy work to support the UK's negotiations to leave the European Union and to establish the future relationship between the EU and the UK. However, we are not going to give a running commentary on every twist and turn of our exit negotiations. It is in all our interests for UK and EU to work together on both our withdrawal and a new relationship and for us to be able to deliver a successful outcome through a constructive negotiation.

■ **European Union Solidarity Fund**

Sue Hayman:

[\[48573\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he expects to receive funding awarded by the EU Solidarity Fund.

Mr David Gauke:

The Government submitted its final application to the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) in respect of the exceptional flooding in winter 2015-16 on 22 September 2016. The application is now being reviewed by the European Commission and if successful, will be subject to the usual budgetary process.

■ FairFuel UK

Steve McCabe: [\[47707\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will meet FairFuelUK to discuss fiscal incentives for the use of cleaner fuels.

Jane Ellison:

Treasury Ministers and officials meet with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery.

■ Floods: EU Grants and Loans

Sue Hayman: [\[48572\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much EU Solidarity Fund flood relief funding the Government applied for after the 2015-16 winter storms.

Mr David Gauke:

In the case of regional applications such as that made by the UK following the severe flooding in winter 2015-16, the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) retrospectively reimburses Member States for 2.5% of the costs incurred. The Government's final application to the EUSF included an estimate of the costs of damage incurred in flood-affected areas. The European Commission is currently reviewing the application and will determine the amount of funding that the UK is eligible for.

■ Living Wage: Trade Competitiveness

Andrew Rosindell: [\[48520\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the introduction of the national living wage on the UK's international competitiveness.

Mr David Gauke:

The introduction of the National Living Wage marked an important step towards building an economy that works for everyone. It ensures that low-wage workers are fairly rewarded for their contribution to a growing economy. At £7.20, it is a 50p increase on the National Minimum Wage and means a pay rise for over a million workers aged 25 and over across the UK.

The impact assessment for the National Living Wage is available at legislation.gov.uk. It covers the direct costs and benefits to businesses and employees, along with the indirect effects of the policy, including the macroeconomic and fiscal impacts.

■ Monetary Policy

Douglas Chapman: [\[48558\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to review his Department's policies in light of the relative gain in strength of the Euro against sterling.

Mr David Gauke:

The UK has an inflation target, not an exchange rate target, and the Government does not express a view on the level of the exchange rate. Instead, the exchange rate is allowed to adjust flexibly in response to economic conditions and movements in sterling are determined by market forces.

There will be a period of adjustment as the economy responds to the vote to leave the European Union. The UK is well-placed to deal with the challenges, and take advantage of the opportunities, that lie ahead.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT■ **Communities and Local Government: Staff**

John Pugh: [\[47556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, approximately how many (a) British and (b) non-British nationals are employed cleaning the Westminster estate of his Department.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Department for Communities and Local Government shares its Westminster office space with the Home Office. I refer the hon Member to the answer to PQ number 47565.

■ **European Union Solidarity Fund**

Mr Jamie Reed: [\[48559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make an application to the EU Solidarity Fund before December 2016.

Andrew Percy:

The Government finalised the UK's application to the European Union Solidarity Fund on 22 September 2016.

■ **Future High Streets Forum**

Gareth Thomas: [\[47834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, when the future high streets forum has met in the last two years; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Percy:

The Future High Street Forum was set up to provide joint business and government leadership to better enable our high streets and town centres to adapt and compete in the face of changing consumer and social trends. It advises the government in the formation and delivery of policies to support high streets and town centres and comprises a wide range of organisations that are involved in the high street.

The Forum's Executive Board has met 6 times in the past two years, including three times in 2016 so far.

■ Mining: Regeneration

Chris Elmore:

[\[47746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to promote investment in former coalfield communities.

Andrew Percy:

In England, local investment is mainly determined by Local Enterprise Partnerships based on their local economic growth priorities and funded through programmes such as City Deals, Devolution Deals, the Local Growth Fund and Enterprise Zones.

My officials continue to work with the Coalfields Regeneration Trust to support former coalfields communities.

Local growth is a devolved issue in the rest of the UK.

■ New Towns: Kent

Damian Collins:

[\[48619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, when he plans to respond to the expression of interest made to his Department by Shepway District Council on proposals for a garden town development near Otterpool in Kent.

Gavin Barwell:

We plan to respond in the next three weeks.

■ Planning Permission

Steve McCabe:

[\[46903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 8 September 2016 to Question 44488, what the implications for councils are of failure to determine planning applications in a timely and efficient manner; and what plans he has to provide extra funding to councils to assist them with implementing his Department's plans to tighten the Planning Guarantee for minor planning applications.

Gavin Barwell:

Councils are at risk of being designated as underperforming where they persistently fail to determine planning applications for major development within statutory timescales or an agreed extended period with the applicant. In an area where the council has been designated as underperforming, applicants can choose to submit their application directly to the Planning Inspectorate for determination, instead of the council. We are extending this regime to applications for non-major development. Where applications are not determined within 26 weeks, councils have to refund the application fee under the Planning Guarantee.

We do not intend to provide any additional funding to local authorities with regard to tightening the Planning Guarantee. Earlier this year we consulted on proposals to increase planning fees and will publish our response in due course.

■ Private Rented Housing: Fees and Charges

Bridget Phillipson: [\[48049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will review the operation of the scheme requiring letting agents to publicise their fees to consumers.

Gavin Barwell:

In May 2015, the Government introduced measures in the Consumer Rights Act 2015 that require letting agents to publicise prominently in their offices and on their website, a full tariff of their fees, whether or not they are a member of a client money protection scheme and which redress scheme they are a member of.

We are committed to reviewing the impact of transparency requirements. We recently established a working group with Baroness Hayter and Lord Palmer to look at how Client Money protection is currently operating and whether to go further by making use of the powers taken through the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to make Client Money Protection (CMP) mandatory.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Advertising: Food

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[47703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make it her policy to restrict television advertising for unhealthy food on programming likely to be watched by children.

Matt Hancock:

We recognise the importance of tackling childhood obesity, which is caused by a number of complex factors. The Childhood Obesity Plan for Action, published in August, considered a number of different policy responses to address this problem. Additional advertising restrictions were considered as part of this process, but current restrictions in the UK are amongst the toughest in the world and the plan focuses on those areas which experts tell us are most effective.

■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: EU Law

Gareth Thomas: [\[48173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, which agreed EU directives have not yet been transposed directly into UK law; and if she will make a statement.

Matt Hancock:

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. During this period the Government will continue to negotiate, implement and apply EU legislation.

One directive within the jurisdiction of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport has not been transposed yet.

■ Food: Advertising

Grant Shapps: [\[48640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has plans to bring forward legislative proposals to prohibit advertisements for fast food on television before the watershed.

Matt Hancock:

The Government recognises the importance of tackling childhood obesity, which is caused by a number of complex factors. The Childhood Obesity Plan for Action, published in August, considered a number of different policy responses to address this problem. Additional advertising restrictions were considered as part of this process, but current restrictions in the UK are amongst the toughest in the world and the plan focuses on those areas which experts tell us are most effective.

■ Gaming Machines: Regulation

Alison Thewliss: [\[47992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of Part 10 of the Gambling Act 2005.

Tracey Crouch:

The Government continues to keep under review all aspects of the Gambling Act 2005. The Triennial Review of Stakes and Prizes is due to be published shortly, and will consider stakes and prizes of all gaming machines.

■ Greyhounds: Animal Welfare

Angela Smith: [\[48466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what progress the Government has made on increasing funding for greyhound welfare from gambling operators since publication of the Government response to the Second Report of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Session 2015-16, on Greyhound welfare, HC 478.

Tracey Crouch:

The betting and greyhound industries should work together and that contributions from betting should reflect the total income generated by the sport.

While there have been a number of discussions between the two industries on this issue since the publication of the Committee's report, I was disappointed to hear that no further commitments to increase funding have yet been made.

I will be raising this matter again with the betting industry and making my views clear.

■ Infant Foods

Alison Thewliss: [\[47844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will issue a response to the report Scientific and factual? A review of breastmilk substitute advertising to healthcare professionals, published by the First Steps Nutrition Trust.

Matt Hancock:

I refer my honourable friend to the answer to PQ 47854.

■ Nuisance Calls: Charities

Susan Elan Jones: [\[48210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of establishment of the Fundraising Preference Service on charitable donations.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The fundraising preference service is a recommendation of the 2015 review of fundraising regulation led by Sir Stuart Etherington. Its development has been charity sector-led and it will be implemented by the independent fundraising regulator.

The government welcomes the proposals for a fundraising preference service. It will give greater control to the public about how and whether they are approached with targeted charity fundraising requests. It will be particularly useful for people who feel inundated with such requests. It will also help charities to ensure that they target their fundraising material only at those people who want to receive it. The fundraising preference service will be an important element in restoring public trust in charity fundraising, which will be of long term benefit to charities.

■ Radio Frequencies: Mobile Phones

Sir Greg Knight: [\[48050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what measures her Department is taking to ensure that all mobile phone operators have sufficient spectrum to meet future demands for mobile data; and what steps her Department is taking to prevent a dominant company controlling the market on spectrum availability.

Matt Hancock:

All mobile network operators face rapidly growing demand for data, and need spectrum to meet that demand. Since 2010 the Government has made 384 MHz of spectrum used by the public sector available for private sector use, including 190 MHz of spectrum suitable for mobile data. This mobile spectrum is being assigned by Ofcom through an auction; a consultation on the auction rules is expected soon.

Ofcom's duties include the promotion of competition and efficient use of spectrum, and it has indicated that it remains committed to the principle of a four-operator UK market – and therefore to four operators with sufficient spectrum to be credible. The Government therefore believes that Ofcom will set rules that ensure serious bidders

approaching the forthcoming auction with realistic valuations of the scarce spectrum on offer can obtain the spectrum they need.

In the next 3-5 years the government and Ofcom will provide additional spectrum for mobile data including the 700 MHz band.

■ Video on Demand

Neil Coyle:

[\[47847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she will take to ensure that people with audio or visual impairments benefit from the Digital Economy Bill; and if she will assess how on-demand services will meet such people's needs.

Matt Hancock:

Ofcom is the regulator with responsibility for on-demand programme services (ODPS). Ofcom are presently consulting on how to improve access services.

DEFENCE

■ Defence Business Services

Mary Glendon:

[\[48574\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to announce the contract award date for the Defence Business Services corporate services integration and innovation provider contract; and if he will make a statement.

Mary Glendon:

[\[48575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he plans to pause the issuing of a formal contract notice in the Official Journal of the European Union for the outsourcing of Defence Business Services in light of the implications of the EU referendum result.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence is currently examining options for the future of Defence Business Services (DBS) as part of the Future DBS Programme. No final decisions have been taken on whether any elements of DBS' current operations will be outsourced. Timescales will be confirmed in the event of a decision to outsource.

■ Ministry of Defence: EU Law

Gareth Thomas:

[\[48174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which agreed EU directives have not yet been transposed directly into UK law; and if he will make a statement.

Mike Penning:

There are no EU directives related to the Ministry of Defence's responsibilities awaiting transposition into UK law.

■ Submarines: Accidents

Ms Margaret Ritchie: [\[48530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with senior officials in the Royal Navy on the recommendations of the Marine Accident Investigation Branch report on the collision involving the MV Karen fishing boat from Ardglass, County Down in the Irish Sea on 15 April 2016.

Ms Margaret Ritchie: [\[48552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the Marine Accident Investigation Branch report, published on 12 October 2016, on the collision involving the MV Karen fishing boat from Ardglass, County Down in the Irish Sea on 15 April 2016.

Mike Penning:

As recognised in the Marine Accident Investigation Report (MAIB), the Royal Navy has already taken actions as a result of this incident. We are now considering the MAIB's report and its conclusions and recommendations to identify what further actions may be required. I will be visiting Northern Ireland soon and go to Ardglass.

■ Trident Submarines

Nic Dakin: [\[48578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions his Department had with UK steelmakers before the decision was made to use French steel in the construction of Trident successor submarines.

Tom Blenkinsop: [\[48618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department received any bid from steel companies with plants in the UK to supply plate steel for the Successor class of nuclear submarines.

Harriett Baldwin:

The management of the steel procurement process for the Successor Programme is the responsibility of the Prime Contractor, BAE Systems. The Ministry of Defence's involvement with suppliers was limited to conducting a technical assessment during the tendering process to ensure bids met specifications.

The tendering process was progressed and concluded by the Prime Contractor, no viable UK bid was received for this part of the Successor submarine manufacture. Other stages of construction will include grades of steel manufactured by British suppliers and I encourage them to take the opportunity to bid.

Overall, 85% of BAE System's supply chain for the new submarines is based in the UK.

■ Trident Submarines: Iron and Steel

Brendan O'Hara: [\[47861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether a British firm made a bid to supply steel for the Trident replacement.

Harriett Baldwin:

No viable UK bid was received by the Prime Contractor, BAE Systems, to supply the specialised steel required for this part of the Successor submarine manufacture.

Other stages of construction will include grades of steel manufactured by British suppliers and we expect them to take the opportunity to bid.

The Successor programme represents billions of pounds of investment in thousands of British jobs across hundreds of companies from Scotland to the South East.

85% of BAE System's supply chain for the new submarines is based in the UK.

John Spellar: [\[47862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reason the Government made a decision to use French steel for the new Trident submarines.

Harriett Baldwin:

Steel for the Successor submarine programme is sourced by the Prime Contractor, BAE Systems. There was no viable UK bid for the specialised steel required for this part of the Successor submarine manufacture.

Other stages of construction will include grades of steel manufactured by British suppliers and we expect them to take the opportunity to bid.

85% of BAE System's supply chain for the new submarines is based in the UK.

EDUCATION

■ Apprentices

Catherine McKinnell: [\[46780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will take steps to differentiate between the roles of her Department and the Institute for Apprenticeships on the (a) quality of apprenticeships training and (b) collection and analysis of data.

Robert Halfon:

From April 2017, the Institute for Apprenticeships will take on a number of functions relating to the quality of apprenticeship standards. The Institute's key responsibilities will be: to set quality criteria for the development of apprenticeship standards and assessment plans; to review, approve or reject them; to advise on the maximum level of Government funding available for standards; and to quality assure some end point assessments. The Institute will have analytical capability to support its function, advising on funding caps and on other issues where appropriate. Responsibility for monitoring the quality of apprenticeship training will not transfer to the Institute.

The Department for Education will retain responsibility for the quality framework. Primary responsibility for the collection and analysis of data and metrics for apprenticeships, and the success of the apprenticeship programme, will remain with the Department, particularly through the work of the Skills Funding Agency.

Jess Phillips: [\[48127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to increase diversity in apprenticeships.

Robert Halfon:

We want to increase the quality and quantity of all apprenticeships, including for those from a black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) background.

We have publically committed to increasing the number of BAME apprentices by 20% to 11.9% overall by 2020, from just under 10% in the last parliament. Targeted campaigns and a network of 18 employer diversity champions are driving progress. In 2014/15, 10.6% of those starting an apprenticeship were from a BAME background.

We have taken action through our marketing campaign 'Get in Go Far' to ensure that there is clear representation from BAME apprentices. Research undertaken prior to the campaign ensured that it could reach a diverse audience. The employer diversity champions are committed to sharing good practice and raising awareness of apprenticeships amongst employers.

Research has been commissioned to explore potential barriers that BAME applicants for apprenticeships face so that we can provide support to improve the success rates of this group. We have started detailed analysis of apprenticeship data to identify areas of under-representation and areas of potential for growth. We are currently developing options to take forward.

■ Apprentices: Derby

Amanda Solloway: [\[47205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that apprenticeships in Derby North constituency are undertaken by people from less-affluent households.

Robert Halfon:

Apprenticeships are paid jobs that give people from all regions and backgrounds the opportunity to reach their potential - acquiring transferable skills much valued in the labour market without having to contribute to the costs of their learning. The locations and sectors where apprenticeships are available are determined by employers choosing to offer opportunities and employ apprentices.

We will be publishing details of our funding policy for apprenticeships in England from May 2017 shortly, which will demonstrate how we will provide opportunities for people regardless of their background.

We will also continue to demonstrate, with Traineeships and our national campaigns, that an apprenticeship can be a very worthwhile and achievable goal for those from less well-off households.

■ Apprentices: Equal Pay

Jess Phillips:

[\[48130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to prevent wage discrepancies between male and female apprentices.

Robert Halfon:

The Apprentice National Minimum Wage (NMW) applies equally to all apprentices regardless of gender (for the first year, if aged 19, the appropriate NMW for age applies). From October 2016, this rate increased to £3.40 per hour.

Most apprentices receive more than the minimum wage; the latest Apprenticeship Pay Survey (2014) estimates that the median hourly pay for Level 2 and Level 3 apprentices across Great Britain is £6.31. For males it was £6.19 and for females it was £6.36. Differences in pay may occur due to the proportion of males and females in higher or lower paid apprenticeships.

The Government places importance on compliance with minimum wage legislation and the effective enforcement of it. Everyone who is entitled to the minimum wage should receive it.

■ Educational Institutions: Closures

Jess Phillips:

[\[48032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many colleges which were not recognised or listed have been shut down in each of the last three years; and how many such colleges are currently under investigation.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government has clamped down on immigration abuse from poor quality institutions selling immigration rather than education. Since 2010, more than 920 institutions have been struck off the Tier 4 sponsors list.

■ Extended Schools

Bridget Phillipson:

[\[48051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect the availability of childcare provision of extended schools has had on reducing (a) the gender pay gap, (b) child poverty, and (c) workless households in England.

Caroline Dinenage:

The evaluation of the extended schools programme suggested that extended services, which are not limited to childcare, may help overcome or ameliorate the effects of child poverty and workless households by allowing parents to work, or work more hours. Research by others, such as the Women's Business Council, suggests that affordable,

flexible childcare is key to enabling women to participate in the labour market, if they want to.

■ **Extended Schools: Disadvantaged**

Bridget Phillipson: [\[48048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to improve participation rates in extended school activities of primary school pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[48102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of the level of parental contributions required to fund extended school activities on participation of pupils from low-income families in such activities.

Edward Timpson:

We want to ensure that all young people get the best start in life, with the opportunity to receive the knowledge and skills, the right advice at the right time, and great, challenging life-shaping experiences that will ensure their future success. We know that effective schools personalise their support for disadvantaged pupils, which can include the use of extended school activities. Schools are free to use the funding they receive, including through the pupil premium, to offer these activities. We have committed to protecting the pupil premium at current rates for the duration of this Parliament, providing £2.5 billion of additional funding this year alone to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

The Department for Education does not collect information on the amount of funding schools receive from parental contributions for extended school activities or how this affects levels of participation in such activities. It is for schools to set their charging and remission policy. Any charges for extended services cannot exceed the cost of the provision, and in setting their charging policy schools can determine the circumstances where they will remit or partially remit any charges.

■ **Extended Schools: Finance**

Bridget Phillipson: [\[48047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will estimate the proportion of funding for extended school activities in primary schools in 2015-16 which came from parental contributions in (a) England, (b) the North East and (c) Sunderland.

Nick Gibb:

The Department does not collect the information requested.

■ **Foreign Students: EU Countries**

Stephen Gethins: [\[47480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to ensure that UK students will retain the ability and funding to study at universities elsewhere in the EU after the UK leaves the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

Future arrangements for migration, student funding and UK students studying abroad will need to be considered as part of wider discussions about the UK's relationship with the EU.

■ **Higher Education: EU Nationals**

Helen Goodman: [47297]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions she has had with the Home Secretary on work permits and immigration rules for EU citizens working in higher education, research and academia after the UK leaves the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

Department for Education officials meet regularly with Home Office officials to discuss a range of issues regarding EU students and staff. The two departments will continue to work closely as these issues progress.

■ **Higher Education: Finance**

Paul Blomfield: [47306]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of a reduction in international student numbers on university finances.

Joseph Johnson:

The Higher Education Council for Funding in England (HEFCE) reports that the HE sector was in sound financial health in 2014/15. In the same academic year, overseas fee income accounted for nearly 13% of total sector income on average. The report can be found on HEFCE's website at:

http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/HEFCE,2014/Content/Pubs/2016/201604/HEFCE2016_04.pdf

International students make an important economic and cultural contribution to the UK. The UK has, and will continue to have, a world class education system that attracts students from across the world.

■ **Medicine: Higher Education**

Paul Blomfield: [47445]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many applications for medicine courses were (a) received and (b) accepted at higher education institutions in England in each of the last five years.

Joseph Johnson:

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) publishes data on applications and acceptances to full-time undergraduate courses. The table below shows the number of main scheme applications (applications submitted by 30 June each year) and the number of acceptances for 'pre-clinical medicine' for applicants domiciled in England.

Table: applications and acceptances to pre-clinical medicine ¹

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of acceptances	5,525	5,705	5,510	5,630	5,515
Number of main scheme applications	55,280	53,740	54,710	55,065	48,525

Notes:

1. Pre-clinical medicine is based on Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) code A1

The figures were extracted from the UCAS 2015 end of cycle data resources (tables DR3_017_01 and DR3_017_03) available via the following weblink:

<https://www.ucas.com/corporate/data-and-analysis/ucas-undergraduate-releases/ucas-undergraduate-end-cycle-data-resource-5>

■ Sex and Relationship Education

Catherine West:

[47734]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if the Government will ensure that the sex and relationships education curriculum includes (a) LGBT issues and (b) supporting young people's long-term physical health, mental health and general wellbeing.

Edward Timpson:

We are clear that as part of schools' duty to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, all young people should be provided with a curriculum that prepares them for success in adult life. We have made it clear in the introduction to the national curriculum that all schools should make provision for high-quality, age appropriate personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, which includes sex and relationships education (SRE).

When teaching SRE, all schools, including academies through their funding agreement, must have regard to the Secretary of State's Sex and Relationship Education guidance. The guidance sets out that young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that their school's SRE is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs, and that teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Schools are also bound by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

When delivering PSHE, schools and teachers have the freedom to design lessons that meet their pupils' needs, taking account of pupil and parent views. PSHE lessons can provide knowledge to support young people's long-term physical health, mental health and general wellbeing.

Teachers are encouraged to develop their practice with the support of specialist organisations and expert professionals. Many of these specialist organisations have produced resources, including the issues you identify, which can be used and adapted by schools.

As the Secretary of State said at the Education Select Committee hearing in September 2016, we need to look again at how schools deliver high quality PSHE including SRE. We are considering all the options and will come to a view soon.

■ Sixth Form Education: Standards

Nic Dakin: [48667]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools with sixth forms there are where the proportion of students achieving GCSE A*-C in English and A*-C in mathematics is lower than the national average in each respective subject.

Nick Gibb:

43.9% of schools with sixth-forms have a percentage of students achieving GCSE A*-C in English, which is lower than the corresponding national average. 45.4% of schools with sixth-forms have a percentage of students achieving GCSE A*-C in maths, which is lower than the corresponding national average.

■ Special Educational Needs

Mr Barry Sheerman: [47943]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many pupils with special educational needs in schools in England (a) have an education, health and care plan and (b) are educated in a special school.

Edward Timpson:

As of January 2016, the number of pupils with special educational needs in schools for whom local authorities maintain an education, health and care (EHC) plan in England was 59,270; of which, 26,229 were in special schools.

The latest statistics providing the number of children and young people with special educational needs for whom local authorities maintain an EHC plan broken down by establishment type can be found in Table 1 of the 'Statements of SEN and EHC plans: England, 2016' statistical first release, which is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statements-of-sen-and-ehc-plans-england-2016>

■ Special Educational Needs: Assessments

Stephen Timms: [48500]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what role Ofqual has in the setting of the requirements for special needs access to examinations specified by the Joint Council for Qualifications.

Nick Gibb:

This is a matter for Ofqual, the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation. I have therefore asked its Chief Regulator, Sally Collier, to write directly to the Honourable Member. A copy of her reply will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

■ Students: Loans

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[47882]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average amount of student loans outstanding for graduates has been in each of the last three years ending on 31 March 2016.

Joseph Johnson:

The Student Loans Company (SLC) administers student loans for each of the UK Government Administrations. Statistics covering English student loan borrowers are published annually by the SLC in the Statistical First Release (SFR) 'Student Loans in England':

<http://www.slc.co.uk/official-statistics/student-loans-debt-and-repayment/england.aspx>

Information on the average outstanding Higher Education loan balance of borrowers liable to repay by repayment cohort and tax year can be found in table 5A(iii) of the SFR. The figures refer to borrowers who received loans as English domiciled students studying in the UK or as EU domiciled students studying in England.

■ Teachers: Resignations

Gloria De Piero:

[48673]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) primary and (b) secondary school teachers left the profession or took early retirement in each year for which data is available since 2011.

Nick Gibb:

The number (and rate) of qualified teachers that enter and leave service (from state funded schools in England) in each year are publicly available.

The latest statistics, for 2011 to 2015, are in Table 7b in the statistical first release 'School Workforce in England, November 2015', which was published in June 2016:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2015>.

In 2015, 43,070 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers left, but they were replaced by 45,810 new entrants. Of those who left 34,250 FTE teachers were 'out of service' (meaning they are not currently teaching in state funded schools) and 8,820 FTE teachers had retired.

We are actively addressing the key issues that evidence suggests cause teachers to consider leaving the profession – for example by supporting schools to reduce unnecessary workload and improving behaviour management training for new teachers.

■ Teachers: Training

Tom Blenkinsop:

[[48579](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2016 to Question 40132, whether there have been any changes to her Department's plans for the roll out of the National Teaching Service; and when her Department expects to confirm the details of those plans.

Nick Gibb:

We are currently reviewing the lessons learned from the National Teaching Service pilot alongside our growing evidence base on the recruitment challenges that different schools face. The next steps on this will be set out in due course.

■ Teachers: Working Hours

Stephen Timms:

[[48604](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the findings of the research on teachers' working hours, published by the Education Policy Institute on 10 October 2016, whether she plans to make an assessment of the findings in that research.

Nick Gibb:

The Education Policy Institute (EPI) report, *'Teacher workload and professional development in England's secondary schools: insights from TALIS'*, uses data based on the 2013 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) which was published in June 2014. We have already taken extensive action based on this survey and other evidence.

Through the Workload Challenge, launched in October 2014, we asked teachers to share their experiences, ideas and solutions on how to tackle unnecessary and unproductive workload. We published the [response to the Workload Challenge](#) in February 2015. This included a comprehensive programme of action to help address the complex issues that were raised.

In addition, we established three new groups to address the three biggest concerns that teachers raised in the Workload Challenge - ineffective marking, use of planning and resources and data management

We published their [reports](#) on 26 March. They were welcomed by the sector and the report from the EPI is clear that the department is right to focus on these areas. The groups set out clear principles about what should happen in schools, and made recommendations to be taken at every level in the school system.

We have accepted all the recommendations for Government. However, as the reports make clear, it is for everybody involved in education to act on the principles and recommendations in these reports.

We are continuing to work with teachers and their representatives on how to effectively embed the principles in the reports, and help make a culture change so teachers can focus on teaching and not unnecessary bureaucracy and paperwork.

We have also conducted the first biennial Teacher Workload Survey, a commitment from the Workload Challenge. The report is due to be published later this year. Results from this survey, and those in future years, will help us track teacher workload so that further action can be taken if needed.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agricultural Products: Quotas

Helen Goodman: [\[47101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will publish an estimate of the UK share of EU tariff rate quotas on agricultural products in (a) each of the last three financial years, (b) 2016-17 and (c) each of the next three years.

George Eustice:

There is as yet no single agreed method to estimate the UK's share. The Government is now preparing to negotiate our exit from the EU. Defra is working with the Department for International Trade and the Department for Exiting the EU on the UK's withdrawal and future trade relationship. As part of this we will have to separate the UK schedules for goods and services at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) from those of the EU. One of the tasks ahead is to examine the UK's use of tariff rate quotas held by the EU. Defra is in close co-operation with other Government Departments and we will pursue this task in consultation with other WTO Members.

Until we leave the EU current arrangements, including agreements relating to tariff rate quotas, are still in place.

■ Agriculture: Antibiotics

Dr Alasdair McDonnell: [\[48312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment the Government has made of the public health danger posed by the use of antibiotics for agricultural purposes.

George Eustice:

Representatives from Defra sit on the European Medicines Agency's ad hoc Antimicrobial Expert Group (AMEG). The group is comprised of experts on human and animal health.

In 2013, AMEG assessed the risk posed to human health by the use of antibiotics in veterinary medicine. Their assessment was revised in 2016 following the discovery of bacteria resistant to colistin, a last resort antibiotic in human medicine. They recommended that colistin was classified as a critically important antibiotic to human health and called for a reduction of its use in veterinary medicine.

AMEG will continue to assess emerging evidence and bring recommendations where necessary.

Dr Alasdair McDonnell:

[\[48499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department plans to respond formally to the Soil Association's Save Our Anti-Biotic campaign.

George Eustice:

No formal response will be made. On 16 September 2016 the Government published its response to the final report and recommendations of the Independent Review on Antimicrobial Resistance. The response outlines future plans and ambitions to reduce the need for antibiotics and tackle antibiotic resistance.

We continue to work with a wide-range of stakeholders and use emerging, scientifically sound evidence to develop policy.

■ Agriculture: Subsidies

Caroline Lucas:

[\[46840\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans she has to consult stakeholders in the development of proposals for a post-Common Agricultural Policy system of farm support.

George Eustice:

Following the decision to leave the European Union, we now have an unprecedented opportunity to redesign our policies to ensure that our agricultural industry is competitive, productive and profitable and that our environment is improved for future generations. We look forward to hearing from the industry, NGOs and the public on what is needed to drive agriculture and the environment forward to help us develop new policies.

■ Bees

Sammy Wilson:

[\[47767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent steps the Government has taken to tackle the threat from the Asian hornet to the honeybee population in the UK.

Sammy Wilson:

[\[47768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the threat from the Asian hornet to the honeybee population in the UK.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

A contingency plan outlining the Government's response against the Asian hornet is in place. The emergency measures it sets out are tested twice a year by the National Bee Unit ensuring that all field inspectors and support staff are trained in how to respond should an outbreak occur.

Following a confirmed sighting of the Asian hornet in Gloucestershire, the National Bee Unit (NBU) enacted our established biosecurity protocols to confirm the scale of the outbreak and eradicate the pest. A single nest was located and destroyed. To date, no more live hornets have been seen in this area.

The outbreak follows on from a policy review in 2013 whereby the National Bee Unit (NBU) increased the number of risk-based exotic pest inspections it carries out each year. These are targeted at early interception of non-native invasive species such as the Asian hornet. NBU Bee Inspectors also routinely provide advice and training to beekeepers to raise awareness of the threat and the need for vigilance.

The Non-Native Species Secretariat has carried out a risk assessment looking at the risks and impacts of an Asian hornet outbreak. The key threat is believed to be against honey bee species, rather than other bee species. Asian hornets will impact on native species through predation, competition and impact on natural pollination.

■ Bees: Beetles

Chris White:

[\[48506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to prevent the small hive beetle from affecting the UK's bee population.

George Eustice:

A Contingency Plan for England and Wales and a Pest Risk Assessment (PRA) have been published for the small hive beetle. Elements of the Contingency Plan were tested during 2016 with the completion of two field exercises in England. Such exercises have been carried out annually since 2005 on a four year rolling regional cycle ensuring that all National Bee Unit field inspectors and support staff are trained in Contingency Planning and Operational Preparedness.

Since the first detection in Italy in September 2014 UK bee inspectors have enhanced our inspection services and surveillance by:

- tracing and checking past imports of bees from Italy;
- increasing inspections of high-risk apiaries near ports and airports;
- doubling the number of targeted exotic pest inspections carried out per year;
- providing training and guidance materials on pest recognition to inspectors responsible for checking UK imports of plants and plant products (e.g. Plant Health and Seeds Inspectors and Horticulture Marketing Inspectors – as these products could provide a route by which the beetle is introduced); and
- working with beekeeper associations, government agencies and importer trade associations (e.g. Fresh Produce Consortium) to raise awareness amongst beekeepers, plant produce importers and growers who use managed bees for pollination services.

■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Vaccination

Paul Flynn: [\[48505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans she has to extend badger vaccination schemes in 2017.

George Eustice:

There have been a number of private badger vaccination initiatives in England over the last three years, some of which have received Defra grant funding. Resumption in Defra-supported vaccination in 2017 will depend on the availability of the vaccine, current supplies of which are being prioritised by the Government for public health use.

Paul Flynn: [\[48577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when she estimates that the BCG vaccine will be available to resume the Badger Edge Vaccination Scheme; and what plans her Department has in place to procure BCG for this purpose.

George Eustice:

We have no firm date for resumption of supply of the authorised product from the manufacturer, with whom my officials and Public Health England (PHE) are in contact. PHE and Defra officials visited the production facility in September.

■ Clean Air Zones

Neil Parish: [\[47950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she has taken to encourage local authorities to implement a voluntary Clean Air Zone; and what estimate she has made of how many will do so within the next 12 months.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

As part of the national air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide, we are requiring five cities (Birmingham, Derby, Leeds, Nottingham and Southampton) to implement Clean Air Zones. Other local authorities can introduce Clean Air Zones should they wish to do so using their powers under the Transport Act 2000.

On 13 October we launched a consultation on a framework for Clean Air Zones. This will provide a consistent approach to the implementation of Clean Air Zones. Its use by local authorities will give businesses and individuals a clear understanding of what a Clean Air Zone will deliver, and the impacts and benefits for them. Setting out the principles in this way will support both those authorities required by Government to implement a Clean Air Zone and those who, after analysing their own situation, consider a Clean Air Zone to be an appropriate measure to bring in.

In addition, applications are now open for councils to bid for a share of at least £3 million as part of an Air Quality Grant to help improve air quality in their area. Applications could include activities such as feasibility studies for Clean Air Zones.

■ Dairy Farming

Greg Mulholland: [\[47255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress her Department has made on developing a futures market for UK dairy farmers.

George Eustice:

Analysis recently completed by Defra, working with HM Treasury and the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), has identified that futures markets have a role to play in tackling price risks, improving price transparency and encouraging the development of longer-term contracts across the supply chain. We are now working closely with AHDB's Volatility Forum to see how this work can be taken forward, although it would be for the financial exchanges to come up with a specific proposition. It is encouraging that some UK dairies are already offering their farmers opportunities to trade on futures markets

■ Farming Regulation Task Force

Tim Farron: [\[48384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which recommendations from the report of the independent farming regulation task force on better regulation in farming and food businesses have been implemented since that report was published in May 2011.

George Eustice:

The Government (Defra, the Department for Transport, Food Standards Agency and the Home Office) accepted 137 of more than 200 recommendations made by the Farming Regulation Task Force in 2011.

The Farming Regulation Task Force Implementation Group published a final assessment of our delivery in April 2014 in which they concluded that we had completed or made progress against the vast majority of the accepted recommendations. The remaining 27 recommendations are currently being reviewed as part of the 'Cutting Red Tape: Review of the Information managements in the Agricultural Sector'. A report on the findings of this review will be published in due course.

■ Livestock: Antibiotics

Dr Alasdair McDonnell: [\[48313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to minimise the use of antibiotics in livestock management.

George Eustice:

On 16 September 2016 the Government published its response to the final report and recommendations of the Independent Review on Antimicrobial Resistance.

The response includes clear commitments to reducing the need for antibiotics in livestock. We have committed to work closely with different individual sectors to ensure that appropriate sector specific reduction targets are agreed by 2017. This will ensure

that future reductions are greatest where there is most scope, and that they are underpinned by improvements which focus on encouraging best practice and responsible use of antibiotics.

This work aligns with the actions already set out in the Government's Five-Year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy, including improving the stewardship of existing antibiotics, improving infection prevention and control and optimising prescribing practice.

■ Meat: UK Trade with EU

Susan Elan Jones:

[\[48206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the export of meat from the UK to other EU member states.

George Eustice:

Defra is assessing impacts on the meat sector from EU Exit and is committed to ensuring continued access to vital markets in Europe on the basis of the UK's high standards of welfare and animal health. In addition, good progress is being made in extending access to international markets such as China, USA and Japan.

■ Pate De Foie Gras

Henry Smith:

[\[47247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will consider taking steps to ban the sale of foie gras in the UK.

George Eustice:

The EU has introduced controls on the production of foie gras. These controls do not ban the sale of foie gras and while the UK is a member of the EU we are subject to EU Treaty obligations in relation to the free movement of goods. Foie gras is not produced in the UK and this Government has made its views very clear that the production of foie gras using force feeding (or 'gavage' as it's known in France) gives rise to serious welfare concerns. If any production were to occur, the Animal and Plant Health Agency would be asked to investigate and advise on any contravention of UK animal welfare laws.

■ Pigmeat: MRSA

Dr Andrew Murrison:

[\[48350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, on what dates Ministers and officials in her Department met with (a) representatives from the British pork industry and (b) her EU counterparts to discuss the MRSA superbug strain.

George Eustice:

Government regularly meets with representatives from the British pork industry and EU counterparts to discuss a wide range of topics which can include MRSA.

Officials from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, who are responsible for antibiotic resistance policy, have met twice this year with the British pork industry to specifically discuss the topic of Livestock Associated MRSA. The last meeting was on 11 October 2016.

■ **Rice: Industry**

Mrs Louise Ellman: [\[48046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the potential implications of UK withdrawal from the EU for the rice milling industry.

George Eustice:

We are preparing for negotiations to exit the EU. As part of these preparations, we will consider future global trading relationships and the impacts on different agricultural sectors

■ **Schools: Air Pollution**

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[47724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many schools in Birmingham are located in areas with pollution higher than World Health Organisation limits.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Defra does not hold information on schools in the city that are located in areas with pollution higher than World Health Organisation limits. Birmingham City Council is responsible for reviewing and assessing air quality in its area. It declared a city wide Air Quality Management Area in 2005 and an action plan to tackle NO₂ was put in place. Birmingham City Council is best placed to provide the information requested.

In 2015 measured concentrations of PM₁₀ in the UK were below EU and WHO limit values. Measured concentrations of PM_{2.5} were well below the EU limit value of 20µg/m³ but slightly above the WHO value of 10µg/m³ by between 2 and 3µg/m³.

In 2015, Birmingham exceeded the EU limit value for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in and around the city centre. The main source of NO₂ emissions is road traffic.

In December 2015, the Government published the national air quality plan for reducing NO₂ concentrations through a new programme of Clean Air Zones in five cities in England, including Birmingham. The plan combines targeted local and national measures and continued investment in clean technologies. These measures will also reduce particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) concentrations. A public consultation seeking views on the draft Clean Air Zone Framework and on the draft regulation mandating the implementation of Clean Air Zones was published on 13 October 2016.

■ Self-sufficiency

David Simpson: [\[47111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to address the change in Britain's self-sufficiency rating.

George Eustice:

The government has a manifesto commitment to introduce a 25 year plan to grow and produce more food, both to increase consumption of British food in the domestic market and to export more.

The UK Food Production to Supply ratio in 2015 was 61% for all food and 76% for indigenous-type food. This compares with 62% and 76% respectively in 2014. This has remained steady over the last decade.

Global food security is dependent on a number of factors including increasing production sustainably, reducing waste and ensuring open markets around the world to facilitate trade.

■ Water Charges

Kate Green: [\[47966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions she has had with water suppliers on tariffs for customers who do not elect to pay for services online.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Department has not had any discussions with water companies about their charges or tariffs in the context of payment methods.

As regulated private businesses, water companies must follow Ofwat's charging rules and their licence conditions in setting tariffs for customers. Ofwat's charging rules set out that companies must include a reasonable choice of payment methods.

Water companies do not generally differentiate between customers that access their account online or pay their water bill by direct debit, and those that choose paper billing and annual payment. However, there are some that offer a discount, reflective of the cost saving, to customers that pay by direct debit. This is an incentive to encourage greater sign up as there are benefits for both the customer and the company.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Drugs

Maria Eagle: [\[48691\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many meetings (a) Ministers and (b) officials of his Department have had with key stakeholders in the pharmaceutical sector on the effect of the UK leaving the EU since 23 June 2016.

Maria Eagle:

[48693]

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many meetings (a) Ministers and (b) officials of his Department have had with key stakeholders in the automotive industry on the effect of the UK leaving the EU since 23 June 2016.

Mr Robin Walker:

Ministers and Officials from across the Government are working with working with a variety of stakeholders from all sectors including the automotive and pharmaceutical industries. Details of Ministerial meetings will be published in the Department's Quarterly Transparency Returns, which will be made publicly available on GOV.UK.

■ UK Withdrawal from EU

Catherine West:

[47700]

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether the Government has set its negotiating position for exiting the EU as being that it will not seek to remain in the single market.

Mr Robin Walker:

We are considering carefully all options for future arrangements with the EU following a UK exit. We know that there is no mandate for a deal that involves accepting the existing arrangements governing free movement of people from Europe. However, we do not accept that there is a binary trade-off in terms of border control and access to the single market for goods and services. We are aiming for the best deal on both for Britain. The Prime Minister has been clear that we are going to be ambitious in our negotiation, to negotiate the best deal for the British people and that will include the maximum possible access to the European market for firms to trade with and operate within.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Andargachew Tsege

Catherine West:

[47897]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Ethiopian counterpart on the case of Andy Tsege.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Government takes the detention and welfare of Mr Andargachew Tsege very seriously. The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson) has raised Mr Tsege's case with his Ethiopian counterpart, Foreign Minister Tedros, on three occasions, most recently during the UN General Assembly in New York in September. During that conversation he pressed Dr Tedros to follow through with the commitment made by Prime Minister Hailemariam, to allow Mr Tsege access to independent legal advice so he can discuss his options under the Ethiopian

legal system. We will continue to press the Ethiopians to ensure that Mr Tsege has legal representation.

■ Commonwealth

Catherine West:

[48665]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth on the UK's decision to leave the EU.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

As the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) has said, the referendum result means that we need to be redoubling our efforts in multilateral organisations, including the Commonwealth. My noble Friend, The Rt Hon. Baroness Anelay of St Johns, Minister for the Commonwealth, has discussed a range of issues with the Commonwealth Secretary General, including the decision by the UK to leave the EU. Building on the positive momentum from the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2015 in Malta, and will make the most of the opportunities that the Commonwealth has to offer. The UK will continue to be a global advocate for Commonwealth interests, including with our European allies. We will work closely with the Secretary General and the Secretariat to successfully deliver the next CHOGM, which will be hosted by the UK in 2018.

■ Commonwealth: Economic Situation

Catherine West:

[48664]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect on the economies of Commonwealth states of the UK's decision to leave the EU.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

My noble Friend, The Rt Hon. Baroness Anelay of St Johns, Minister for the Commonwealth, has recently recently met a range of Commonwealth High Commissioners to hear their views on challenges and opportunities for Commonwealth countries following the EU referendum result. I have also discussed the issue with Ministers from a range of Commonwealth countries in Asia and the Pacific. Some voiced understandable concerns and uncertainty, including around impact on areas like EU development assistance. However, many saw opportunities following the decision, particularly in the areas of trade and stronger relations with the UK. We will continue to be a strong and energetic global advocate for Commonwealth interests, including with European allies. The Government's aim is that our departure from the EU should cause as little disruption as possible for all our trading partners. Leaving the EU will allow the UK to develop new economic relationships and Commonwealth countries will form a key part of our work in this regard. We will be co-hosting with Malta the inaugural Commonwealth Trade Ministers' meeting in London next year. This is an excellent opportunity to discuss how we can increase cooperation. Boosting trade and investment

across the Commonwealth will be crucial to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

■ Commonwealth: Maldives

Catherine West: [48666]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for the Commonwealth of the recent announcement by the government of the Maldives that the Maldives plans to exit the Commonwealth.

Alok Sharma:

As the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) said on 13 October, the UK is disappointed that the Maldives Government has decided to withdraw from the Commonwealth. We believe in the Commonwealth and its commitment to improving the lives of people across all its member states. It is an organisation dedicated to developing free and democratic societies, and to promoting peace and prosperity.

There are no immediate implications for the Commonwealth. The Secretary-General will continue to champion the values enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter and will maintain support to all member states, especially small and developing states, in upholding and advancing these values practically for the enduring benefit of their citizens.

However, we remain extremely concerned about governance and human rights in the Maldives, not least freedom of expression and association, judicial independence, and the arbitrary detention of political figures. I made clear our concerns when I met the Maldives Foreign Minister, Dr Asim, in London in September.

We will continue to work with the Maldives Government to support them to make progress on these and other areas.

■ Drugs

Maria Eagle: [48689]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many meetings (a) Ministers and (b) officials of his Department have had with key stakeholders in the pharmaceutical sector on the effect of the UK leaving the EU since 23 June 2016.

Alok Sharma:

The details of meetings between Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Ministers and external organisations are published in quarterly returns, which are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data>

The details of meetings between external organisations and officials across the FCO network are not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Ethiopia: Security

Steve McCabe:

[\[47618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what account his Department took of the case of Andargachew Tsege in its decision to fund the executive MSc programme in security sector management in Ethiopia.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

In line with standard government policy, we conducted an Overseas Security and Justice Assessment before funding for the executive MSc programme in security sector management was approved. The consular case of Mr Andargachew Tsege was not a factor in the process. The programme focuses on building an understanding of the rule of law, human rights and international humanitarian law, and the assessment evaluated the programme to be supporting the reduction of human rights violations. The Government takes the detention and welfare of Mr Andargachew Tsege very seriously and continues to raise his case with the Ethiopian government at the highest levels.

■ Imdad Ali

Catherine West:

[\[47842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the Pakistani government on overturning the death sentence of Imdad Ali.

Alok Sharma:

I am concerned about Mr Ali's case and continue to follow developments closely. The UK remains firmly opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances. Abolitionist work is high on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) agenda and is part of the day-to-day work of all diplomatic missions to countries that retain the death penalty. The FCO human rights and democracy report 2015 makes clear our views on the death penalty and the resumption of executions in Pakistan.

The former Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Philip Hammond), raised the issue of the death penalty with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 2015, and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Tobias Ellwood), wrote subsequently to the Pakistani High Commissioner to the UK expressing deep concern about ongoing executions. Together with our EU partners, we continue to raise our concerns about the death penalty with the Government of Pakistan and urge compliance with its international obligations.

■ Iraq: Military Aid

Brendan O'Hara:

[\[47775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how the UK is supporting the Iraqi government in its preparations to restore inclusive governance in Mosul after that city is removed from the control of IS.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are supporting the Iraqi government in its efforts to unite Mosul's communities against Daesh and extremism, rebuild public trust in the Iraqi state and deliver the services and opportunities which all Maslawis want and deserve. Our goal is to liberate Mosul, in a way that protects civilians, minimises the humanitarian impact, and limits longer-term conflict by supporting political reconciliation.

The UK has pledged £9.25m to the UN's Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilisation, which is supporting the Iraqi government to stabilise areas recently liberated from Daesh and has so far helped 775,000 people return to their homes by re-establishing security, basic services and inclusive local governance. The Development Secretary announced a further £40 million in humanitarian assistance for Iraq at the UN General Assembly on 21 September, specifically to support the response to Mosul.

■ Israel: Housing**Tom Brake:**[\[47625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has received on the compatibility with (a) Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and (b) other elements of international law of the Israeli Supreme Court's rejections of cases where demolition orders have been contested; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

While we have not received any representations on these specific issues, we have repeatedly raised our opposition to demolitions with the Israeli authorities and have urged them to provide a legal route for Palestinian construction. On 7 September, during a meeting with Israeli Defence Minister Lieberman in London, I raised our concerns about demolitions.

■ Libya: Compensation**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[47645\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to persuade the Libyan government to issue compensation for UK victims of Libyan-sponsored IRA terrorism.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK Government takes the needs of victims of terrorism in the UK very seriously and is sympathetic to their attempts to seek redress. The current instability in Libya has delayed further discussions with the authorities on the resolution of legacy issues. We have made clear to the Libyan authorities that resolution of legacy issues remain a priority for us. Mr Ellwood raised the issue with Prime Minister Serraj when he met him in Tunis last November. We also raised it with Foreign Minister Siala during the visit to Libya by the former Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede

and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) earlier this year. In July, Mr Ellwood wrote to the Government of National Accord (GNA) seeking an update on legacy issues, but we do not anticipate a swift response given the current challenges facing the GNA.

■ Mexico: Human Rights

Alan Brown:

[47351]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the Mexican government on co-operation with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights investigation into the disappearance of 43 teacher training students of the Escuela Normal in Ayotzinapa on 26 September 2014; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Government has been clear in expressing to the Mexican authorities its deep concern over this case.

The then Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. David Cameron, raised the case with the President of Mexico during his State Visit to the UK in March 2015. The case has also been raised on numerous occasions by other British Ministers, including the then Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) during his visit to Mexico on 2 May.

We welcome the Mexican Government's agreement to a formal follow-up mechanism with the Inter American Court on Human Rights and urge them to work constructively with the Court to implement the mechanism. Two years on from the disappearance of the students in Ayotzinapa, it is important for the Mexican Government to redouble its efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice.

■ Ministers: Visits Abroad

Catherine West:

[48662]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what overseas visits he has made since his appointment.

Alok Sharma:

Since his appointment, the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), has visited Belgium, the United States of America, France, Germany, Austria, Slovak Republic, Poland, Ukraine, Italy, Netherlands, Turkey, Israel and Luxembourg on official business. Details of ministerial travel are published quarterly: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/minister-data>.

■ Norfolk Island: Politics and Government

Andrew Rosindell:

[47623]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has received representations from the people of Norfolk Island on administrative and constitutional changes being implemented on that Island by the Australian government.

Alok Sharma:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has received correspondence from individuals resident on Norfolk Island about the administrative and constitutional changes. The Government is clear that the governance and administration of Norfolk Island is a matter for Australia.

Andrew Rosindell:

[R] [\[47624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether (a) Ministers and (b) officials of his Department have met the administrator of Norfolk Island since 1 July 2016.

Alok Sharma:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers have not met the Administrator. The Department's officials have met the Administrator of Norfolk Island, most recently on 7 October.

■ Pakistan: Capital Punishment

Catherine West:

[\[47843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Pakistani counterpart on the death penalty in that country.

Alok Sharma:

The UK remains firmly opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances. Abolitionist work is high on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) agenda and is part of the day-to-day work of all diplomatic missions to countries that retain the death penalty. The FCO human rights and democracy report 2015 makes clear our views on the death penalty and the resumption of executions in Pakistan.

The former Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Philip Hammond), raised the issue of the death penalty with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 2015, and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Tobias Ellwood), wrote subsequently to the Pakistani High Commissioner to the UK expressing deep concern about ongoing executions. Together with our EU partners, we continue to raise our concerns about the death penalty with the Government of Pakistan and urge compliance with its international obligations.

■ Palestinians: Capital Punishment

Richard Burden:

[\[47611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the statement issued by his Department on 7 October 2016 on death sentences issued in Gaza, what discussions he has had with counterparts in the region on the subject of that statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have not discussed the contents of this statement with regional counterparts. The increasing use of the death penalty in Gaza is a worrying trend. The UK maintains a no contact policy with the de facto authorities in Gaza.

■ **Royal Yacht**

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[47643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the possible diplomatic benefits of recommissioning HM Yacht Britannia.

Alok Sharma:

The Government is determined to make a success of our global role in the world, but re-commissioning the Royal Yacht Britannia is not on our agenda, nor is commissioning a new yacht. There was a debate in Westminster Hall about this very topic on 11 October which aired a range of issues including feasibility and cost. My Rt Hon Friend, the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson MP), the Foreign Secretary, also told the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee on 13 October that he hoped a consortium of philanthropists would come forward to finance the cost of a new yacht.

The former Royal Yacht was used on just 37 occasions for trade promotion and signing trade deals during the last seven years of its commission (1989-1997) and only 27 trips were made overseas – four times per year. There is no evidence that the yacht made a difference to the trade deals secured in these years and this level of use would not represent a good return on investment.

The Government does not have potential costs for the reintroduction of the Royal Yacht Britannia or building of a new royal yacht because neither a feasibility study nor a review has been carried out since the decommissioning of the Britannia in 1997.

We shall continue to make full use of the FCO global network of nearly 270 embassies, high commissions and consulates to promote UK interests overseas. We shall also continue to make full use of existing Royal Navy ships for promotional purposes when they are in foreign ports.

■ **Somaliland**

Stephen Doughty:

[\[48526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the Somaliland government's work on reconciliation between the communities in the Sool and Sanaag regions of Somaliland; and what support the Government is providing in assisting with those efforts.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK welcomes the recent dialogue between the Somaliland Government and representatives from the Eastern regions of Sool and Sanaag. This is a Somali-led and Somali-owned process which we hope will result in a more inclusive political settlement and enhance stability in the region. On 16 September, with international partners, we

made a statement calling for the Somaliland President urgently to set out a clear process, with timelines, to achieve this.

■ **Somaliland: Somalia**

Stephen Doughty: [\[48669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what role the Government plans to take in helping to facilitate a resumed dialogue between Somaliland and Somalia after presidential elections in Somaliland in March 2017.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Government recognises the importance of dialogue between Somalia and Somaliland, currently facilitated by the Government of Turkey, and we expect to see this resumed once both the Somaliland Presidential elections and the Parliamentary and Presidential electoral processes in Somalia have been held.

The Government's position on Somaliland has long been that it is for Somalia and Somaliland to decide their future, and for regional neighbours to take the lead in recognising any new arrangements.

■ **Tibet: Human Rights**

Catherine West: [\[48663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with (a) his Chinese counterpart and (b) officials from Tibet on human rights in Tibet.

Alok Sharma:

We do have concerns about human rights and freedoms in Tibet. I raised our concerns about the Tibetan language advocate Tashi Wangchuk and Tibetan Blogger Druklo (aka Shokjang) with the Chinese Ambassador, in writing, on 1 August 2016. In that letter I also pressed him to allow UK diplomats to visit the Tibetan Autonomous Region.

Neither I, nor my officials, have been able to have recent discussions with officials from the Tibetan Autonomous Region. However my officials have had discussions with non-government organisations on the situation in Tibet.

■ **UK Trade with EU**

Mr David Hanson: [\[906653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what role his Department has taken in discussions with the EU on UK membership of the single market after the UK leaves the EU.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Although my Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Exiting the EU (Mr Davis) leads on negotiations with the EU, as I said to the Foreign Affairs Committee last week, our Departments are working closely together to get the best possible deal for the British people.

■ UK Withdrawal from EU: Scotland

Roger Mullin:

[[906660](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he plans to have with Ministers of the Scottish Government on the role of that Government in negotiations on the UK leaving the EU.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) has committed the Government to full engagement with the Devolved Administrations, to achieve the best possible deal for all parts of the United Kingdom, as we leave the EU.

■ United Nations: Finance

Steve McCabe:

[[47619](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 9 September 2016 to Question 44301, United Nations: finance, how much his Department contributed voluntarily to the missions referred to in each of the last five years.

Alok Sharma:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office pays the UK's assessed contributions for Special Political Mission thematic cluster I, which covers special and personal envoys and advisers of the UN Secretary General. This is paid as part of our contribution to the UN Regular Budget, which is mandatory under the UN Charter.

The UK Government has also, on occasion, provided additional targeted voluntary funding. Information about these discretionary payments is not held in a single consolidated form, and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. The Government identifies and monitors the value and impact of providing the voluntary funding on a case-by-case basis.

■ Yemen: Children

Frank Field:

[[47782](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of enforcement of international humanitarian and human rights law in respect of children by the UN Human Rights Council in Yemen.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We worked hard with international partners to secure a strong resolution to help the situation on the ground in Yemen. The resolution includes a commitment to increase the number of international human rights experts in the Yemen Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) operation, making clear the independent mandate for OHCHR to conduct their own investigations. The resolution also maintains the technical cooperation programme for OHCHR to strengthen the National Commission in Yemen, which we believe will make a difference on the ground. We look forward to reports from the OHCHR next year.

■ Yemen: Military Intervention

Julie Elliott: [\[48431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the humanitarian situation in Yemen following the air strike on a funeral hall in Sana'a on 8 October 2016.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are very concerned with the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Yemen is now one of the most serious humanitarian crises in the world. One fifth of the world's total population in need of humanitarian aid live in Yemen (21 million, 82% of the population). On 21 September the Secretary of State for International Development, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Witham (Mrs Patel) announced an additional package of £37 million support to Yemen, which will bring the UK's total humanitarian funding for the crisis to £100 million this year. The UK is the fourth largest donor to the Yemen crisis. So far this calendar year (since January) the UK has provided £54 million in humanitarian support to Yemen, which has contributed to projects within the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan. We have so far helped more than 1.3 million Yemenis with food, medical supplies, water, and emergency shelter.

Gill Furniss: [\[906654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will review the UK's support for the Saudi-led coalition forces operating in Yemen.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK supports the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition military intervention, which came at the request of legitimate President Hadi, to deter aggression by the Houthis, and allow for the return of the legitimate Yemeni Government.

As set out in UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 2216, the UNSC continues to support President Hadi as the legitimate authority in Yemen.

Chris White: [\[906655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policy on Yemen of the airstrike in Sanaa on 8 October 2016.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I visited Riyadh on 13 October and met with Saudi Foreign Minister Al Jubeir to discuss the airstrike on a funeral hall and efforts to revive the stalled political process in Yemen. I welcome the release of the report by the Coalition's Joint Incidents Assessment Team into the incident. This will be used to contribute to our overall view on the approach and attitude of Saudi Arabia to international humanitarian law.

■ Zimbabwe: Politics and Government

Oliver Colvile:

[\[906661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential implications for Zimbabwe's political and economic future in the event of the death of President Mugabe.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Zimbabwe faces enormous political and economic challenges. A peaceful transition to a leader willing to make reforms could move Zimbabwe towards a more democratic, prosperous future. The UK does not support parties or individuals, but rather the implementation of policies that could lead to eventual normalisation of Zimbabwe's international relations.

HEALTH

■ Ambulance Services: Standards

Justin Madders:

[\[47902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the most recent rating by the Care Quality Commission was of each Ambulance Trust.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care providers in England. Following an inspection the CQC rate providers on a four point scale running from outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate. In addition to an aggregate rating at a provider level, the CQC produces ratings for individual services and locations. The CQC has provided the following information:

The CQC began its new inspection approach in September 2013. Since then the CQC has undertaken a comprehensive first rating inspection at all National Health Service trusts it committed to; non-specialist acute trusts, community trusts, mental health trusts, ambulances and specialist acute trusts. The deadlines for each were met, namely, March 2016 for acute non-specialists and June 2016 for the other commitments. As all inspections for ambulance trusts have been completed, the majority of inspection reports have been published. Those that are not yet published are undergoing the factual accuracy process and will be published by the end of 2016.

The table below sets out the 10 NHS ambulance trusts that are registered with CQC, their overall rating (where applicable) and the date the inspection report was published.

Registered ambulance trusts ¹ with overall rating under new inspection regime where applicable (as at 11 October 2016)

PROVIDER NAME	LATEST OVERALL RATING	PUBLICATION DATE
Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust	Requires improvement	21 August 2015

PROVIDER NAME	LATEST OVERALL RATING	PUBLICATION DATE
London Ambulance Service NHS Trust	Inadequate	27 November 2015
East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust	Requires improvement	10 May 2016
East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust	Requires improvement	9 August 2016
South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust	Good	20 September 2016
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust	Inadequate	29 September 2016
South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust	Requires improvement	6 October 2016
North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust	Report not yet published	To be confirmed
North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust	Report not yet published	To be confirmed
West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust	Report not yet published	To be confirmed

¹ Registered NHS Healthcare Organisation providers and active NHS Healthcare Organisation locations with primary inspection category of Ambulance Service. Ratings supplied are the overall for the trust, not that specific to Patient Transport Services. In addition, one trust, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust, has a rating for Patient Transport Services but is excluded from the data supplied because it is not an ambulance trust.

Rehman Chishti:

[\[48018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress his Department has made on improving the performance of ambulance services which are in special measures.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Since entering Special Measures in November 2015, the London Ambulance Service has reduced the gap from 3% behind the national average for Category A Red 1 Calls 8 minute standard, to 1.3% in August 2016, and is consistently above the national average for the remaining Category A Red 1 and 2 performance standards.

The London Ambulance Service has met its A8 performance recovery trajectory each month from April to August 2016 in spite of growth in incidents of 5.4% above the original contract plan.

South East Coast Ambulance Service entered Special Measures in September 2016 and is now receiving a comprehensive package of support, including buddying with South Central Ambulance Service and an Improvement Director has been appointed.

■ **Birmingham City Hospital: Ophthalmic Services**

Richard Burden: [\[47610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent representations he has (a) received and (b) made on eye health services at Birmingham City Hospital.

David Mowat:

A search of the Department's Ministerial correspondence database has identified one written representation received between 1 April 2016 and 11 October 2016 about eye health services at Birmingham City Hospital.

The Department has made no representations on this matter.

■ **Blood and Organs: Donors**

Hilary Benn: [\[47915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether it is the Government's policy to comply with EU rules on the exchange of (a) blood and (b) organs after the UK has left the EU.

David Mowat:

The safety and quality of our blood, tissue and cells and organ donation and transplant programmes must be assured. Any proposed changes within or outside Europe will continue to be considered carefully to ensure a safe and high quality service. Whilst the United Kingdom remains a full member of the European Union, EU legislation will of course continue to be in place and all obligations of EU membership will apply. Ongoing discussions are taking place regarding which rules and regulations are best placed to meet UK healthcare needs.

■ **Cancer**

Justin Madders: [\[47900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the recommendation of the Independent Cancer Taskforce report, Achieving World-Class cancer outcomes: a strategy for England 2015-2020, published in July 2015, what progress has been made on developing the future shape and skill mix of the cancer workforce; and when he plans to publish a review into the cancer workforce.

David Mowat:

Supported by Cancer Research UK and Macmillan Cancer Support, Health Education England (HEE) has been leading on the independent Cancer Taskforce recommendation that it should work with NHS England, charities and others to develop a vision for the future shape and skills mix of the workforce required to deliver a modern, holistic patient-centred cancer service.

HEE has completed an initial cancer workforce baseline review that has been shared and discussed with key stakeholders, including the National Cancer Advisory Group, which has wide representation from cancer charities, medical Royal Colleges and others. The review is regularly updated with emerging intelligence from Sustainability and Transformation Plan areas on the workforce they require to deliver the cancer service challenge.

In addition, HEE is leading on a major piece of work to address the workforce challenges in transforming cancer services, which includes a skills mix review. It has agreed an approach with key stakeholders for the review and will be working through Local Workforce Action Boards, Vanguard and Cancer Alliances, to understand the skills mix needed for emerging cancer service models. HEE will report back on this work in March 2017.

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[48105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 19 September 2016 to Question 46209, when he expects terms of reference to be published for (a) the clinical expert groups and (b) the clinical steering group.

David Mowat:

The Terms of Reference refer to management meetings, which are part of the programme structure and not statutory meetings or advisory mechanisms. Consequently NHS England does not plan to publish these.

■ Childbirth: Staffordshire

Mr Jamie Reed: [\[47963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 10 October 2016 to Question 46089, if his Department will collect information on the number of babies born in transit between Stafford and Stoke Royal University Hospital.

Mr Philip Dunne:

We have no plans to ask NHS Digital to collect such information.

■ Chronic Illnesses: Prescriptions

Frank Field: [\[47781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of reviewing the medical exemption criteria of prescription charges for people with long-term health conditions.

David Mowat:

We have no plans to change the list of medical conditions which provide for exemption from prescription charges. Extending this exemption would have significant cost implications at a time when the National Health Service is facing increased demand and is expected to deliver efficiency savings of £22 billion by 2020.

■ Dental Services: Finance

Imran Hussain:

[\[47349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the total budget is for dental care in England in each of the next five years; and how much of that budget is allocated to dental care education in (a) schools and (b) the community.

David Mowat:

NHS England has a legal duty to commission primary care dental services to meet local need and therefore does not have a specified dental budget. Local teams commission dentistry based on the local oral health needs assessment undertaken in partnership with local authorities, which identifies the level of dental need for a particular community.

Health Education England is responsible for funding dental education. Information on funding for dental education is only available for 2016/17 and can be found in the table below.

TRAINING CATEGORY	2016/17 TOTAL COST £
Undergraduate Dental training	122,296,360
Postgraduate Dental - Foundation Level	80,998,539
Postgraduate Dental - Specialist Level	14,328,506
Dental Nurses	8,455,506
Dental Technicians	1,495,340
Dental Hygienists	8,110,376
Dental Therapists	7,454,032
Total	243,138,660

■ Drugs

Maria Eagle:

[\[48692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many meetings (a) Ministers and (b) officials of his Department have had with key stakeholders in the pharmaceutical sector on the effect of the UK leaving the EU since 23 June 2016.

David Mowat:

The Department meets with key stakeholders in the pharmaceutical sector regularly and on a range of issues, including various meetings between Ministers and officials relating to the impact of leaving the European Union on the sector since the Referendum result.

■ Drugs: Licensing

Nick Thomas-Symonds: [\[47613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress his Department has made on ensuring that repurposed, off-patent drugs are consistently available to NHS patients where evidence supports their use.

Nicola Blackwood:

Current prescribing arrangements already allow off-patent drugs that are found to have new uses to be prescribed to patients.

The Government and medical research charities are working together to ensure that robust evidence showing new uses for existing drugs can be brought more systematically into clinical practice to benefit patients.

■ Electronic Cigarettes

Mr David Nuttall: [\[48248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what his policy is on the proposal tabled for the forthcoming World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Conference of the Parties to ban or restrict the sale of certain e-cigarette flavours to responsible adults.

Mr David Nuttall: [\[48249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what evidential basis his Department has to support a prohibition on claims of the effectiveness of e-cigarettes and other reduced harm products as smoking cessation aids on the grounds of such prohibition improving public health in the UK.

Mr David Nuttall: [\[48250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the evidential basis is for his Department to support an indoor ban on e-cigarettes and other reduced harm products on the grounds of such a ban improving public health in the UK.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government has no further plans to ban or restrict the sale of flavoured e-cigarettes in England. The Tobacco and Related Products Regulation already contain provisions which prohibit e-liquids from containing any ingredients that pose a risk to human health.

The Government advice has been clear, the best thing a smoker can do is to quit and quit for good. For those that are unable to quit, switching to e-cigarettes is less harmful than continuing to smoke. Claims relating to cessation can be made on any product that has been licensed by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and has successfully evidenced those claims for that particular product.

The Government has no current plans to extend smoke-free legislation to e-cigarettes or smokeless tobacco products, as the basis for this legislation is the health harms associated with second-hand tobacco smoke.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[48580]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of people switching from cigarettes to e-cigarettes in each of the last three years.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department has not made an assessment of the number of people that have used e-cigarettes to quit or replace smoking in each of the last three years. Data from Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) suggests in 2015 there were 2.6 million e-cigarette users of which nearly two out of five no longer smoked tobacco products.

ASH 'Use of electronic cigarettes (vapourisers) among adults in Great Britain', 2015:

http://www.ash.org.uk/files/documents/ASH_891.pdf

■ European Food Safety Authority

Hilary Benn:

[47912]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether it is the Government's policy to negotiate to continue participation in the European Food Safety Authority after the UK leaves the EU.

David Mowat:

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is the lead Department for relations with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The priority of the FSA and of the United Kingdom Government continues to be to ensure effective and proportionate food regulation which protects public health while supporting innovation and growth. The FSA will continue to use independent expert advice on risk assessment to inform food policy and regulation, and will continue to liaise with EFSA as an important source of international expert advice, as well as with other sources of evidence and advice from the UK and internationally. Detailed arrangements for the UK's relationship with EFSA after the UK leaves the European Union will be determined as part of the UK's wider approach to the EU.

■ European Medicines Agency

Hilary Benn:

[47910]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential (a) health and (b) economic effects of the UK withdrawing from the European Medicines Agency.

David Mowat:

The Government is undertaking work to understand in full the impacts of withdrawing from the European Union including on public health. This is ongoing and will inform the Government's approach to future negotiations.

■ General Practitioners

Justin Madders:

[47887]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate his Department has made of the number of GPs to (a) be recruited and (b) retire in each of the next five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department does not collect this data centrally.

GP Workforce statistics have recently been published by NHS Digital and can be found here:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/article/810/Latest-GP-workforce-figures-released>

The Department has been working with HEE, NHS England, the Royal College of General Practitioners and the British Medical Association (BMA) General Practitioners committee to develop a skilled, trained and motivated workforce in general practice.

HEE's Mandate requires them to ensure that 3,250 trainee doctors enter GP training programmes by 2016, with 5,000 additional doctors in general practice by 2020, enabling a further increase in the primary care workforce across England.

■ Health Services

Kelly Tolhurst:

[47608]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to analyse and expand health service capacity in areas of expected high population growth.

David Mowat:

Neighbouring National Health Service providers, commissioners, and other health and care services are currently developing strategic plans across 44 sustainability and transformation 'footprints' to deliver a sustainable NHS. These are geographic areas in which people and organisations are collaborating to develop plans to improve the way that health and care is planned and delivered in a more person-centred and coordinated way for local people. In places where high population growth is identified as a need it is expected that the plans will contain a locally developed approach to ensure the service can manage demand.

Adam Afriyie:

[47885]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent steps he has taken to put in place the Government's commitment to parity of esteem between mental health treatment and physical health treatment.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government welcomed the publication of the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health and Future in Mind to transform mental health services by 2020. The recommendations in these reports represent a significant step forward in achieving parity of esteem between mental and physical health. We continue to work with NHS England and other arm's length bodies to embed the recommendations set out in these reports into our national policies and we are committed to reporting regularly and transparently on our progress.

These reports are supported by additional investment for mental health of over £2 billion up to 2020. We will be holding NHS England to account through the NHS Mandate to ensure that we deliver the commitments set out in these reports.

■ Health Services: Reciprocal Arrangements

Hilary Benn: [\[47914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether it is the Government's policy to seek to maintain free emergency medical treatment for (a) citizens from EU countries in the UK and (b) UK citizens in EU countries after the UK has left the EU.

David Mowat:

While the people of the United Kingdom have voted to leave the European Union, until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the EU and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force, including the rights associated with medical treatment abroad.

Nothing has yet been decided on the future of British citizen medical treatment abroad. Government officials are considering the positions and options available to us with the aim of achieving the best outcome for British citizens in the UK and abroad.

■ Health: Expenditure

Jess Phillips: [\[48424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to paragraph 1.104 of the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015, whether the Government carried out an equality impact assessment of the policy to make savings in local authority public health spending.

Jess Phillips: [\[48425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to paragraph 1.104 of the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on women of savings in local authority public health spending.

Jess Phillips: [\[48487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what information his Department holds on the number of local authorities that have undertaken an equality impact assessment before making changes to their budget for public health.

Jess Phillips: [\[48488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to ring-fence public health spending in 2018-19.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department carried out and published an equality analysis of the formula (developed by the independent Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation) that influenced the distribution of the grant between local authorities in 2013/14 and 2014/15. A copy of that analysis is attached.

The distribution of resources in 2015/16 and 2016/17, and indicative allocations for 2017/18, were calculated on the same basis as the 2014/15 allocations. We considered the equality implications of those decisions in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. No decisions have been made on specific funding arrangements for 2018/19.

We do not collect information on equality impact assessments undertaken by local authorities.

Attachments:

1. Equality Analysis [Equality Analysis.pdf]

■ **Medicine: Education**

Grahame Morris: [\[47615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions he has had with his Ministerial colleagues on encouraging young people in deprived communities to pursue a career in medicine.

Mr Philip Dunne:

We are increasing the number of medical training places available to students each year. Beginning in September 2018, the Government will fund up to 1,500 additional student places through medical school each year. Students will be able to apply for the extra places from next year in order to take them up from the academic year 2018/19.

This increase will provide more opportunities for people from all backgrounds to study medicine, and will ensure the National Health Service will continue to have the right workforce to provide safe and effective patient care.

■ **Mental Health Services: Greater London**

Helen Hayes: [\[47736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many (a) residents, (b) children and (c) adolescents from Lambeth and Southwark were admitted to a mental health facility outside the London boroughs of Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark and Croydon served by South London and the Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust in the last year.

Nicola Blackwood:

The information requested is not held centrally.

Inpatient mental health services for children and young people are commissioned by NHS England. The NHS England (London) Specialised Commissioning team has advised that, in 2015-16, 90 children and young people from Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark and Croydon were treated in the South London and Maudsley Foundation Trust, while 69 received inpatient care elsewhere. Of these, 24 received care from other London-based providers.

The current national service review aims to rebalance the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) capacity to address deficits in services, it is expected that as a result more patients will be able to receive inpatient care closer to home. There are a number of more specialised services with the CAMHS portfolio that will continue to be commissioned to serve multi-regional populations – for example medium secure services and deaf inpatient care. London Region specialised commissioning team is working with local commissioners in Lambeth, Southwark,

Lewisham and Croydon and other clinical commissioning groups to ensure that we can provide sufficient capacity to meet population needs.

■ Multiple Sclerosis: Health Services

Royston Smith:

[\[47899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what provision is available to help people with multiple sclerosis access the care and support they need.

David Mowat:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance Multiple sclerosis: management of multiple sclerosis in primary and secondary care, updated in October 2014, sets out best practice on the diagnosis, treatment, care and support of people with multiple sclerosis (MS). The guidance makes a range of recommendations on the drug based treatments for MS, but also highlights the importance of involving professionals who can meet the needs of the patient in the best way, such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

NHS England commissions specialised neurological services nationally to meet the needs of patients with complex neurological conditions such as MS. NHS England has published a service specification setting out what providers must have in place to deliver specialised neurological care. This supports equity of access to high quality services for patients wherever they live. Although much of the routine care people with MS receive will be provided by local primary, community and secondary care services via local clinical commissioning groups, elements of their care may be provided by specialists subject to their needs. Specialised neurological care can include access to specialist nurses, orthoptists, dieticians and speech and language therapists, psychologists, continence and pain relief services, services provided jointly with specialists in rehabilitation medicine, spasticity management services and clinics for the assessment for and monitoring of disease modifying therapies.

■ NHS Trusts: Finance

Justin Madders:

[\[47708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of NHS trusts have agreed financial control totals for the next two years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Trusts' access to the Sustainability and Transformation Fund (STF) will be through a formal agreement of financial control totals (and other STF criteria) between NHS Improvement and trust boards, as part of the two-year planning process. The planning timetable includes full plan submissions by the end of December 2016 and we expect to publish figures in the new year.

To date indicative financial control totals and STF allocations for 2017/18 and 2018/19 were communicated to trusts in letters from NHS Improvement on 30 September 2016.

■ NHS: Negligence

Justin Madders: [\[47713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when his Department plans to publish a consultation on proposals to introduce fixed recoverable costs for clinical negligence cases.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department plans to publish our consultation on fixed recoverable costs in lower value clinical negligence claims shortly. Following the consultation period we plan to provide a Government response and implement the scheme as soon as practically possible, in line with procedures for drafting and laying the Civil Procedure Rules.

■ NHS: Public Participation

Justin Madders: [\[47728\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost of the NHS Citizen scheme has been to date; and what assessment he has made of its success since its creation.

Mr Philip Dunne:

A total of £4.2 million has been spent on the NHS Citizen programme in 2014-15 and 2015-16 and the programme has a budget of £1.3 million for 2016/17.

The Department's annual assessment of NHS England in 2015-16 states that NHS England has made good progress against its duties to involve patients and the public. In the Department's previous assessment, my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State praised the positive work of the NHS Citizen programme and how it is building on its strong brand by expanding activity to ensure that Citizen Voice is locked into NHS England priority delivery areas and in the development of Sustainability and Transformation Plans.

■ NHS: Staff

Philip Davies: [\[47917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 13 September 2016 to Question 44948, what the ratio of (a) nurses and (b) midwives is to administrators in the NHS.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The ratio of nurses to administrators in the National Health Service is 2.6:1. The number of nurses includes health visitors as they are qualified and registered nurses.

The ratio of midwives to administrators in the NHS is 1:5.1.

■ NHS: Sustainable Development

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[47649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps NHS England is taking to encourage local communities to input into individual sustainability and transformation plans; and if he will publish contact details for lead officers co-ordinating proposals on the way maternity services are delivered in each NHS area.

David Mowat:

NHS England, with other national health and care bodies, released guidance to the local areas developing Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STP) entitled 'Engaging local people' in September 2016 which can be found on their website. Local proposals for health and care transformation are not expected to have gone through formal local National Health Service or other organisations' board approval and/or formal public engagement or consultation at this early stage. We expect that areas will publish a version of their Sustainability and Transformation Plans between late October and the end of the year. We would also expect that most areas will undertake public engagement during this period, building on the engagement they have already done to shape thinking. Every area will be working to a different timeframe, based on its own circumstances and how well-progressed its plan is.

As with the current arrangements for planning and delivery, there are layers of plans which can sit below STPs, with shared links and dependencies. STPs act as an umbrella, holding underneath them a number of different specific plans to address key local issues. Clinical commissioning groups remain accountable for securing high-quality healthcare services for their local populations.

Justin Madders:[\[47709\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, who is responsible for approving sustainability and transformation plans.

Justin Madders:[\[47710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the sign-off process is for sustainability and transformation plans.

David Mowat:

The Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) are being developed by local areas. National Health Service providers, commissioners, local authorities, and other health and care services are coming together to propose how they, at local level, can close the health and wellbeing, care and quality and financial gaps. These plans are locally owned, but will be shared with the national health and care bodies, chiefly NHS England and NHS Improvement, so the national bodies can best develop support to enable footprints to deliver their plans. The National bodies have also published guidance on the STP process.

NHS England and NHS Improvement will continue to work closely with STP areas to provide them with support and expertise to develop robust plans which will meet the objectives set out in the Mandate. STPs will form the basis for operational planning for 2017/18 and 2018/19, which will be subject to NHS Improvement and NHS England assurance processes.

The local organisations will also be leading public engagement processes on their STP plans, in line with the engagement guidance.

Justin Madders:

[\[47711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he plans to publish sustainability and transformation plans.

David Mowat:

Local areas will submit an updated plan to the national health and care bodies for review at the end of October, with further public engagement and consultation taking place from this point. We expect that areas will publish a version of their Sustainability and Transformation Plans between late October and the end of the year. We would also expect that most areas will undertake public engagement during this period, building on the engagement they have already done to shape thinking. No changes to the services people currently receive will be made without local engagement and, where required, consultation.

Shabana Mahmood:

[\[47825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much time has been allocated for the public consultation on the sustainability and transformation plans for Birmingham and Solihull and the Black Country and West Birmingham; and if he will ensure that the feedback from this public consultation will be published.

David Mowat:

NHS England, with other national health and care bodies, released guidance to the local areas developing Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) entitled 'Engaging local people' in September 2016 which can be found on their website. Local proposals for health and care transformation are not expected to have gone through formal local National Health Service or other organisations' board approval and/or formal public engagement or consultation at this early stage. We expect that areas will publish a version of their STPs between late October and the end of the year. We would also expect that most areas will undertake public engagement during this period, building on the engagement they have already done to shape thinking. Every area will be working to a different timeframe, based on its own circumstances and how well-progressed its plan is.

■ Obesity: Children

Jim Shannon:

[\[48108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to reduce the number of (a) obese and (b) overweight children under the age of 11; and if he will take steps to cooperate with (a) his counterparts in the devolved administrations, (b) GPs, (c) teachers and (d) parents to help reduce that number.

Nicola Blackwood:

We launched *Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action* on 18 August. Our plan focuses on actions that are likely to have the biggest impact on reducing childhood obesity and maintaining a healthy weight. It presents a bold package of policy proposals, informed by the available evidence. We will work with the devolved administrations, general

practitioners and other healthcare professionals, teachers and parents to improve the health and wellbeing of children across the United Kingdom.

We are confident that the measures announced will make a real difference and estimate that they could reduce childhood obesity rates by around a fifth (330,000) over the next 10 years.

A copy of *Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action* is attached and is available at:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/546588/Childhood_obesity_2016_2_acc.pdf

Attachments:

1. Childhood Obesity Plan [Childhood Obesity Plan.pdf]

■ **Patients: Transport**

Justin Madders: [47729]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the performance of the Cheshire Patient Transport Service in the last 12 months.

Mr Philip Dunne:

No assessment has been made. Assessment of the performance of patient transport services in Cheshire is the responsibility of its commissioners and the Care Quality Commission as the regulator of health services in England.

■ **Pharmacy**

Michael Dugher: [48605]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, (a) on how many occasions during the most recent negotiation period Ministers and officials of his Department met with representatives from the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee and (b) when he plans to announce a funding package for community pharmacy for 2016-17.

David Mowat:

Since 9 September 2016, when a revised package of measures was put to the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiation Committee (PSNC), the Department, supported by NHS England, has met the PSNC on four occasions. I have met PSNC three times since 30 August 2016, including on 6 October 2016.

Ministers are still in a process of considering a proposed package for the community pharmacy sector and are expecting to make an announcement shortly.

Michael Dugher: [48606]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of the reduction in the number of community pharmacies in England of (a) five, (b) 10, (c) 25 per cent on the number of patients (i) seeking a GP appointment and (ii) attending accident and emergency units.

David Mowat:

The Government's proposals for community pharmacy in 2016/17 and beyond, on which we have consulted, are being considered against the public sector equality duty, the family test and the relevant duties of my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health under the National Health Service Act 2006.

Our assessments include impacts on other NHS services. An impact assessment will be completed to inform final decisions and published in due course.

Our proposals are about improving services for patients and the public and securing efficiencies and savings. We believe these efficiencies can be made within community pharmacy without compromising the quality of services or public access to them.

Our aim is to ensure that those community pharmacies upon which people depend continue to thrive. We are consulting on the introduction of a Pharmacy Access Scheme, which will provide more NHS funds to certain pharmacies compared with others, considering factors such as location and the health needs of the local population.

■ Pharmacy: Finance**Steve Double:**[\[47779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the likely effect on Category M of the Drug Tariff of the proposed changes to the pharmacy funding formula.

David Mowat:

We do not expect that our proposals to reduce funding, in respect to community pharmacy in 2016/17 and beyond, will have any effect on Category M or the medicine margin as we propose to achieve them through changes to pharmacy contractors' fees and allowances.

■ Pregnancy: Alcoholic Drinks**Jim Shannon:**[\[48111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he take steps to raise awareness among pregnant women of the (a) risks of alcohol consumption and (b) benefits of zero alcohol consumption.

Nicola Blackwood:

The new United Kingdom Chief Medical Officers' (CMO) low risk drinking guidelines provide the public with the most up to date scientific information to help people make informed decisions about their own drinking.

The guideline for women who are pregnant or think they could become pregnant, is that the safest approach is not to drink alcohol at all, to reduce risks to the baby to a minimum.

The UK CMOs' low risk drinking guidelines can be found at Gov.uk at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alcohol-consumption-advice-on-low-risk-drinking>

■ Radiography: Staff

Jim Shannon:

[\[48084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to enable more radiologists to be trained and approved to carry out breast cancer mammogram imagery.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Training and recruitment of the workforce needed to deliver care is a matter for the health department in each of the devolved administrations.

In England, Health Education England (HEE) is conducting work to recruit more trainees into Radiology. As part of the investment planning process, Clinical Radiologists have been prioritised with plans to increase training posts by 32 to 1,144 for 2016-17 recruitment. Clinical Radiology has also been one of the five large specialty reviews undertaken by the HEE planning team this year.

Recent trends in Clinical Radiology Consultants in the National Health Service:

AS AT 31 MARCH	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	GROWTH 2010-15
Whole Time Equivalents	2,247	2,326	2,390	2,472	2,531	2,653	406 (18.1%)

Source: NHS Digital's NHS Workforce Statistics - October 2015, Provisional statistics

The content and standard of medical training is the responsibility of the General Medical Council (GMC), which is an independent statutory body. The GMC has the general function of promoting high standards of education and co-ordinating all stages of education to ensure that medical students and newly qualified doctors are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for professional practice.

■ Royal Brompton Hospital

Dr Tania Mathias:

[\[48616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will undertake a consultation with patients, staff and the public on the proposed closure of congenital heart services at Royal Brompton Hospital.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The national review of congenital heart disease services is an NHS England led review.

NHS England will run a service change process in relation to the proposed changes to congenital heart disease services at Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust and other trusts affected by the review's proposals before finally deciding on and implementing any change. This process will include full public consultation.

■ Shingles: Vaccination

Dr Tania Mathias: [\[48617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to advice published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on the effect of varicella vaccination on shingles, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policy on mandatory varicella vaccination of the findings of that report.

Nicola Blackwood:

In 2010, the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI) considered the addition of varicella (chickenpox) vaccine in the childhood vaccination programme. After carefully considering all the available evidence, JCVI concluded that offering a universal varicella (chickenpox) vaccination programme would not be cost effective as it could lead to an increase in shingles (herpes zoster) in adults.

JCVI keeps all its recommendations under review and is currently in the process of reviewing the latest scientific evidence to establish whether a routine childhood varicella vaccination programme would be effective and of benefit in England; this includes evidence from other countries that have introduced a vaccination programme. JCVI will make its recommendations, once it has considered all the necessary evidence.

■ Smoking

Bob Blackman: [\[47621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Answer of 3 May 2016 to Question 35653, how much Public Health England plans to spend on campaigns promoting the cessation of smoking in 2016-17.

Nicola Blackwood:

Public Health England took over all the public health campaigns formerly run by the Department on 1 April 2013, including smoking cessation.

Campaigns for 2016-17 promoting the cessation of smoking are currently ongoing. Final media costs will be available only after the 2016-17 financial year end, when spend has been confirmed and completed.

■ Stem Cells: Transplant Surgery

Gareth Johnson: [\[47743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what his Department's policy is on the interruption of stem cell transplantation.

Nicola Blackwood:

The decision to perform a stem cell transplant will be made by specialist clinicians in discussion with the patient based on the potential benefits and risks of this form of treatment. Treatments may be discontinued for clinical reasons or in accordance with the wishes of the patient.

Gareth Johnson:

[\[47744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost per patient is of carrying out stem cell transplantation.

Nicola Blackwood:

Costs associated with stem cell transplants can vary widely depending on the specific clinical circumstances.

Gareth Johnson:

[\[47745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have had stem cell transplantation procedures interrupted in England in each of the last five years.

Nicola Blackwood:

Stem treatments may be discontinued due to a range of clinical reasons or patient choice. NHS England does not hold information on the number of patients that start but do not complete this form of treatment.

■ Strokes

Derek Thomas:

[\[47904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans his Department has to replace or renew the National Stroke Strategy, published in December 2007.

David Mowat:

The strategy remains valid and implementation of it continues. There are, therefore, no current plans to renew the national stroke strategy. Action is being taken to ensure the progress made on stroke continues. This includes:

- ongoing work in virtually all parts of the country to organise acute stroke care to ensure that all stroke patients, regardless of where they live or what time of the day or week they have their stroke, have access to high quality specialist care;
- publication of the Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Outcomes Strategy in 2013, which includes many stroke specific strategic ambitions;
- a CVD expert forum, hosted by NHS England, to coordinate delivery of the work which was initiated in the CVD Outcomes Strategy; and
- NHS England's National Clinical Director for Stroke works with the Strategic Clinical Networks, clinical commissioning groups, voluntary agencies and individual providers to support better commissioning and provision of stroke care.

More generally, the NHS Five Year Forward View recognises that quality of care, including stroke care, can be variable and that patients' needs are changing and new treatment options are emerging. The Five Year Forward View sets out high level objectives to address these issues.

■ Strokes: Children

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[48595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to improve the diagnosis of stroke in children.

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[48597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the lifelong support available to survivors of childhood stroke.

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[48598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what engagement his Department has had with the families of childhood stroke survivors.

David Mowat:

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, funded by the Stroke Association, is currently developing guidance on the diagnosis, management and rehabilitation of childhood stroke. This guidance is due to be published in 2017.

Services for children with complex needs following a stroke are usually provided through specialised paediatric neurology or neurodisability services. Through its specialised commissioning function, NHS England is administering a number of 'Pathfinder projects' looking at end to end care processes for paediatric neurosciences. This work is seeking to describe the optimal care pathway for specialist paediatric neurorehabilitation and will encompass children's stroke.

The Department is not aware of any direct engagement with the families of childhood stroke survivors. NHS England's National Clinical Director for Stroke continues to work with the Stroke Association on how children's long term stroke care is best delivered to their local communities.

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[48596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what training is provided to NHS clinicians on diagnosing childhood stroke.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The General Medical Council (GMC) regulates all stages of doctors' training and professional development in the United Kingdom. It also sets the standards and outcomes that all medical students must meet if they are to graduate and work as a doctor in the UK.

It is the responsibility of the royal colleges, for example the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Physicians, for developing postgraduate speciality training curricula for doctors. They also set and maintain standards of speciality training and assessment.

The Mandate that the Department has with Health Education England (HEE) requires HEE to continue to lead on the transformation of the children and young peoples' healthcare workforce to ensure it is fit to serve the needs of children and young people,

with a focus on long-term sustainability and integration across primary and secondary care settings. HEE works with organisations such as the GMC and the Royal Colleges to seek to ensure training meets the needs of patients.

HOME OFFICE

■ Africa: Politics and Government

John Mann:

[\[47299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which African countries her Department regards as unsafe to return political opposition supporters to.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

In accordance with our international obligations, the UK is required to consider asylum and human rights applications carefully on their individual merits. The Government takes its international responsibilities seriously and will grant protection to those in genuine need.

Each individual assessment of an asylum claim is made against the background of the latest available country of origin information and any relevant caselaw. The country of origin information is based on evidence taken from a range of reliable sources, including reputable media outlets; local, national and international organisations, including human rights organisations; and information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The Home Office's country of origin information, used in the asylum decision making process, is published on the gov.uk website. It is kept under constant review and updated periodically.

■ Albania: Asylum

John Mann:

[\[47304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the reasons for unaccompanied children from Albania seeking to purchase tickets to fly to the UK in order to claim asylum.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Albanians require a visa to travel to the UK and are not allowed to board the plane without one. We do not issue visas for the purpose of claiming asylum in the UK. Unaccompanied children who nonetheless manage to reach the UK, including those from Albania, claim asylum for a variety of reasons. Each case is considered on its individual merits in accordance with our international obligations and protection is granted where it is needed.

■ Anti-social Behaviour

Mr Douglas Carswell: [\[48561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to review the efficacy of sections 103 and 104 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Sarah Newton:

The Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 introduced new and more flexible powers to make it quicker and easier for police forces and local authorities to protect victims and communities from anti-social and nuisance behaviour.

The Government issued statutory guidance for frontline professionals in July 2014 on the use of these powers, which included community remedies and anti-social behaviour case reviews under sections 103 and 104 the 2014 Act. We are currently reviewing this guidance to ensure it remains relevant and up to date.

■ Asylum: Children

Fiona Mactaggart: [\[47285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many children who have applied in France for asylum in the UK have been successful in their application in the last three years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

It is not possible for an individual to apply for asylum in the UK from France. If an asylum claim is made in France and the French Government consider that the UK is responsible for examining that asylum claim under the Dublin Regulation, a transfer request is made, which the UK subsequently either accepts or rejects. If the transfer request is accepted, the individual is transferred to the UK where their asylum claim is considered.

Before the beginning of the year very few transfers of children were made from France to the UK. However, following a concerted effort to improve the functioning of Dublin by the UK and French authorities, between 1 January and 1 October 2016 over 80 children have been accepted for transfer from France to the UK.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[47390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many unaccompanied child refugees are in the process of seeking asylum to be reunited with family members who are already in the UK, under the terms of the Immigration Act 2016.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Between 12 May and 1 October 2016 over 50 children who meet the criteria in Section 67 of the Immigration Act were accepted for transfer. Over 35 have already been transferred to the UK and many more are in train.

The Government can only give figures for those who have been accepted for transfer to the UK; the number of unaccompanied child refugees in the process of seeking asylum in other Member States is a matter for that Member State.

Tom Brake:

[\[47554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government has received any legal challenge regarding delayed acceptance of child refugees in Calais with a legal right to residence in the UK.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The UK has received a number of legal challenges regarding alleged delays in accepting asylum seeking children in Calais who assert that they have a legal right to residence in the UK.

A number of these challenges include cases where the child is yet to seek asylum in France. We are clear that individuals must claim asylum before the UK can consider a transfer request. The recent case of ZAT demonstrates that due process must be followed.

We are working to improve the operation of the Dublin Regulation and transfer requests are now generally processed within 10 days.

■ Asylum: Homosexuality

Caroline Lucas:

[\[47014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have applied for asylum on the basis of sexual orientation; how many of these claims have been unsuccessful; on what grounds those unsuccessful applications were refused in the last 12 months; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office is currently undertaking a process to quality assure information on its Case Information Database relating to sexuality based asylum claims.

Until this exercise has concluded it is not possible to provide an accurate picture of the number of asylum claims based solely, or partly on sexuality.

■ Asylum: Housing

Shabana Mahmood:

[\[48040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which contractors have been sanctioned for breaching contractual obligations in relation to accommodation for asylum seekers in (a) Birmingham, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England in the last two years; when each such contractor was sanctioned; and what each sanction so applied was.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 17 October 2016]: The COMPASS contracts include Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for monitoring and measuring performance against required standards.

If a breach of the contractual obligations in relation to accommodation is identified then the Provider has a set timescale in which to rectify the breach. Should this not be rectified within that timescale then a KPI failure is recorded and may result in the

application of a Service Credit. A 'Service Credit' is a rebate / money deducted from the Providers monthly invoice.

There were no service credits recovered from providers of the COMPASS accommodation in a) Birmingham, b) the West Midlands and c) England in the last two years, in relation to accommodation standards.

■ Bail

Mr David Hanson: [\[47078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people received pre-charge bail conditions that (a) withheld their travel documents and (b) restricted their movement in each year since 2010; and how many people breached those pre-charge bail conditions.

Brandon Lewis:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ Borders: Coastal Areas

Bob Stewart: [\[47522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will assess the potential merits of deploying fishing trawlers to patrol the UK coastline to prevent illegal immigration.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Border Force is actively engaged through partners in the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) with commercial fishing operators. The UK's commercial fishing operators already form a valuable part of the Project KRAKEN network providing 'intelligence' reports based on their assessment of unusual activity, however, they are not specifically tasked with official patrolling.

Border security is a priority for this Government. We are committed to countering threats to the UK coastline using an intelligence-led approach and through working with the wider law enforcement community. Border Force has long-standing working relationships and intelligence-sharing practices in place, and is increasing interaction with key partners as well as undertaking joint operations in order to disrupt organised criminal gangs looking to facilitate illegal entry into the UK.

Border Force and operational partners are conducting activity on a number of fronts to prevent migrants from entering the UK via clandestine and illegal means, strengthening the coordination of maritime security assets so that maximum coverage at sea is delivered. Border Force currently operates three cutters in UK territorial waters at any given time.

The cutters form part of a layered approach to coastal defence, including patrols comprising additional law enforcement vessels, on-shore resources and intelligence and surveillance. Border Force has invested in additional coastal patrol vessels (CPV) to complement the work being done by our cutters to combat attempts to smuggle migrants and illicit goods into the UK illegally.

■ British Nationality: EU Nationals

Drew Hendry:

[47941]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to review the citizenship process for EU nationals married to British citizens.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

There are no plans to review the citizenship process for EU nationals married to British citizens at the current time.

■ Domestic Violence and Stalking

Liz Saville Roberts:

[48297]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much has been spent from the public purse on (a) police officers and (b) Crown Prosecution Service training in respect of (i) stalking and (ii) coercive control offences in each of the last three years.

Brandon Lewis:

[Holding answer 17 October 2016]: The requested figures are not held centrally. Each police force delivers their own training. As the professional body for policing, the College of Policing has designed courses that contain material on coercive control such as "Domestic Abuse Matters." Additionally, the College has published new Authorised Professional Practice on investigating domestic violence and abuse.

Specialist e-learning training on stalking and harassment offences was launched in April 2014 for prosecutors. Crown Prosecution Service Violence Against Women and Girls coordinators have also delivered a one-day masterclass on the prosecutorial approach to coercive control offences, supported by legal guidance, e-learning and an updated evidence gathering checklist.

■ Forced Labour

Martyn Day:

[46875]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support her Department offers to victims of labour exploitation; and what steps her Department is taking against individuals and businesses involved in such exploitation.

Sarah Newton:

The Home Office sponsors the National Referral Mechanism to provide support to victims of modern slavery offences, whilst support for workers who have experienced exploitative treatment from employers and employment agencies is available from other enforcement authorities across Government, including the HMRC national minimum wage team, the BEIS Employment Agency Standards' Inspectorate and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority. All potential adult victims of Modern Slavery, including those who suffer labour exploitation, are able to access a tailored and specialised package of care and support through the £40m government-funded Salvation Army victim care contract.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 consolidated and strengthened modern slavery offences and introduced a world-leading provision which requires all commercial organisations operating in the UK with a turnover above £36m to set out what steps they are taking to prevent modern slavery in their business and supply chains. This transparency will drive improvements in tackling modern slavery throughout the business community.

The Immigration Act 2016 established the Director of Labour Market Enforcement to provide closer integration between the authorities responsible for enforcing labour market protections and a stronger intelligence capability, reformed the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority with new powers to investigate labour market offences wherever they occur in the economy, and stronger sanctions for non-compliant businesses. The Immigration Act 2016 also includes new powers to tackle employers of migrants working illegally on the UK.

■ Forced Marriage

Richard Burden: [\[48463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what work her Department undertakes with (a) refugees and (b) women's support groups on forced marriage.

Sarah Newton:

The Government is committed to tackling the practice of forced marriage and providing the best protection possible to victims. 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 joint Home Office/ Foreign Office Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) leads efforts to combat forced marriage both at home and abroad. The FMU works closely with a range of voluntary and community sector and support organisations, including its quarterly partnership board and ongoing programme of outreach.

■ Hamza Sodagar

Hilary Benn: [\[47634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her policy is on the admission of Shaykh Hamza Sodagar into the UK; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We do not routinely comment on individual cases.

■ Home Office: Migrant Workers

Steve McCabe: [\[47417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, (a) how many and (b) what proportion of the staff employed by her Department are non-UK nationals.

Sarah Newton:

All Government Departments are bound by legal requirements concerning the right to work in the UK and, in addition, the Civil Service Nationality Rules.

Evidence of nationality is checked at the point of recruitment into the Civil Service as part of wider pre-employment checks, but there is no requirement on departments to retain this information beyond the point at which it has served its purpose.

More broadly, the Government will be consulting in due course on how we work with business to ensure that workers in this country have the skills that they need to get a job. But there are no proposals to publish lists of the number or proportion of foreign workers.

■ Home Office: Staff

John Pugh: [\[47565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, approximately how many (a) British and (b) non-British nationals are employed cleaning the Westminster estate of her Department.

Sarah Newton:

The Home Office does not employ cleaning staff. The cleaning of the Home Office estate is outsourced. The contract requires that all contracted staff have undergone the necessary pre-employment checks and have the right to work in the UK.

John Pugh: [\[47587\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of staff on the payroll of her Department who work in Westminster are (a) British nationals and (b) nationals of another country.

Sarah Newton:

All Government Departments are bound by legal requirements concerning the right to work in the UK and, in addition, the Civil Service Nationality Rules.

Evidence of nationality is checked at the point of recruitment into the Civil Service as part of wider pre-employment checks, but there is no requirement on departments to retain this information beyond the point at which it has served its purpose.

More broadly, the Government will be consulting in due course on how we work with business to ensure that workers in this country have the skills that they need to get a job. But there are no proposals to publish lists of the number or proportion of foreign workers.

■ Immigration Controls

Christian Matheson: [\[47246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 30 September 2016 to Question 46253, what steps her Department has taken via (a) broadcast media, (b) UK Visas and Immigration, and (c) agencies of her Department to advise employers of their responsibilities under a points-based immigration system on employing non-EU nationals in the UK; and what the cost of that advice was to the public purse in the latest period for which figures are available.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Comprehensive guidance for employers is published on the gov.uk website, and we regularly engage with employers and trade bodies, at no additional cost to routine business.

■ **Immigration Controls: Channel Ferries**

Mr Christopher Chope: [\[48028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 21 July 2016 to Question 42843, whether all necessary checks were completed on the departure of the ferry Barfleur from Cherbourg to Poole.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 17 October 2016]: Any checks on the Barfleur when it departs from Cherbourg is the responsibility of the French authorities. We reaffirm that 100% of necessary checks were completed on the Barfleur on arrival into Poole on the 23rd June.

■ **Immigration: EU Nationals**

Justin Madders: [\[47888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with (a) Cabinet colleagues and (b) key stakeholders on ensuring that researchers who are EU nationals and who are in the UK or due to arrive in the UK to work at leading research institutions are supported through any changes to their ability to remain and work in the UK when the UK leaves the EU.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Prime Minister has been clear that she wants to protect the status of EU nationals already living and working in the UK, and the only circumstances in which that wouldn't be possible is if British citizens' rights in other EU Member States were not protected in return.

As part of this process, the Home Secretary will continue to work closely with colleagues across Whitehall and the Government will engage with relevant stakeholders.

■ **Knives: Southwark**

Neil Coyle: [\[48486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to work with the Crown Prosecution Service, other Government departments and the police to improve the prosecution rate for the use of knives in Southwark.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office works closely with the Crown Prosecution Service, other Government departments and the police to tackle knife crime and we have taken action to make sure that offenders are dealt with effectively.

On 17 July 2015, a new minimum custodial sentence of at least six months for adults and a detention and training order of at least four months for 16 and 17 years old, for

anyone caught in possession of a knife for a second time came into force. This sends a strong message that those caught with a knife for a second time should expect a prison sentence.

We are encouraging police forces to undertake a series of coordinated weeks of action to tackle knife crime under Operation Sceptre, which involves targeting habitual knife carriers, weapon sweeps, test purchases of knives from identified retailers, and use of surrender bins. The next Operation Sceptre will take place in the week of 17 October, with 25 police forces taking part.

■ Malawi: Diplomatic Service

Brendan O'Hara: [\[47858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take immediate steps to reopen consular facilities in Malawi to enable Malawian nationals to obtain UK visas in that country.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), an operational command of the Home Office, has responsibility for running the UK's visa service.

In Malawi, UK visa applications can be made through the Visa Application Centre in Lilongwe, which is open five days a week. UKVI has no plans to change its current operating model.

■ Migrant Workers: Research

Andrew Rosindell: [\[47837\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that UK-based science research teams can employ foreign researchers without restriction.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Immigration reforms since 2010 have explicitly taken account of the needs of scientists and researchers. The Government has consistently enhanced the treatment of scientists and science in the immigration system.

In Tier 2, the skilled work route for non-EEA nationals, PhD-level occupations have higher priority when allocating places within the annual limit. These occupations are also exempted from the £35,000 earnings threshold for settlement applications, and we have relaxed the Resident Labour Market Test to allow the best candidate to be appointed, regardless of nationality.

We have introduced the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) route for world leaders in science, engineering, humanities, the arts and digital technology.

The Tier 5 (Temporary Work) route contains further provisions which enable sponsored researchers to participate in international research collaborations

■ Migrant Workers: Taxation

Bob Stewart: [\[47543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to introduce a levy on companies employing foreign workers below an agreed wage threshold.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Foreign workers in the UK benefit from the same rights under National Minimum Wage legislation as UK workers.

In addition, companies sponsoring non-EEA workers to fill vacancies under Tier 2 (General), the skilled work immigration route, must pay a salary of at least £20,800 (rising to £25,000 later this autumn and £30,000 in April 2017) or the appropriate rate for the particular occupation, whichever is higher. For non-EEA workers using the Tier 2 (Intra Company Transfer) route for multi-national companies, the salary minimum is £24,500, rising to £30,000 later this autumn and £41,500 from April 2017.

From April 2017, the Government will levy an Immigration Skills Charge on Tier 2 employers of £1,000 per sponsored worker per year. A reduced rate of £364 will apply to small and charitable sponsors. PhD-level roles, intra-company transfer graduate trainees, and graduates switching from the student route will be exempt.

■ Police and Crime Commissioners

Steve McCabe: [\[47617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what evidence her Department holds on the effect of the creation of police and crime commissioners on police accountability.

Brandon Lewis:

Around 9 million total votes were cast by the public for their Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) at the most recent national elections in May - this is in stark contrast to the invisible, unelected and unaccountable Police Authorities they replaced.

Previously, only seven per cent of the public knew to go to their police authority if they had a problem with policing in their local area. According to the independent Crime Survey for England and Wales, 59% of the public are aware of PCCs.

The Home Affairs Select Committee report 'Police and Crime Commissioners: here to stay' recognised that the "introduction of PCCs has worked well to date and has had some beneficial effect on public accountability and clarity of leadership in policing.

■ Police: Bahrain

Mr Alistair Carmichael: [\[46877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assistance British police have provided to Bahrain in the last 12 months; what the (a) dates and (b) titles of those assistance projects were; which constabularies were involved; what type of assistance police

forces plan to provide to Bahrain in the next 12 months; and if she will place copies of the relevant International Police Assistance Board referral forms in the Library.

Brandon Lewis:

The British Government continues to provide support to Bahrain in a range of areas on their reform agenda.

The provision of UK police advice and assistance is a key element in this as they progress towards being in compliance with international standards and best practice. Assistance has been provided to Bahrain by the police in the last 12 months.

■ **Refugees: Mediterranean Sea**

Andrew Rosindell:

[47640]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the total number of refugees who will attempt to cross the Mediterranean in 2017.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Government is closely monitoring global migration developments, including the number of Mediterranean crossings, working in partnership with the EU and in source and transit countries, to address the mass movements of people attempting to cross the Mediterranean. This includes tackling criminal gangs who facilitate journeys and exploit migrants.

We have not made an estimate of the number of refugees who will attempt to cross the Mediterranean in 2017. Determining refugee status is at the discretion of EU Member States and we do not estimate the number of illegal migrants that will be granted refugee status.

■ **Religious Hatred: Islam**

Catherine West:

[47765]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many instances of Islamophobic abuse have been recorded in each of the last 12 months.

Catherine West:

[47766]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many instances of Islamophobic abuse have been recorded in each of the last five years.

Sarah Newton:

The Home Office does not hold the requested information. The Home Office has published data for 2011/12 to 2014/15 on hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales for the five centrally monitored strands (race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and gender identity) but these data cannot be broken down by religion of the victim. The 2015/16 data will have been published on 13 October 2016.

From April 2016, the Home Office began collecting data from the police on the targeted religion of religious hate crime offences in order to help forces build community trust, target their resources and enable the public to better hold them to account. This

information will be provided voluntarily in 2016/17, but we intend to make it mandatory from the following year. We will publish the first data from this collection in the 2016/17 Hate Crime statistics publication in 2017.

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.

■ Terrorism: British Nationals Abroad

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[47748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of UK nationals who have travelled overseas to engage in terrorist activity.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[47749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of UK nationals who have travelled overseas to engage in terrorist activity and have subsequently returned to this country.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Government takes the threat posed by UK nationals who travel overseas to engage in terrorist activity extremely seriously. We are particularly concerned about those who travel to Syria and Iraq to fight; around 850 linked individuals have travelled to engage in the conflict since it began, and just under half of those have returned.

People seeking to travel to engage in terrorist activity should be in no doubt we will take the strongest possible action to protect our national security.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[47750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been charged with terrorism offences committed overseas on their return to the UK in each of the last three years.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Government takes the threat posed by UK nationals who travel overseas to engage in terrorist activity extremely seriously. We are particularly concerned about those who travel to Syria and Iraq to fight. People seeking to travel to engage in terrorist activity should be in no doubt we will take the strongest possible action to protect our national security.

The number of individuals suspected of involvement in acts of terrorism or criminal matters who are arrested and then formally charged is recorded and collated in the Home Office Quarterly Statistical Bulletin which was last published on 22 September 2016. These statistics do not disaggregate arrests, charges and convictions relating exclusively to overseas returnees.

■ Visas: Overseas Students

Ian Murray:

[\[48003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the criteria for inclusion in the limited post-study work visa pilot were; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 17 October 2016]: The Tier 4 visa pilot has been introduced to test the benefits of a differentiated approach within the education sector on the basis of compliance with immigration sponsorship requirements.

The four universities chosen to participate in the Tier 4 visa pilot, namely the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Bath and Imperial College London, were chosen on the basis of their consistently low visa refusal rates.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

■ Palace of Westminster: Migrant Workers

John Pugh:

[\[47510\]](#)

To ask the Rt. hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington representing the House of Commons Commission, what proportion of people who have security clearance for catering and cleaning purposes in the Palace of Westminster are not UK nationals.

Tom Brake:

The Pass Office database shows that the Palace of Westminster holds security clearance and passes for a total of 779 pass holders whose jobs relate to catering and cleaning purposes. 330 of these are not UK nationals. This equates to 42.36%.

John Pugh:

[\[47511\]](#)

To ask the Rt. hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington representing the House of Commons Commission, what proportion of people given security clearance and passes in 2015 to work for construction, maintenance and refurbishment purposes in the Palace of Westminster were not UK nationals.

Tom Brake:

In 2015 responsibility for construction, maintenance and refurbishment was held by the Parliamentary Estates Department. The Pass Office database shows that 2,529 CTC (Counter Terrorist Check) clearances were conducted on those working in PED in 2015. Of these, 366 were non-UK nationals. This equates to 14.47% of all those given security clearance for work in the department in 2015.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Department for International Development: Consultants**

Margaret Hodge: [\[48096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 2 September 2016 to Question 44352, for what contracts the largest three total payments were made to (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young and (d) KPMG in the last three years.

Rory Stewart:

Detail on all DFID spend is available via our departmental website.

■ Department for International Development: EU Law

Gareth Thomas: [\[48181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, which agreed EU directives have not yet been transposed directly into UK law; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. During this period the Government will continue to negotiate, implement and apply EU legislation.

■ Department for International Development: Public Expenditure

Kate Osamor: [\[48287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what proportion of her Department's budget is planned to be allocated to projects administered by other Departments in 2017-18.

Priti Patel:

The Spending Review settlement provides that approximately 17% of DFID's budget in 2017-18 is expected to be transferred to (a) other government departments to fund projects that they will administer and (b) cross-government facilities into which DFID and other departments can bid such as the Conflict, Security and Stabilisation Fund as set out in DFID's Spending Review settlement letter.

■ Developing Countries: Capital Punishment

Stephen Doughty: [\[48525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of withdrawing overseas development assistance funding to countries in which the death penalty is applied.

Rory Stewart:

DFID works closely with the FCO to assess and monitor the civil and political rights context in the countries where it has programmes. DFID continuously monitors the situation in partner countries across the full range of human rights, including the death penalty. DFID uses the Partnership Principles to make an overall balanced assessment of

a partner country's commitment to human rights. These assessments inform our overall programming decisions.

■ Developing Countries: Poliomyelitis

Rehman Chishti:

[\[48019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what her policy is on UK support for the global eradication of polio; and what discussions she has had with her counterparts in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria on eradication of that disease in those countries.

James Wharton:

The UK is fully committed to global polio eradication and is the third largest donor to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, providing £300million for 2013 to 2019. The UK is also the largest donor to Gavi; which has led the rapid global scale up of Inactivated Polio Vaccine. DFID helps sustain global political commitment and ensures the eradication programme has a strong focus on results and delivering value for money.

The Governments of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria have shown extraordinary commitment to polio eradication. DFID officials work closely with their counterparts in these three endemic countries to support their national efforts towards this historic cause.

■ Kenya: Migrant Camps

Stephen Doughty:

[\[48670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the humanitarian effect of the closure of the Dadaab camp on Somali refugees in that region.

James Wharton:

The UK supports voluntary return of refugees in line with international refugee law. The UK supports the extension of the Tripartite Agreement between the Governments of Kenya and Somalia, and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), as the legal basis regulating the returns process to Somalia. The UNHCR leads on refugee returns and we support their assessments of the process.

The UK welcomes the monitoring role civil society plays and works in dialogue with them. We are working across partners and government to monitor the regional impacts, including from movement of people, impacts on other refugee host countries and on regional security.

■ Malawi: Overseas Aid**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[47956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if the Government will take steps to ensure that UK aid to Malawi funds long-term transport infrastructure, irrigation, diversification of farming and food products projects.

James Wharton:

The UK's development programme in Malawi works to grow the economy and eradicate extreme poverty. Improvements in the agriculture sector are essential for Malawi's growth. DFID prosperity programmes aim to deliver increased agricultural production and productivity, including through the expansion of land under irrigation; a diversified economic base and increased investment in inclusive agri-business. DFID has also provided some support to rehabilitating rural roads, and undertaken feasibility work for rail and road corridors.

We will continue to make transformative investments to help Malawi to move up the agricultural supply chain, improve regional trade and create more jobs. This will contribute to increased food security and agricultural production, helping to boost growth and create off-farm jobs.

■ Marriage: Children**Kate Osamor:** [\[48097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking in co-operation with UN agencies to tackle the increase in child brides in refugee camps and conflict areas.

Priti Patel:

The UK is committed to the 'Call to Action' on women and girls and keeping girls and women safe in emergencies, including providing £23.5 million to UNFPA in Syria, to support women and girls vulnerable to child and forced marriage, domestic violence, and sexual violence, abuse, and exploitation through improved access to psycho-social support and sexual and reproductive health care.

■ Overseas Aid**Stephen Doughty:** [\[48524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, when she plans to publish an updated list of her Department's priority countries.

Rory Stewart:

The outcomes of the Bilateral Aid Review will be published soon, and this will include a description of the geographical priorities for the aid programme over the spending review period.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ Department for International Trade: World Trade Organisation****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[47650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many meetings he has had with officials from the World Trade Organisation since the creation of his Department; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

In addition to speaking on the phone and an exchange of letters, my Rt. Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade and my noble Friend the Minister of State for Trade Policy have each had one face-to-face meeting with the Director General of the WTO since the creation of the Department.

JUSTICE**■ Birmingham Prison and Oakwood Prison****Louise Haigh:**[\[47220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the contractual agreement between her Department and G4S Care and Justice Services (UK) Limited at HM Prison (a) Birmingham and (b) Oakwood, how many performance points have been incurred and for what reason those performance points have been incurred in each year from 2012-13 to date.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Well-run prisons are fundamental to the proper functioning of our justice system, and a vital part of our reform plans. Private providers play an important role in the prison estate. Performance of all providers is closely monitored and we will not hesitate to take action where standards fall short.

Prison Contracts set out a strict performance framework, consisting of prescriptive performance targets. Failure by the provider to meet performance targets results in performance points being applied.

Performance points are awarded according to the severity of failure. If the total number of points exceeds the agreed baseline for the performance quarter or year, financial remedies are applied against the Contractor in accordance with the Contract. In certain circumstances financial remedies can also be applied directly, without performance points being accrued. The amount of points awarded therefore cannot always be linked to the value of remedies imposed.

The number of performance points incurred at HMP Birmingham and HMP Oakwood for the reporting years 2012-2013 through to 2015-2016 are as follows.

Data for reporting year 2016-2017 is not yet available as it has not been finalised.

		2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
		Points	Points	Points	Points
Birmingham	Failure to comply with procedures	0	248.9	25	103
	Incidents	0	0	0	0
	Failure to comply with prison regime	135	45.71	0	0
Oakwood	Failure to comply with procedures	7	1.5	0	0
	Incidents	0	0	0	0
	Failure to comply with prison regime	90	10	0	0

■ Codes of Practice: Victims

Richard Burgon: [\[48620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans the Government has to include the key entitlements for victims and witnesses set out in her Department's Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, published in October 2015, in primary legislation.

Dr Phillip Lee:

Victims deserve the best possible support to help them cope with what they have been through and recover as much as possible.

The Victims' Code is a statutory code of practice, and the legislation governing the Code makes clear that the Code sets out the services that are to be provided to victims of crime. Under the Code if victims do not receive those services they are entitled to complain and, if dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, refer it to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

Nevertheless we know there is more to do to further increase the rights of victims. We will announce our plans in due course.

■ Family Courts: Domestic Violence

Angela Smith: [\[46936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of domestic abuse victims in child contact cases in the family court have been in receipt of legal aid in each year since 2010.

Dr Phillip Lee:

This data is not centrally recorded and could only be obtained by incurring disproportionate costs.

■ First Offenders

Amanda Solloway: [\[47120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps her Department has taken to ensure first-time offenders entering the prison system are (a) made aware of gang culture in prisons and (b) discouraged from becoming involved in that culture.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Safety in prisons is fundamental to the proper functioning of our justice system and a vital part of our reform plans. We do not tolerate violence or bullying in prisons and take appropriate action against victimisation of any kind.

Gang membership and youth violence cause serious harm to those involved and their communities. The Government is committed to reducing the likelihood of young people joining gangs, and to responding effectively when they do.

Many young and vulnerable people come into contact with the criminal justice system as a result of their involvement with gangs.

Prison gives young people the opportunity to leave gangs behind and lead safe and productive lives in their communities. Prison staff work with the police to tackle gang related activity in prison, and to provide new opportunities for young people.

All offenders entering prison participate in induction programmes designed to help them make the most from their time in that prison. Some prisons have appointed a gangs officer, and prison staff work closely with the police to respond where gang members are coming into prison.

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) will shortly issue guidance to all prison staff to help them identify gang members, take action against gang related violence and help them use their time in prison to leave gangs behind. The Identity Matters programme is specifically designed to help prisoners disengage from gangs and stop offending.

■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Staff

Ian Lavery: [\[46842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many civilian enforcement officers were employed by HM Courts and Tribunal Service in each year since 2010; and if she will make a statement.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The number of civilian enforcement officers that were employed by HM Courts and Tribunals Service since 2013 are:-

	HEADCOUNT	FTE (FULL TIME EQUIVALENT)
December 2013	296	287.49
December 2014	242	231.18
December 2015	212	202.59
September 2016	185	173.72

Data prior to 2013 could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

HMCTS takes recovery and enforcement of financial impositions very seriously and is working to ensure that clamping down on defaulters is a continued priority nationwide and remains committed to finding new ways to ensure impositions are paid and to trace those who do not pay. This is why there has been a year on year increase in the total amount of financial penalties collected over the last five years. The amount of money collected has risen from £310m at the end of 2014/15 to a record of £381 million at the end of 2015/16.

■ Muslim Arbitration Tribunal: Judges

Mr Douglas Carswell:

[\[48560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions her Department has had with the Judicial Office on permitting district judges to sit as presiding judges at the Muslim Arbitration Tribunal.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The involvement of judges in outside organisations is covered by the Guide to Judicial Conduct, which is published by the independent judiciary. The guide is publicly available on gov.uk. The Department does not discuss the application of this guidance to individual cases.

■ Personal Injury: Compensation

Philip Davies:

[\[47753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment her Department has made of proposals set out in January 2016 by Lord Justice Jackson to set fixed costs on all personal injury claims valued up to £250,000; and what steps the Government is taking to control costs and promote access to justice in this area.

Sir Oliver Heald:

On 15 September, the Government announced that it is keen to extend fixed recoverable costs to as many civil cases as possible. The senior judiciary will be developing proposals and the Government will consult in due course.

In addition, the Department of Health is currently considering the introduction of fixed recoverable costs in lower value clinical negligence claims, on which it expects to consult as soon as practicable; and the Ministry of Justice has asked the Civil Justice Council to consider and make recommendations on the possible introduction of fixed recoverable costs in noise induced hearing loss cases.

■ Prison Sentences

Jon Trickett: [\[46737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners serving indefinite sentences in England are awaiting re-offending courses.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

On 11th October 2016 there were 215 indeterminate sentence prisoners on the referral list for the Healthy Sex Programme and 115 for the Extended Sexual Offending Treatment Programme in England and Wales. All other NOMS accredited offending behaviour programmes are managed locally, and data on waiting lists is not held centrally.

■ Prison Service: Staff

Tom Blenkinsop: [\[48599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps she is taking to improve the safety of prison staff at work.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Prisons should be places of safety and reform. Improving safety and decreasing violence is an urgent priority for the Government.

Prison officers are some of our finest public servants. We do not underestimate the challenges faced by everyone working in prisons. We will continue to support our staff to help them maintain safe and secure prisons.

Funding of £14 million will be given to 10 prisons with some of the highest rates of violence for additional staff to implement new offender management arrangements, including dedicated prisoner contact time.

We will be setting out our plans for prison safety and reform in a White Paper in the coming weeks, including our plans to reduce prison violence.

■ Wellingborough Prison

Mr Peter Bone: [\[48501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans she has to re-open Wellingborough Prison.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

We are investing £1.3 billion to reform and modernise the prison estate to make it more efficient, safer and focused on supporting prisoner rehabilitation. We will build new

prisons and close prisons that are in poor condition and those which do not have a long-term future in the estate.

We are currently considering sites for new prison places and will set out plans shortly.

Mr Peter Bone: [\[48502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans are in place to improve security at Wellingborough Prison to prevent travellers encroaching on the site.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Following the travellers' occupation of the main car park at the former HMP Wellingborough, we took immediate action to seek their removal including pursuing the matter through the courts. The travellers were evicted on 3 October and we put security guards in place until a permanent solution could be installed. On 13 October we installed concrete barriers to prevent future encroachment at the site.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

■ Palace of Westminster: Offices

John Mann: [\[47459\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, how many (a) Peers and (b) civil servants have offices within the Palace of Westminster.

Mr David Lidington:

As of 13 October, there is a total of three hundred and sixty eight (368) Peers with desks provided within one hundred and twelve (112) offices in the Palace of Westminster.

There is a total of twenty eight (28) desks provided within eight (8) offices to Civil Servants in the House of Commons foot print of the Palace of Westminster for the following: Prime Minister, Home Secretary, Leader of the House and Government Chief Whip.

There is a total of twenty one (21) desks provided within six (6) offices to Civil Servants in the House of Lords foot print of the Palace of Westminster for the following: Cabinet Office (16 desks, 4 offices) and Crown Office (5 desks, 2 Offices). In addition there is a Bill Team Room in the House of Lords. This is a single office with two desks which is for the use of civil servants from whichever department is having legislation debated in the Chamber to use as a 'hotdesking' facility.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Borders: Ireland

Dr Rupa Huq: [\[48042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what the Government's policy is on the nature of the border controls between the UK and the Republic of Ireland after the UK leaves the EU.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 17 October 2016]: The open border between the UK and the Republic of Ireland existed for many years before either country was a member of the European Union and it has served both countries well. There is a strong will – within this Government, among the Northern Ireland parties and in the Irish Government – to preserve the open border. We must now work closely together to ensure that as the UK leaves the EU we find shared solutions to the challenges and maximise the opportunities.

SCOTLAND

■ Air Routes: China

Douglas Chapman:

[\[47722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, whether he has made representations to the Department of Transport on negotiations on the bilateral agreement regulating direct flights between the UK and the People's Republic of China.

David Mundell:

On Tuesday 11 October, following successful negotiations in London, the UK Government announced an agreement between the UK and China to more than double the number of flights allowed to operate between the two countries, lifting all limits on cargo services and the number of destinations that can be served. Transport Scotland and representatives from both Edinburgh and Glasgow airports were present at these negotiations, and the agreement will provide economic opportunities right across the UK, including Scotland.

Visits from China to the UK are on the increase, with 2015 figures up 46% on 2014 to almost 270,000, and spend rising by 18% to £586 million during that same period. This moves China into the UK's top 10 most valuable inbound markets, and provides yet another positive example that it is a strong United Kingdom with a strong global voice that is the union which matters to Scotland.

■ Electricity: Meters

Dr Paul Monaghan:

[\[47733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what incentives are provided by the Government to encourage electricity providers to create opportunities for households with dynamically teleswitched metres to switch between electricity suppliers.

David Mundell:

The Government recognises that customers using dynamically teleswitched meters do not enjoy the same wide choice of energy suppliers as other domestic customers. In its final report in June, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) included in its remedies an order on energy suppliers with more than 50,000 domestic customers to make all their single-rate electricity tariffs available to all existing and new domestic electricity customers with restricted meters, without requiring the meter to be replaced.

Suppliers will also need to ensure these customers receive regular information on the options to switch supplier or tariff. The Citizens Advice will become a recognised provider of information and support for customers with restricted meters. These provisions will be implemented through CMA orders on suppliers and amendments to their licence conditions.

Dr Paul Monaghan: [47988]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what opportunities are available to households in Scotland with dynamically teleswitched meters to switch between electricity suppliers.

Dr Paul Monaghan: [47989]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what tariffs are available to households in Scotland with dynamically teleswitched meters that may want to switch between electricity suppliers.

David Mundell:

Households in Scotland with dynamically teleswitched meters can switch to a single-rate or an Economy 7 tariff offered by their existing supplier or by a rival supplier. At present, some suppliers may require the dynamically teleswitched meter to be replaced at a cost to the customer and they may suffer a loss of functionality. In its final report in June, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) included in its remedies an order on energy suppliers with more than 50,000 domestic customers to make all their single-rate electricity tariffs available to all existing and new domestic electricity customers with restricted meters, without requiring the meter to be replaced. Suppliers will also need to ensure these customers receive regular information on the options to switch supplier or tariff. The Citizens Advice will become a recognised provider of information and support for customers with restricted meters.

Dr Paul Monaghan: [48013]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many households in (a) Scotland and (b) the Highland area of Scotland have their electricity supplies controlled by dynamically teleswitched meters.

David Mundell:

We do not hold information on how many households in Scotland and the Highland area of Scotland have their electricity supplies controlled by dynamically teleswitched meters. In Ofgem's response to the Competition Markets Authority's Notice of Remedies published in August 2015, it was estimated that there were 160,000 households across Great Britain with dynamically teleswitched meters in operation at the end of 2014.

The Competition Markets Authority's Notice of Remedies is available online at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/561e1fbaed915d39bc000013/Ofgem_revised_with_additional_material .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/561e1fbaed915d39bc000013/Ofgem_revised_with_additional_material.pdf).

■ Scotland Office: EU Law

Gareth Thomas:

[[48185](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, which agreed EU directives have not yet been transposed directly into UK law; and if he will make a statement.

David Mundell:

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. During this period the Government will continue to negotiate, implement and apply EU legislation.

The Scotland Office has no EU Directives awaiting transposition into UK law.

■ Transport Scotland: Telephone Services

Andrew Stephenson:

[[47783](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what discussions he has had with the Scottish Government on the number of complaints Transport Scotland has received on over-staging on its dedicated hotline in each of the last four years.

David Mundell:

Transport Scotland is an Agency of the Scottish Government, accountable not to myself but to the Scottish Parliament and the public through Scottish Ministers.

TRANSPORT

■ British Transport Police: Telephone Services

Richard Burden:

[[48348](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much has been spent from the public purse on promoting and publicising the British Transport Police's 61016 text service in each quarter since its introduction.

Paul Maynard:

The British Transport Police (BTP) is not funded directly from the public purse, but is funded by income from the rail industry for the policing services it provides. The communications campaign for the text message service was funded from within BTP's budgets.

Richard Burden:

[[48349](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many reports have been made to the British Transport Police using the 61016 text service in each territorial division in each quarter since its introduction.

Paul Maynard:

The attached table demonstrates the number of texts received in each division in each quarter since 6th March 2013 when the system became live. It should be noted that

British Transport Police reorganised its Divisions in 2014/2015; this change is reflected in the table entries.

Attachments:

1. 048349 - Table - BTP divisional texts received [048349 - Table - BTP divisional texts received from 6th March 2013.docx]

■ **Crossrail 2 Line**

Stephen Hammond: [\[48420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans his Department has for the next public consultation on Crossrail 2.

Paul Maynard:

The government is pushing forward with plans for Crossrail 2 with a revised business case due in March 2017 and development of a funding and financing plan underway. It is crucial that the scheme is affordable and deliverable. As the scheme progresses, we will ensure there are ongoing opportunities for the public to be consulted.

■ **East Anglia Rail Franchise: Compensation**

Mr Mark Prisk: [\[48688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the timetable is for the delay repay scheme to begin operating on the (a) Greater Anglia franchise and (b) West Anglia route.

Paul Maynard:

The Greater Anglia franchise already provides a Delay Repay scheme across the whole franchise including the West Anglia route.

Rail passengers will soon be able to claim compensation if their train is more than 15 minutes late under an improved compensation scheme we announced on 13 October 2016. However, we cannot set out the dates on each franchise as this is subject to commercial negotiation. To set out dates could place the Department in a weaker position in its commercial negotiations and we have a duty to ensure that we secure the best possible deal for taxpayers.

■ **Eurotunnel: Fees and Charges**

Tom Brake: [\[47622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will hold discussions with Eurotunnel on providing incentives through its access charges for increased long distance transportation of passengers and freight by rail.

Tom Brake: [\[47628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will undertake research on whether alternative pricing structures of the access charges set by Eurotunnel could incentivise greater passenger and freight traffic between the UK and mainland Europe.

Paul Maynard:

Since the 15th June 2016 responsibility for Economic regulation of the Channel Tunnel rests with the independent regulators, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) in the UK and Autorité de regulation des activités ferroviaires et routières (ARAFER) in France.

■ Heathrow Airport

Sammy Wilson:

[\[47848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of Heathrow Airport expansion on UK industry.

Mr John Hayes:

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December 2015 and is considering all of the evidence very carefully before reaching a view on its preferred scheme. The Government is not providing a running commentary on this work before an announcement on its preference.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Michael Fabricant:

[\[48489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the High Speed Rail Committee's recommendations on ecology in its report of March 2016, Government overview of the case for High Speed 2 Phase One and its environmental impacts, what the reasons are for the time taken for Natural England to publish its report into the net loss of biodiversity measurements; and when he expects that report to be published.

Andrew Jones:

No net loss of biodiversity is a complex and important issue. It is, therefore, correct that Natural England takes the time necessary to produce a thorough independent review for Government and that the Government takes the time to make a considered response. We hope to publish both Natural England's review and the Government's report before the end of the HS2 Select Committee in the Lords.

■ London Airports

Gareth Thomas:

[\[48164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions his Department has had with local authorities on the possible expansion of Heathrow and Gatwick airports; and if he will make a statement.

Mr John Hayes:

There have been no discussions with local authorities on the possible expansion of Heathrow and Gatwick airports.

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December

2015 and is considering all of the evidence very carefully before reaching a view on its preferred scheme.

■ Motor Vehicles: Ownership

Tom Blenkinsop: [\[48600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department holds data on the level of motor vehicle ownership in (a) England and (b) Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency in each of the last five years.

Andrew Jones:

The numbers of vehicles registered in England and in the Middlesbrough and East Cleveland constituency at the end of each of the last five years are as follows:-

YEAR	LICENSED VEHICLES (THOUSANDS)	MID YEAR	
		POPULATION ESTIMATES (THOUSANDS)	VEHICLES PER 1000 POPULATION
(a) England			
2011	29,069	53,107	547
2012	29,275	53,494	547
2013	29,692	53,866	551
2014	30,361	54,317	559
2015	31,047	54,786	567
(b) Middlesbrough South & East Cleveland			
2011	48.2	92.8	520
2012	48.4	92.6	523
2013	48.8	92.5	528
2014	49.9	92.7	539
2015	50.3	1	1

Vehicle statistics are derived from the DVLA vehicle register. This is an operational database used to handle the licensing of vehicles registered in the United Kingdom. The number of vehicles are those where the address of the registered keeper is located in (a) England and (b) within the Middlesbrough and East Cleveland constituency. Mid year population estimates published by the Office for National Statistics. 1. figures for 2015 are not yet available.

■ Public Transport: Autism

Daniel Zeichner: [\[48470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the outcomes of its proposed Accessibility Action Plan will improve the accessibility of public transport for autistic people.

Andrew Jones:

This Government is committed to continuing improving access to public transport services for those with visible and hidden disabilities.

The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) has advised the Department on the broad content and scope of the Accessibility Action Plan. The Department has also sought input from organisations representing disabled people with different impairment types, including the National Autistic Society. We will ensure that the Accessibility Action Plan improves the accessibility of public transport for autistic people.

■ Public Transport: Disability

Daniel Zeichner: [\[48490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department plans to publish its Accessibility Action Plan.

Andrew Jones:

The Department for Transport is preparing a revised Accessibility Action Plan (AAP) at the moment in discussion with the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee. We plan to publish the AAP for consultation by the end of the year.

■ Railways: Per Capita Costs

Justin Madders: [\[47901\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much has been spent from the public purse on rail services per head of population in (a) Ellesmere Port & Neston constituency, (b) the North West, (c) the Northern Powerhouse area, (d) London and (e) England in (i) 2014-15 and (ii) 2015-16.

Andrew Jones:

Figures on public sector spend on railways per head of population are produced for England and the regions as part of the HM Treasury Country and Regional Analysis (CRA).

In 2014/15, the latest year for which data are available, public sector spend per head on railways was £93 in the North West, £353 in London and £113 in England.

Defining the Northern Powerhouse area as the three regions in the north of England (North West, North East and Yorkshire and the Humber), spend on railways per head was £88 in 2014/15.

Data on spend per head on railways is not available for Ellesmere Port and Neston.

■ Rescue Services: Training

Nic Dakin: [\[48503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure effective working between the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and local Fire and Rescue services on appropriate access to flight and winch training.

Mr John Hayes:

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency works closely with all of the emergency services to provide an appropriate level of access to its search and rescue helicopters and familiarisation about how they work.

■ River Mersey: Bridges

Steve Rotheram: [\[47715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will produce a cost impact assessment for users of the new Mersey Gateway.

Andrew Jones:

The Mersey Gateway Bridge scheme is being promoted by Halton Borough Council and it is for them to justify the costs for users of the new bridge. A range of discounts will be available for frequent users of the crossing.

In approving the scheme the Government considered the case for change, the economic case, and that the scheme is viable, affordable and achievable. In line with other estuarial crossings, and as there will be improved travel across the Mersey, users are expected to part fund the infrastructure.

Mr George Howarth: [\[48118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of tolls on the Mersey Gateway and Silver Jubilee bridges on the (a) finances, (b) employment levels, (c) employment choices and (d) road travel habits of residents of Knowsley.

Andrew Jones:

The Secretary of State for Transport has not produced an assessment of the effect of tolls on the Mersey Gateway and Silver Jubilee bridges on the (a) finances, (b) employment levels, (c) employment choices and (d) road travel habits of residents of Knowsley. The Mersey Gateway Bridge scheme is being promoted by Halton Borough Council and it is for them to justify the costs for users of the new bridge. A range of discounts will be available for frequent users of the crossing.

In approving the scheme the Government considered the case for change, the economic case, and that the scheme is viable, affordable and achievable. In line with other estuarial crossings, and as there will be improved travel across the Mersey, users are expected to part fund the infrastructure.

Mr George Howarth: [\[48119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the introduction of tolls on the Mersey Gateway and Silver

Jubilee bridges; and whether a decision has been taken on discounts for use of those bridges for local businesses and residents.

Andrew Jones:

The Secretary of State has not discussed this issue with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. A final decision on whether to fund further discounts to users of the bridges has yet to be taken.

■ Roads: Capital Investment

Justin Madders:

[\[47727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much has been spent on road infrastructure per head of population in (a) Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency, (b) the North West, (c) the Northern Powerhouse area, (d) London and (e) England in (i) 2014-15 and (ii) 2015-16.

Andrew Jones:

Figures on public sector road infrastructure spend per head of population are produced for England and the regions as part of the HM Treasury Country and Regional Analysis (CRA).

In 2014/15, the latest year for which data are available, capital spend on road infrastructure per head was £87 in the North West, £68 in London and £96 in England.

Defining the Northern Powerhouse area as the three regions in the north of England (North West, North East and Yorkshire and the Humber), capital spend on road infrastructure per head was £100 in 2014/15.

Data on spend per head on road infrastructure is not available for Ellesmere Port and Neston.

■ Speed Limits: Cameras

Sir Greg Knight:

[\[47984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reasons his Department deploys speed cameras that photograph vehicles from the (a) front and (b) rear on (i) trunk roads and (ii) motorways; and for what reasons his Department does not have a consistent policy on the deployment and use of such speed cameras.

Andrew Jones:

It is for local authorities and police to decide how they wish to operate speed cameras. The Department issued guidance in 2007 entitled "Use of speed and red-light cameras for traffic enforcement: guidance on deployment, visibility and signing". I wrote to all local authorities in England and Wales on 20 October 2015 to remind them of the guidance which is available on gov.uk.

Some cameras have the capability to photograph vehicles from the front and rear, whereas others do not. Where front and back photographing is possible, it will be for highway authorities and the Police to decide whether such cameras are most suitable.

■ Transport: Greater London

Neil Coyle: [\[47846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what further devolution is being considered to the Mayor of London; and how his Department is working with the Mayor to tackle rail challenges facing the capital.

Paul Maynard:

The Secretary of State for Transport has asked the Mayor of London to submit a business case for running London suburban rail services. This was submitted on Friday 14 October. We will now consider this and decide whether it will improve services for all passengers, including longer distance commuters. We will also need to understand how the Mayor intends to fund his proposals. A decision will be made in due course.

WALES**■ Wales Office: EU Law**

Gareth Thomas: [\[48188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, which agreed EU directives have not yet been transposed directly into UK law; and if he will make a statement.

Alun Cairns:

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. During this period the Government will continue to negotiate, implement and apply EU legislation.

There are no EU directives within the Wales Office's responsibilities.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Cancer: Young People**

Justin Madders: [\[47831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the implication for his Department's policies of recommendations made by CLIC Sargent in its report on cancer costs and their effect on young people and their families published in September 2016.

Justin Madders: [\[47906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the findings of the report by CLIC Sargent entitled Cancer Costs: the financial impact of treatment on young cancer patients and their families, published in September 2016, whether he plans to review the financial support available for young cancer patients and their families to help meet the cost of their energy bills.

Penny Mordaunt:

CLIC Sargent has supplied the Department for Work and Pensions with a copy of the report "Cancer Costs". We are examining the contents of the report and I have asked my officials to arrange a meeting with CLIC Sargent's representatives in the near future.

■ Children: Maintenance**Mary Glendon:**[\[48576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 21 July 2016 to Question 42974, when the written responses from external stakeholders on child maintenance service charges will be made available.

Caroline Nokes:

There are currently no plans to publish the written responses stakeholders have submitted for the 30 month review. The feedback from stakeholders will be used to help inform the Department's response to the review. The findings from the review are expected to be published in early 2017.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Data Protection**Dr Paul Monaghan:**[\[47889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what data protection measures his Department has in place to ensure the safety of claimant's personal information from a potential online data breach.

Caroline Nokes:

The Department takes the security of personal information very seriously. The Department has a range of capabilities in place to ensure the safety of the data it holds and processes. Disclosing the exact nature of the measures it takes to prevent data breaches would be prejudicial to the Department's ability to keep that data safe.

The Department works with other agencies, Departments and delivery partners to prevent online data breaches in support of the National Security Strategy.

■ Employment: Disability**Matthew Pennycook:**[\[47773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of isolation in the workplace on disabled people and the effect of such isolation on developing skills and career progression for disabled people.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Department for Work and Pensions has not made a recent assessment of the effect of isolation in the workplace on disabled people.

However, we are committed to halving the employment gap between disabled and non-disabled people. The Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Health have created a cross departmental Work and Health Unit to develop a strategy for system-wide reform on health, disability and employment, in order to reduce the

numbers of people who are economically inactive due to a health condition or disability. The treatment of disabled people in the workplace will be among the factors the unit takes into account.

Meanwhile, employers and disabled employees continue to benefit from the support offered through Access to Work, which provides practical support, advice and guidance for both disabled people in work or entering work and their employers.

In addition, the Government's Disability Confident scheme supports our commitment to halve the disability employment gap by focusing on employers, who have a crucial role to play in ensuring disabled people are recruited, retained and developed in their careers. Employers signing-up to Disability Confident on Gov.UK get access to a wide range of information, good practice and other resources, including links to DWP programmes which offer practical support.

Matthew Pennycook:

[47774]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment he has made of the performance of Access to Work; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure that (a) deafblind people and (b) people with complex needs receive the appropriate levels of support to help them into work.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Government wants all disabled and people with a long term health condition to fulfil their potential and achieve their aspirations. Every individual should have the opportunity to work and share in the economic and health benefits that work brings, regardless of their health condition or disability.

Deafblind customers and customers with complex needs are not recorded separately in Access to Work data, so it is not possible to assess the scheme's performance with them. However, Access to Work has specialist teams to provide a dedicated service to particular groups of customers including both deaf customers and customers with a visual impairment. People who are deafblind are normally assisted by the Visual Impairment team

Last year, Access to Work helped over 36,000 people to take up or remain in employment. Access to Work figures may be subject to change. Official Statistics have recently been subject to a detailed methodology review which identified some technical issues. We will release a revised publication once these issues have been resolved.

We will soon publish a Green Paper on work and health and conduct a consultation aimed at disabled people, their representative organisations and a wide range of other stakeholders, who all have an important part to play in making the transformative changes needed.

Justin Madders:

[47832]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the implication for his Department's policies of the findings in the recent report from the charity Sense, Realising Aspirations for All.

Penny Mordaunt:

We welcome the Sense report, Realising Aspirations for All and its findings. We want all disabled and people with a long term health condition to fulfil their potential and achieve their aspirations.

We will soon publish a Green Paper on work and health and conduct a consultation to understand how every individual can have the opportunity to work and share in the economic and health benefits that work brings, regardless of their health condition or disability. We will continue to engage with Sense and other key stakeholders as part of the Green Paper consultation.

■ Employment: Mental Illness**Henry Smith:**[\[47903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent measures the Government has undertaken to ensure that people with mental health conditions are properly supported into work.

Penny Mordaunt:

We are investing significant resources in improving provision to help people with mental health conditions back to work. This includes funding to increase the coverage of the Talking Therapy services by 600,000 people per year to 1.5million by 2020 and investment in a number of voluntary initiatives and trials to test different types of support, with a view to taking forward those that have the most impact.

In addition we will shortly be publishing a Green Paper on work and health to seek views on what will work to deliver real lasting change for disabled people and those with a health condition. Mental health will be a key focus of our Green Paper as we know that people with mental health conditions fare poorly in the labour market.

Our aim is to help transform the lives and prospects of disabled people and those with a health condition and contribute to building a society and an economy that works for everyone.

■ Jobseeker's Allowance: Children in Care**Frank Field:**[\[47886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential effect on employment outcomes of moving care leavers from jobseeker's allowance to income support.

Damian Hinds:

We have not made an assessment of the potential effect on employment outcomes of moving care leavers from Jobseekers Allowance to Income Support.

■ Pension Protection Fund**Steve McCabe:** [\[47706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will estimate the number of people who would have been entitled to a larger income due to the proposed changes to the Pension Protection Fund's compensation cap and who have died since the proposals were first included in the Pensions Act 2014.

Richard Harrington:

The information requested is not collated centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Pensions: British Overseas Territories**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[47647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the financial cost of unfreezing UK-issued pensions in those British Overseas Territories where they are frozen.

Richard Harrington:

The Government has a clear position, which has remained a consistent policy of successive Governments for around 70 years. UK State Pensions are payable worldwide and are uprated abroad where we have a legal requirement to do so; for example in the European Economic Area, or countries where we have a reciprocal agreement that allows for uprating, and so annual increases are paid to UK State Pension recipients in Gibraltar and in Bermuda. We have no plans to change this policy.

Were this to occur, liabilities for pensioners who live in other countries and territories would also have to be met. The estimated cost of increasing pensions in those countries where they are not currently uprated would be over £0.5 billion a year. This would be financially unaffordable.

The annual additional cost of up-rating the State Pensions of those recipients who are resident in the British Overseas Territories was estimated at approximately £1million in 2015/16.

■ Personal Independence Payment**Neil Coyle:** [\[47350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to monitor the effect of the personal independence payments rollout for disabled people in work and using motability vehicles and ensuring employment is not lost as a result of differing thresholds between disability living allowance and the new benefit.

Penny Mordaunt:

There are now more people on the Motability scheme than there were when Personal Independence Payment (PIP) was first introduced. Whilst some Disability Living Allowance (DLA) users with Motability vehicles will not be eligible for them under PIP,

there are also many who would have been ineligible under DLA, but are eligible under PIP.

We appreciate that PIP reassessment can be a challenging time for those who do have to return their vehicle. That is why we worked closely with Motability to put in place a £175 million package of transitional support to help these individuals. This includes a £2,000 cash lump sum in most cases, help with insuring and adapting a new, non-scheme vehicle and a 7-week grace period. Most will also continue to be eligible for the standard-rate mobility allowance, which pays over £1,100 per year.

DLA and PIP are available regardless of whether claimants are in or out of work and we do not collect any information on claimants' work circumstances as part of the PIP claim. However, the Department is firmly committed to supporting disabled people to move into and stay in employment. For example, the Access to Work scheme is available to help with the cost of travelling to work.

Phil Boswell:

[47737]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the cost to the public purse is of the contracts with (a) Capita and (b) ATOS Healthcare for the assessment of personal independence payments.

Penny Mordaunt:

The information may be found in Contract Finder via the following links:

Atos Healthcare for PIP assessments in Northern England and Scotland – Lot 1

<http://data.gov.uk/data/contracts-finder-archive/contract/695721/>

Capita for Central England and Wales assessments – Lot 2

<http://data.gov.uk/data/contracts-finder-archive/contract/740844/>

Atos Healthcare for PIP assessments in London, East of England and Southern England – Lot 3

<http://data.gov.uk/data/contracts-finder-archive/contract/695729/>

Capita for Northern Ireland assessments – Lot 4

<http://data.gov.uk/data/contracts-finder-archive/contract/762330/>

Phil Boswell:

[47755]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what standard of medical expertise is expected of personal independence payment assessors; and what (a) experience and (b) training is required to understand the symptoms of medical conditions.

Phil Boswell:

[\[47757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what qualifications and experience are expected of personal independence payment assessors who handle cases in which an individual suffers from a neurological condition for which symptoms may present sporadically; and what processes are in place for claimants who consider the result of an assessment an unfair representation of their condition.

Penny Mordaunt:

All Health Professionals (HPs) undertaking assessments on behalf of DWP must be registered practitioners who have also met requirements around training, experience and competence. Approval to work as an HP must be conferred by the DWP Chief Medical Adviser on behalf of the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

For the delivery of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessments, they must be an occupational therapist, level 1 nurse, physiotherapist, paramedic or doctor. They must also be fully registered and have at least two years' post full-registration experience. In addition to their profession, the Department recognises the importance of ensuring that individuals also have sufficient experience, skills and training to carry out their duties and PIP providers are required to ensure that the HPs carrying out assessments have knowledge of the clinical aspects and likely functional effects of a wide range of health conditions and impairments.

This means that all HPs receive comprehensive training in disability analysis which includes a functional evaluation as to how medical conditions and the long-term medical treatment of those conditions affect an individual's ability to perform day-to-day activities. Prior to carrying out an assessment the HP routinely refreshes their knowledge of any condition with which they are not fully familiar.

Claimants who consider the result of an assessment to be an inaccurate representation of their condition can ask for a "mandatory reconsideration", in writing or by telephone, giving their reasons. They may include further information to support their case.

Matthew Pennycook:

[\[47890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that personal independence payment assessments are undertaken fairly and appropriately.

Penny Mordaunt:

Provider performance is measured across a range of contracted service levels, which set out the Department's expectations for the delivery of the service. These include the requirements for the quality of assessments which are assessed through an independent audit. Contractual remedies are in place if the provider fails to deliver against the service standards.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Scotland

Phil Boswell: [\[47756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people are paid as personal independence payment assessors in Scotland.

Penny Mordaunt:

378 people were working as Personal Independence Payment Health Assessors in Scotland (6 October 2016).

■ Social Security Benefits

Debbie Abrahams: [\[48668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2016 to Question 47675, if he will publish the recommendations made by his Department's internal process reviews into the deaths of social security claimants since 2014.

Damian Hinds:

There are no plans at present to publish further recommendations made since 2014.

■ State Retirement Pensions

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[47705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in cases when someone in receipt of a state pension passes away, (a) whether their family is automatically notified on any pensions payments owing, (b) how long such payments take to process and (c) how many people are currently waiting for such a payment to be made.

Richard Harrington:

When someone in receipt of a state pension passes away:

(a) The death arrears payee would be notified of any arrears by letter. The death arrears payee is normally a family member but can also be another body such as a solicitor.

(b) Payments owing are normally made within 15 days following confirmation of the correct payee.

(c) There are 4,092 customers who have confirmed the correct payee currently waiting for such a payment to be made.

■ Universal Credit

Stephen Timms: [\[48603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the level of work allowance for universal credit will be for people (a) with and (b) without a housing element included in their universal credit in each of the next five years.

Damian Hinds:

The work allowance rates are set out in regulations, and are £192 for those with housing costs and £397 for those without.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ UK Trade with EU

Mr David Hanson:

[[906653](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what role his Department has taken in discussions with the EU on UK membership of the single market after the UK leaves the EU.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 18 October 2016. The correct answer should have been:

Sir Alan Duncan:

~~Although my Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Exiting the EU (Mr Davis) leads on negotiations with the EU, as I said to the Foreign Affairs Committee last week, our Departments are working closely together to get the best possible deal for the British people.~~ **The Department for Exiting the European Union is the lead department for such matters. As the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) said to the Foreign Affairs Committee last week, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for Exiting the European Union are working closely together to get the best possible deal for the British people.**

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Committees and Ministerial responsibilities

Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General (Ben Gummer):

[\[HCWS196\]](#)

Today the Government is publishing an updated list of Cabinet Committees and Implementation Taskforces. It includes three new committees, chaired by the Prime Minister, to oversee this Government's strategic priorities and deliver our manifesto commitments

The Economy and Industrial Strategy Committee will oversee the development of a new industrial strategy, ensuring that all parts of the country and all of our citizens see the benefits of economic growth; and will drive work to address the UK's longstanding productivity issues. The EU Exit and Trade Committee will oversee work to withdraw the UK from the European Union and develop a new relationship between the UK and the EU; and oversee our plans to promoting the UK as a place to do business and trade with, drive inward investment, and, in time, negotiate trade agreements. The Social Reform Committee will oversee social policy reforms, and drive the Government's work to increase social mobility, deliver social justice, and make Britain a country that works for everyone, not just a privileged few. These will sit alongside the National Security Council and the Parliamentary Business and Legislation Committee, which will continue to serve the same purpose as previously. The nine sub-committees announced today will support the process of collective agreement across government. The list also includes details of seven Implementation Taskforces, which will monitor and drive delivery of important cross-cutting priorities.

An updated List of Ministerial Responsibilities has also been published today.

Copies of the associated documents will be placed in the Library of House and published on gov.uk. The list of Ministerial responsibilities will also be sent to each Hon. Member.

Attachments:

1. WMS Cabinet Committee&Ministerial responsibilities [1WMS (Committees and LMR) 18.10.16 (1).docx]

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Supporting troubled families

Minister for Local Government (Mr Marcus Jones):

[\[HCWS202\]](#)

I am pleased to announce the publication of the National Evaluation of the first Troubled Families Programme which ran between 2012 and 2015.

The programme was set up in 2012 to work with a minimum of 116,000 families with multiple and complex problems who had previously been failed by services.

This evaluation reveals the true scale of families' problems, finding that families each had an average of seven serious social problems including issues of: drug and alcohol abuse; mental and physical health problems; domestic violence; debt; truancy; anti social behaviour and unemployment.

Our own data shows that more than 116,000 families on the programme saw their lives improve – more children attending school, youth crime and anti-social behaviour significantly cut and, in more than 18,000 cases, an adult holding down a job for three months or more.

The evaluation reports provide additional detail on how the programme benefitted families. For example, in-depth interviews with the families found that they reported increased confidence as a result of the programme's intensive 'whole family' help, which they rated as better than the services which had tried to intervene before.

The evaluation also finds that the programme helped improve and join up local services for families by encouraging a single keyworker approach to work with the whole family on all of its problems.

There are also important lessons in the reports that are being taken on board for the new Troubled Families Programme which will work with up to 400,000 more families by 2020.

A copy of the report will be placed in the House Library and also made available on the GOV.UK website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-evaluation-of-the-first-troubled-families-programme>

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment and Rural Life
Opportunities (Dr Thérèse Coffey): [\[HCWS198\]](#)

The 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) took place in Johannesburg between 24 September and 5 October 2016. CITES is a vital international mechanism for protecting some of our most precious yet vulnerable global wildlife.

Having attended the conference, I can report it was a great success, delivering strong agreements to protect some of the world's most iconic species. I am pleased that much of this action was driven by the UK.

For example, the UK led negotiations on African Lions which saw the trade in wild lion bones banned and the establishment of a new CITES Task Force.

We also chaired discussions on rhinos, resulting in investigative action into failures to halt rhino horn trafficking in key destinations. A proposal to allow trade in rhino horn was also rejected.

Perhaps most significantly and in recognition of the peril facing many elephant populations, the conference voted against a resumption of trading in modern day ivory, in line with recent domestic UK action. There was also a clear direction to close national ivory markets where these fuel poaching and illegal trade and decisive action to strengthen National Ivory Action Plans which help combat ivory trafficking in key markets.

In addition, global rules on hunting trophies were enhanced, with export permits now mandated for almost all species listed as endangered.

The many victories for global wildlife are too numerous to detail, with action also delivered for Pangolins, as the world's most trafficked mammal, the African Grey Parrot and species of sharks amongst others.

Vitally, while CITES deals with the legal trade in species, Illegal Wildlife Trade was also a strong focus, with agreements reached on increased global cooperation, and intelligence sharing to boost efforts to reduce demand for wildlife products and tackle corruption. This agreement is crucial as we look towards the Hanoi conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade which will bring together global leaders in November to push further action. Following on from the ground-breaking London Conference, the UK is providing funding and advice to Vietnam in hosting this latest conference, assuring the Illegal Wildlife Trade's place at the top of the global political agenda and delivering on our manifesto pledge to continue to lead the world on this issue. The Secretary of State Andrea Leadsom will lead HMG's delegation to the Conference, which will also be attended by HRH the Duke of Cambridge. Their presence at this vital time will show that the UK continues to be at the forefront of global action, pushing for an end to this brutal trade.

UK leadership in this area is clear. At home, we are tackling wildlife crime through our National Wildlife Crime Unit, which will receive £1.2 million of funding over the next four years. Abroad, the British military is delivering anti-poaching training to rangers in Gabon, home of Africa's largest population of forest elephants. We are also investing £13 million in projects around the world to support communities and boost law enforcement through our Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, including specialised interception tracking courses to protect rhino and elephant populations across sub-Saharan Africa.

Decisions made in recent weeks will have a real impact in safeguarding some of the world's most vulnerable species. The UK has been at the forefront of driving this and we will remain committed to protecting global wildlife for generations to come.

■ United Nations Agreement to phase down Hydrofluorocarbon Greenhouse Gases

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment and Rural Life

Opportunities (Dr Thérèse Coffey):

[\[HCWS197\]](#)

I would like to update the House on the outcome of the recent United Nations Montreal Protocol negotiations in Rwanda.

I am very pleased to report that a deal was agreed amongst the 197 Parties to the Protocol to phase down hydrofluorocarbon greenhouse gases (HFCs) over the next three decades.

The Montreal Protocol, agreed in 1987, is already seen as one of the most successful environmental treaties ever agreed, having phased out 98% of the ozone depleting substances that would have caused major damage to human health, agriculture and the wider environment. That included chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) which were used in products such as refrigeration, air condition and aerosols. As a result, the ozone layer is showing the first signs of recovery.

The replacements for CFCs and HCFCs – hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) – while not damaging the ozone layer, do still have a global warming potential thousands of times greater than carbon dioxide. The growth of refrigeration and air conditioning in developing countries means HFC use could have amounted to as much as 11% of global greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

HFC alternatives are increasingly available and the UK had, before this weekend's agreement, already taken the lead in committing to cut usage by 80% by 2030 – amongst the most ambitious phase downs in the world. The deal in Rwanda means the rest of the world is now following suit, bringing major benefits for the climate and levelling the playing field for UK businesses.

It is estimated that this deal will reduce cumulative emissions by the equivalent of between 60 and 70 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide by 2050, which equates to the output of around 600 coal fired power stations operating between now and 2050. In turn that is likely to avoid close to 0.5 degrees Celsius of global warming by the end of this century, making it possibly the single biggest step the world could have taken in achieving the Paris climate agreement goal of keeping temperatures well below 2 degrees.

The UK negotiating team played a central role in the discussions, influencing the strategy of like-minded countries to achieve an ambitious outcome and chairing the legal drafting group, which worked ceaselessly to turn the political agreement into legal text, then clarified and defended it through the final night of negotiations.

The key elements of the deal are as follows.

Developed countries will meet the following phase down commitment:

- By 2019, production and consumption of HFCs will be reduced by 10% relative to the amount of HFCs produced or consumed in the years 2011 to 2013, plus an additional allowance of 15% of the baseline used for their phase out of HCFCs.
- By 2024, the amount will be reduced by 40% and then by 70% by 2029, 80% by 2034 and finally 85% by 2036.

All developing countries, except India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, The United Arab Emirates, Iran and Iraq will meet the following phase down commitment:

- By 2024, production and consumption of HFCs will be limited to 100% of the average amount of HFCs produced or consumed in the years 2020 to 2022, plus an additional allowance of 65% of the baseline used for their phase out of HCFCs.
- By 2029, this amount will be reduced by 10% and then by 30% in 2035, 50% in 2040 and finally 80% by 2045.

- Production and consumption established before 2020 will be eligible for financial support from developed countries to help with the transition to low global warming alternatives.

India Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, The United Arab Emirates, Iran and Iraq, will meet the following phase down commitment:

- By 2028, production and consumption of HFCs will be limited to 100% of the average amount of HFCs produced or consumed in the years 2024 to 2026, plus an additional allowance of 65% of the baseline used for their phase out of HCFCs.

- By 2032, this amount will be reduced by 10% and then by 20% in 2037, 30% in 2042 and finally 85% by 2047.

- Production and consumption established before 2024 will be eligible for financial support from developed countries to help with the transition to low global warming alternatives.

Certain Gulf countries and others with high average temperatures will be able to exempt large scale air-conditioning from the phase down requirements if they believe suitable alternatives are not available for their climates.

There will be a review of the availability of technologies which use alternatives to HFCs in 2022 and every 5 years thereafter to inform any necessary adjustments to the phase down schedule. There will also be a review 4 to 5 years before 2028 specifically to consider whether those countries which have to cap HFC production and use by 2028 need a compliance deferral of 2 years due to faster HFC growth than anticipated.

This statement has also been made in the House of Lords: [HLWS200](#)

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ 1980 Hague Convention on Child Abduction

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan):
[\[HCWS201\]](#)

The Government has decided to opt in to the European Commission's proposals for the acceptance by the Member States, in the interests of the EU, of the accession of Kazakhstan, Peru and the Republic of Korea to the 1980 Hague Convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction.

All EU Member States are party to the 1980 Hague Convention, the primary civil law international instrument which provides a mechanism to seek the prompt return of wrongfully removed or retained children to their country of habitual residence.

When a country wishes to accede to the Convention, it is necessary for an existing contracting state to accept that country's accession before the Convention can apply between them. It is the European Commission's view that there is exclusive competence on the EU for all matters relating to the 1980 Convention and that therefore Member States must be authorised by the EU to accept accessions by third countries and must do so collectively through Council decisions.

Although not anticipated in the proposals, the Government believes that the UK opt-in under the Protocol to Title V of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union applies and it has therefore asserted its right to choose whether to opt in and has decided that it is in the UK's best interests to do so.

The Government has taken this decision notwithstanding the fact that they dispute the Commission's claim to exclusive competence.

The Government believes that the wider significance of these proposals for external competence mean that it is in the UK's interests to participate fully in these negotiations, including having the ability to vote. These proposals must be agreed by unanimity within the EU Council.

■ OSCE Informal Ministerial Council, Potsdam

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan):
[\[HCWS200\]](#)

My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, (Mr Boris Johnson), attended an informal meeting of Foreign Ministers of participating states of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), held in Potsdam, Germany on 1 September 2016 at the invitation of German Foreign Minister and OSCE Chair-in-Office, Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Nearly all 57 OSCE states were represented, around 40 of these by their Foreign Ministers.

Foreign Minister Steinmeier called the meeting to discuss both current security challenges in the region and the OSCE's future role and agenda. A number of common themes emerged over the course of the meeting. Many Foreign Ministers, like the Foreign Secretary, highlighted resolution of the crisis in Ukraine, and restoration of Ukrainian sovereignty as the most pressing priority for the OSCE. Strong support for the work of the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) was evident, with the Chair-in-Office leading many speakers in condemning the obstruction of SMM operations and intimidation of monitors.

As well as conflict prevention and resolution, other themes that emerged as high priorities for many OSCE participating states were protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and reducing the risk of military accidents and incidents. A strong desire was evident on the part of most states to restore respect for OSCE principles and commitments, many referring to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and military intervention in the Donbas in this context.

On the eve of the Potsdam meeting, Foreign Minister Steinmeier published proposals relating to Conventional Arms Control in Europe. Updating existing Confidence and Security Building Measures in this field is a UK priority and, we believe, is needed urgently to reduce the risk of military accidents and incidents. We will continue to work closely with Germany and other partners to push for such modernisation as well as for respect for the spirit and letter of these instruments. Implementation of all commitments is a prerequisite for building trust and restoring confidence between the participating states of the OSCE.

In the margins of the Potsdam meeting the Foreign Secretary had many bilateral meetings and conversations. These included exchanges with his Ukrainian and Polish counterparts, and

with OSCE Secretary General, Lamberto Zannier. He expressed strong UK support for the work of the OSCE's autonomous institutions when he met Michael Link, Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and Dunja Mijatović, the Representative on Freedom of the Media. In his various meetings the Foreign Secretary commended the Baroness Falkner of Margravine, the UK candidate to head the OSCE's third autonomous institution, the High Commission on National Minorities.

In this first encounter as Foreign Secretary with the OSCE, the Foreign Secretary noted the potential, as yet not fully tapped, of the organisation's uniquely comprehensive approach to security and a participation that reaches from Canada to Central Asia. The discussions in Potsdam helped clarify priorities for the coming weeks, months and years. We now need to focus our efforts on tackling them together with robust determination.

■ Recent Developments in relations between the UK and Argentina

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth (Sir Alan Duncan):
[\[HCWS199\]](#)

I would like to update the House on the current state of relations between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Argentina following my recent visit to Buenos Aires.

After more than a decade of difficult relations under Argentina's previous government, the election of President Macri in November 2015 paved the way for an improvement in our relationship. It is in the UK's interests to strengthen ties with Argentina. Argentina is the world's 25th largest economy and has considerable natural resources. A more constructive relationship will enhance the UK's prosperity.

Since December the Government has taken positive steps towards resetting our relationship by focusing on areas where both states can benefit. The Prime Minister has committed to move our relationship with Argentina into a more productive phase.

During my visit to Buenos Aires – the first by a Foreign Office Minister since 2009 – I agreed an historic UK-Argentina Joint Statement establishing closer co-operation across our bilateral relationship. This includes ambitions to: increase trade links; identify new investment opportunities; strengthen cultural ties; cooperate in the fight against corruption and organised crime; and increase links in the fields of science and technology.

Our position on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands remains unchanged. The UK will always support the right of the Falkland Islanders to determine their own future.

The Joint Statement secured important benefits for the Falkland Islanders. We committed to work together on areas of mutual interest in the South Atlantic. Argentina agreed to take appropriate measures to remove any obstacles limiting the economic growth and sustainable development of the Falkland Islands, including in trade, fishing, shipping and oil and gas. We also agreed the Falkland Islanders are free to set up further flight connections with other countries in the region, with a monthly stopover in Argentina. Both sides expressed support for the recently confirmed project to use DNA examination to identify the remains of unknown Argentine soldiers buried in the Falkland Islands.

The Government will explore ways to build on these positive first steps and consider how the UK can best maximise the opportunities offered by an improved relationship with Argentina.