



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 7 April 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (02:22 P.M., 07 April 2017). 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

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Attorney General: Internet

Justin Madders: [\[69111\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what the five most visited websites were by staff of the Law Officers' Departments in the last year for which figures are available.

Jeremy Wright:

CPS & HMCPSI

1. crowncourtdcs.caselines.co.uk
2. www.google.co.uk
3. civilservicelearning.civilservice.gov.uk
4. www.bing.com
5. www.bbc.co.uk

SFO

Details of the websites visited most often by SFO staff during the past 12 months are not held centrally. However, records are held on the SFO's internet proxy server covering the 6 month period up to 27 March 2017

1. www.google.co.uk
2. tfl.gov.uk
3. www.bbc.co.uk
4. civilservicelearning.civilservice.gov.uk
5. www.amazon.co.uk

GLD

1. Google (All Google subdomains) and related analytical sites
2. Facebook.com
3. BBC.co.uk
4. Caseline.co.uk
5. YouTube.com

The Attorney General's Office has recently changed IT providers and is unable to access this data.

■ Attorney General: Management Consultants

Jon Trickett: [\[69292\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, pursuant to the Answer of 7 March 2017 to Question 65676, how much of the procurement spending in each of those years related to the services of management consultants.

Jeremy Wright:

EXPENDITURE ON MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS						
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
AGO	0	0	0	0	0	0
SFO	£1,382,460	£772,659	0	0	0	0
CPS	£684,314	£13,347	£9,793	£960	0	0
GLD	0	0	0	0	0	0
HMCPSI	0	0	0	0	0	0

The CPS does not separately record expenditure on management consultancy and the amounts in the table above represent expenditure on all consultancy services and may include non-management consultancy services such as IT, legal, HR and project management.

■ Attorney General: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders: [\[69213\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how much the Law Officers' Departments has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Jeremy Wright:
CPS

CATEGORY	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Hotels	-	1,010,080	1,396,952	1,327,147	1,483,386
Hospitality	-	-	-	-	-
Food and drink	154,553	166,225	173,708	181,970	183,470
Transport	-	4,161,445	4,445,346	4,276,918	4,511,405

SFO

CATEGORY	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17*
Hotels	87,844	80,616	95,414	101,582	104,782
Hospitality	2,648	1,628	3,007	2,634	2,733
Food and Drink	6,238	2,090	3,023	507	1,103
Transport	113,964	153,723	231,954	186,622	224,170

*Figures as of 28 February 2017

GLD, including AGO and HMCPSI

UK Hotels

£	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
GLD*	6,772	10,549	6,403	19,363	26,628
AGO	402	2,265	2,210	-	375
HMCPSI	49,023	41,803	42,759	23,642	35,369

Hospitality

£	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
GLD*	-	657	177	47	204
AGO	2,897	41	-	18	-
HMCPSI	123	6	-	64	-

Travel

£	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
GLD*	79,539	106,161	139,103	252,523	307,457
AGO	153,893	123,566	98,644	110,462	116,192
HMCPSI	86,678	61,841	72,149	61,753	72,175

Other related cost

£	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
GLD*	42,126	57,906	56,464	58,153	70,390
AGO	3,536	3,451	554	918	911
HMCPSI	20,323	10,982	10,815	23,828	16,639

This includes all expenditure on food and drink, foreign hotels and other subsistence costs and the cost of meeting refreshments. This expenditure cannot be broken down further without looking at individual invoices which would incur disproportionate cost.

*The Treasury Solicitor's Department until 31 March 2015. GLD has increased in size as a result of the merger programme to create a shared legal service for government and expenditure has increased as a result.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders:

[\[69212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much his Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Margot James:

The latest available information for the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (former BIS only) is

CATEGORY	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17 APR-FEB	GRAND TOTAL
A) Hotel	£1,150,701	£1,463,207	£1,055,134	£3,669,042
B) Hospitality / C) Food and Drink	£9,726	£9,859	£5,805	£25,390
D) Transport	£5,277,839	£5,041,693	£3,731,821	£14,051,352
Grand Total	£6,438,266	£6,514,759	£4,792,760	£17,745,785

(former DECC only) is

CATEGORY	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	GRAND TOTAL
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	CATEGORY		FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	GRAND TOTAL
Apr-Feb						
A) Hotel & Accommodation	£322,438	£484,665	£502,423	£1,309,526		
B) Hospitality /		£210,602		£167,150	£56,455	£434,207
C) Catering						
D) Transport	£1,792,648	£1,505,946	£1,966,603	£5,265,197		
Grand Total	£2,325,688	£2,157,761	£2,525,481	£7,008,930		

■ Energy: Private Rented Housing

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[\[69167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 66455, which options he is considering for the implementation of the private rented property energy efficiency regulations.

Jesse Norman:

The Energy Act 2011 requires that the energy efficiency private rented property regulations come into force no later than 1 April 2018. We are working hard to ensure the regulations can be implemented as planned from this date.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has recently published guidance to landlords of non-domestic property on compliance with the minimum standard requirements, and is developing an exemptions register, as required by the Energy Efficiency Regulations 2015. We will set out the detail of how the domestic regulations will be implemented through corresponding guidance for landlords of domestic private rented property. This will be published prior to the launch of the exemptions register for domestic landlords later this year.

■ Local Enterprise Partnerships

Grahame Morris:

[\[69543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of local enterprise partnerships in delivering employment, growth and investment (a) nationally, (b) in the North East and (c) in Easington constituency.

Margot James:

Local Enterprise Partnerships are bringing together the public and private sector with universities, colleges and other local organisations, to ensure investment is made where it will generate the most jobs and growth.

The Government has invested £379.6m in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area through three rounds of Growth Deals. The Easington constituency has benefitted directly through the Horden (Peterlee) Station project and the improvement to the A19/A189 Seaham/Murton interchange. Both projects will help the residents of Easington and the North East to access new and existing job opportunities.

■ Renewable Energy: Greater London

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[69148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many accredited renewable energy generators operate in (a) Hampstead and Kilburn and (b) London in each of the last three years; and how many Renewables Levy Exemption Certifications Ofgem issued in those areas in those years.

Margot James:

The information requested is set out below, based on the postcode for the installations. For Hampstead and Kilburn, we have used the postcodes of N8, NW2, NW3, NW6, NW8, NW10, W9 and W10.

For the Renewables Obligation and the Feed-in Tariffs scheme, the “New” column shows new installations in the specified year. The “Total” columns show the cumulative number since the schemes started, in 2002 and 2010 respectively.

RENEWABLES						
OBLIGATION		NUMBER OF INSTALLATIONS GRANTED ACCREDITATION				
2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		
New	Total	New	Total	New	Total	
Hampstead and Kilburn	0	0	0	0	0	0
London	9	45	1	46	0	46
FEED-IN						
TARIFFS						
SCHEME		NUMBER OF OPERATIONAL INSTALLATIONS				

FEED-IN TARIFFS SCHEME		NUMBER OF OPERATIONAL INSTALLATIONS				
2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		
New	Total	New	Total	New	Total	
Hampstead and Kilburn	55	475	60	535	33	568
London	4,616	22,545	5,574	28,119	1,769	29,888

	LEVY EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES (LECs)		NUMBER OF LECs ISSUED	
	2015/16	2016/17		
Hampstead and Kilburn	8	4		0
London	944,803	333,854		0

■ Self-employed

Melanie Onn:

[\[69369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the recommendation of the publication of the Julie Dean Self-Employment Review, what steps he has taken to review the equal treatment and recognition for the self-employed in the last 12 months.

Melanie Onn:

[\[69370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the recommendation of the publication of the Julie Dean Self-Employment Review, what steps he has taken to calculate the effect new policies will have on the self-employed sector in the last 12 months.

Margot James:

The independent Matthew Taylor review on employment practices in a modern economy is considering the impact of non-standard working arrangements on employment status and employment rights, and as part of his review he has considered a range of available papers, including Julie Deane's Review. That review will be reporting in the summer.

We have also announced we will be looking at parental benefits for the self-employed.

■ Self-employed: Temporary Employment

Melanie Onn: [\[69371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he has taken to tackle the use of self-employed people as agency workers by businesses.

Margot James:

A self-employed individual decides how they undertake work. This could include identifying a suitable role via an agency and it is for the work-seeker and agency to agree the type of contract that they will be engaged under.

Individuals seeking work through an agency, regardless of circumstances outside of the agency relationship, are protected by the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulation 2003 and the Agency Worker Regulations 2010.

The Taylor review on modern employment practices is considering the impact of non-standard working arrangements on employment status and employment rights.

■ Social Services: Living Wage

Claire Perry: [\[69322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what analysis he has undertaken on the effect of the national living wage on the cost to the adult social care sector of employing staff on sleep-in contracts.

Margot James:

Workers who are required to be available to perform work as and when called upon are entitled to the National Living Wage (NLW) and National Minimum Wage (NMW) for the entire shift if they are deemed to be “working”. This remains the case, even if they are permitted to sleep during that shift.

The Government asks the Low Pay Commission (LPC) to monitor and evaluate the impact of the National Minimum and National Living Wage rates. The LPC carry out extensive research, consultation and analysis across a range of sectors to inform its wage rate recommendations.

The LPC autumn 2016 report, summarises its consultation with business stakeholders on the impact of the NLW and NMW. The report is available here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-minimum-wage-low-pay-commission-autumn-2016-report>

The Government also produces analysis of the NMW/NLW rates in its Impact Assessment, this projected that around 126,000 workers are affected by the April 2017 rate rises (p79). Available here - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/465/impacts>

■ Tidal Power

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[69595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of alternative forms of tidal energy generation; what the result of the modelling of those alternatives was; what assessment was made of the effect of each such alternative on (a) coastal erosion and (b) sediment build-up; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

In 2010, the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) published its feasibility assessment of a scheme to generate electricity from the tides of the Severn estuary. It found that, since the Severn estuary is highly dynamic, and without detailed information on specific projects, it was impossible to predict the impacts of the tidal power schemes surveyed with absolute certainty.

Environmental impacts, along with other relevant matters, would be considered as part of the relevant statutory planning processes when consent applications for tidal energy generation projects are submitted.

■ Tidal Power: Swansea Bay

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[69508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will provide research funding for an assessment of the potential effect of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon on 10 year fishing spawning cycles; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

The Department considers funding for a range of research activities and is carefully considering the recommendations contained in Charles Hendry's recent report on tidal lagoons.

Any decisions arising from the Review, including whether to proceed with the Swansea Bay project, will need to balance the priorities of security of supply, affordability and meeting our climate change obligations.

We understand that Natural Resources Wales are currently examining the developer's marine licence application.

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[69509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether a marine licence has been granted for the proposed development of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon.

Jesse Norman:

We understand that Natural Resource Wales are currently examining the developer's marine licence application.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Office: Internet

Justin Madders: [\[69112\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the five most visited websites were by staff of his Department in the last year for which figures are available.

Justin Madders: [\[69124\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the five most visited websites were by staff of 10 Downing Street in the last year for which figures are available.

Chris Skidmore:

The top five websites visited by Cabinet Office (incorporating the Department for Exiting the European Union and 10 Downing Street) in the past 12 months (March 2016 – March 2017) are;

1. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk>
2. <https://www.google.co.uk>
3. <http://www.bbc.co.uk>
4. <https://civilservicelearning.civilservice.gov.uk>
5. <http://www.bing.com>

■ Cabinet Office: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders: [\[69214\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much his Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Justin Madders: [\[69226\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much 10 Downing Street has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Chris Skidmore:

The Prime Minister's Office is an integral part of the Cabinet Office and is included in this reply.

The information requested is not held centrally and therefore is only available at disproportionate cost.

Spend on Travel, Subsistence and Hospitality can be found in the Cabinet Office annual report and accounts. The annual report and accounts for financial year 2010-11 to 2015-16 are accessible from the Gov.uk website and the link is below:
www.gov.uk/government/publications

■ Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster: Procurement

Jon Trickett: [\[65056\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many civil servants of his Department oversee contracts which have been awarded to external providers.

Jon Trickett: [\[65254\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many civil servants in 10 Downing Street oversee contracts which have been awarded to external providers.

Chris Skidmore:

The Prime Minister's Office is an integral part of the Cabinet Office and is included in the reply

Information on the total number of civil servants overseeing contracts awarded to external providers is not centrally held.

■ Crime: Statistics

Lyn Brown: [\[69630\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans there are to continue the statistical series Crime Statistics, Focus on Public Perceptions of Crime and the Police, and the Personal Well-being of Victims; and when he plans to publish the next such report.

Chris Skidmore:

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

Attachments:

1. Letter from UKSA [PQ 69630 v.02 (1) (1) (1).pdf]

■ Electronic Warfare

Caroline Lucas: [\[69045\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment the Government has made of the current level of threat to democracy in the UK from cyber attacks, propaganda and subversion by hostile states; and if he will make a statement.

Chris Skidmore:

The first duty of Government is to safeguard the nation, and we treat the security of our democratic processes extremely seriously.

Our system of paper balloting and hand counting means UK voting mechanisms do not lend themselves to direct electronic manipulation. However, the Government has in place a number of measures to protect the integrity of the electoral process from malign activity, including from cyber attack.

The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) offers UK organisations, including political parties, access to the best cyber security advice and support to help them

meet their responsibility to protect their information and prevent cyber attacks from all possible threats.

■ Government Departments: Digital Technology

Andrew Gwynne: [\[69619\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 23 March 2017 to Question 68394, if he will place in the Library a copy of the auditing schedule pro-forma issued to Departments to provide guidance on day-to-day digital auditing.

Chris Skidmore:

An auditing schedule pro-forma is not issued to departments but detailed guidance on the security of digital infrastructure, audit and penetration testing is freely available to all Government organisations on the National Cyber Security Centre website, available at www.ncsc.gov.uk

■ Government Departments: Staff

Louise Haigh: [\[69139\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what proportion of civil servants in each Government department are (a) under 30 and (b) over 50 years of age.

Chris Skidmore:

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

Attachments:

1. Letter from UKSA [PQ 69139.pdf]
2. PQ69139 table [PQ69139 table.xlsx]

■ Government: Databases

Tom Watson: [\[69491\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the potential benefits to the digital economy of releasing government data sets.

Chris Skidmore:

Open data is already delivering enormous value across the economy and society. The UK is a world leader in open data and we have released over 41,000 non-personal datasets, powering over 400 apps and enabling transformational change in sectors as diverse as transport, agriculture and housing. The UK is committed to being the world's most open and transparent government and the UK's third Open Government National Action plan sets out an ambitious agenda to achieve this.

■ Offences against Children

Jim Shannon: [\[69415\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many sex offences were committed against children in each of the last five years.

Chris Skidmore:

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

Attachments:

1. Letter from UKSA [PQ 69415.pdf]

■ **Public Sector: Procurement**

Tom Watson:

[\[69277\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he plans to take to support UK digital technology companies to access public sector procurement contracts.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government Transformation Strategy and the UK Digital Strategy set out how this Government will lead a step-change in procurement, making it easier than ever for digital technology companies of all sizes to access public sector procurement contacts through the Digital Marketplace.

As part of this, we will be heavily promoting the use of the Digital Marketplace by local and wider public sector bodies to lower barriers for all digital and technology suppliers. The Government's aim is that the public sector should spend at least £750 million a year with SMEs by 2020.

TREASURY

■ **Climate Change Levy**

Chris Davies:

[\[69531\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of recent changes to the climate change levy on the policy to move off-gas grid businesses away from oil, coal and other higher carbon fuels.

Jane Ellison:

As announced at Budget 2016, the Government will rebalance the Climate Change Levy (CCL) rates between energy sources from 2019-20.

In 2019-20, the electricity to gas rates will move from a ratio of 2.9:1 to 2.5:1.

Liquefied Petroleum Gas and other taxable fuel rates will be increased in proportion to the rate for gas. The Government intends to further rebalance the electricity to gas ratio to 1:1 by 2025.

This continues to ensure that the CCL encourages the efficient use of energy by businesses and reduces emissions by creating incentives to source electricity from renewable sources.

■ Import Duties

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg: [\[69548\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will place in the Library a full list of tariffed commodities with their identifying codes and their annual revenues for 2015.

Jane Ellison:

The full list of tariffs is contained in the Integrated Tariff of the United Kingdom, which publishes the schedule of duty rates for over 16,600 commodities. This information is available online here:

www.gov.uk/trade-tariff/sections

Specific information relating to the revenue yield for each commodity code is not collated in a readily available format by HM Revenue and Customs.

■ Landfill Communities Fund

Richard Burden: [\[69589\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the level of funding for the Landfill Communities Fund; and what proportion of the landfill tax will be allocated to providing that funding in each of the next five years.

Jane Ellison:

For 2017-18, the value of the LCF has been set at £39.3 million. As a result, the cap on contributions from landfill operators has been increased from 4.2% to 5.3%. The Government expects to maintain this higher 5.3% cap for future years, but this expectation assumes we see continued progress from environmental bodies in terms of reducing administrative costs and the level of unspent funds.

■ Minimum Wage

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69202\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) cases of national minimum wage compliance the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) National Minimum Wage Risk Unit has investigated, (b) notices of underpayment have been issued to employers for that non-compliance, (c) employers have been fined the maximum amount for non-compliance and (d) employers have been taken to civil court or an employment tribunal by HMRC for failing to comply with the terms of a notice of underpayment in (i) 2015-16 and (ii) 2016-17.

Jane Ellison:

The Government is determined that everyone who is entitled to the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) receives them. Anyone who feels they have been underpaid NMW or NLW should contact the Acas helpline on 0300 123 1100. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) reviews all complaints that are referred to the department.

In 2015/16, HMRC completed 2667 investigations, identifying 958 instances of non-compliance. In 2016/17, up to 30 September 2016, HMRC had completed 1420 investigations, identifying 521 instances of non-compliance.

HMRC do not hold data on Employment Tribunals and action taken through civil courts in a format that would enable provision of the statistics requested.

■ Overseas Trade

Richard Graham: [\[69153\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many UK companies there are with Authorised Economic Operator status.

Richard Graham: [\[69154\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many companies have applied for Authorised Economic Operator status in each of the last five years.

Richard Graham: [\[69241\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the average length of time taken to process an application for Authorised Economic Operator status was in each year of the last five years; and whether there are target times for the processing of such applications.

Jane Ellison:

On 28 March 2017 the UK had 667 businesses holding Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) status.

During the last five complete calendar years the number of applications received by HM Revenue and Customs and the average time taken to issue a decision are as follows:

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Applications received	55	45	58	91	300
Average time taken to issue a decision (days)	123	96	124	120	128

As of 28 March 2017, there had been 32 UK AEO applications received for 2017. There has been a significant increase in applications since the introduction of the Union Customs Code from 1 May 2016.

The Union Customs Code provides a period of 120 days for an AEO decision to be issued. A further 60 day extension is allowed where the customs authority considers it necessary, providing a total of 180 days if required.

■ Third Sector: Tax Allowances

Caroline Lucas: [\[69071\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has received any advice on the admissibility of Social Investment Tax Relief for community-owned renewable energy projects under EU State Aid Rules from the European Commission or other relevant organisations.

Jane Ellison:

At Autumn Statement 2015 the Government announced the exclusion of all energy generation, including community energy projects, from the tax advantaged venture capital schemes with effect from 6 April 2016 and from the Social Investment Tax Relief (SITR) scheme when it is enlarged. The SITR scheme will be enlarged with effect from 6 April 2017 under the provisions of the Finance (No. 2) Bill. This was a domestic policy decision, taken in response to strong and growing evidence of such investments being used for tax planning.

■ Tobacco: Smuggling

Martyn Day: [\[69165\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 16 January 2017 to Question 58873, what the timetable is for formal ratification of the World Health Organisation Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products.

Martyn Day: [\[69336\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the announcement in the Spring Budget 2017 on the use and ownership of tobacco manufacturing machinery, whether the Government will ratify the World Health Organisation Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products.

Jane Ellison:

A Command Paper setting out the UK's plans to ratify the World Health Organisation Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products can be laid before Parliament once all the Primary legislation to fully implement the Protocol has been approved by Parliament.

While the UK already has many of the Protocol's requirements in place, the requirement to license tobacco manufacturing machinery has not yet been implemented. Legislation to accomplish this is included in the Finance (No.2) Bill.

■ Transfer Pricing

Margaret Hodge: [\[69072\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has discontinued the publication of annual transfer pricing statistics.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs has not discontinued the publication of these statistics.

The Department intends to publish the transfer pricing statistics shortly.

■ Treasury: Internet

Justin Madders:

[\[69127\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the five most visited websites were by staff of his Department in the last year for which figures are available.

Simon Kirby:

Due to the manner in which access to individual website pages is recorded, the information requested could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Treasury: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders:

[\[69228\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much his Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Simon Kirby:

The breakdown of costs for the last five years for hotels, hospitality, food and drink and transport in the last five years can be found in the table below.

FINANCIAL YEAR	HOTEL	HOSPITALITY	TRANSPORT
2012-13	£111,255	£6,224	£1,003,825
2013-14	£154,516	£12,568	£1,095,945
2014-15	£149,207	£8,994	£1,097,983
2015-16	£159,673	£24,133	£1,164,983
2016-17*	£180,126	£11,030	£1,248,062

*the 2016-17 costs does not reflect the complete financial year as March 2017 figures are not yet available.

The information requested for food and drink cannot be provided within the disproportionate costs threshold.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Communities and Local Government: Internet

Justin Madders: [\[69113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the five most visited websites were by staff of his Department in the last year for which figures are available.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Department for Communities and Local Government does not hold this information in the format requested.

■ Empty Property: Easington

Grahame Morris: [\[67600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will provide financial support to bring back into use derelict properties in Easington constituency.

Gavin Barwell:

The number of empty homes in England is at its lowest since records began. At May 2010 over 300,000 homes in England had been standing empty for longer than 6 months. As of October 2015, the number had fallen to 203,596.

Local authorities already have powers and incentives to tackle empty homes. Through the New Homes Bonus they earn the same financial reward for bringing an empty home back into use as building a new one. They also have flexibility to impose council tax on empty homes with the power to impose a premium, of up to 50 per cent (on top of the council tax bill), on properties that have been empty for more than two years. We have extended permitted development rights to make it easier to convert property from business to residential to give new life to thousands of empty buildings.

The £32 million Estate Regeneration Fund is being distributed to local authorities and housing associations across England to support refurbishment and redevelopment of thousands of homes across 100 housing estates. The funding will be used to speed up schemes in their early stages, improve engagement with residents, address problems that hold up projects and give local authorities access to skills to ensure high-quality regeneration.

■ Forests and Trees: Conservation

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[69533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans the Government has to update paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework to improve protection for woods and trees.

Gavin Barwell:

Paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides strong protection for irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and veteran trees.

We are consulting on placing our policy on ancient woodland and veteran trees alongside other national policies, for example Green Belt, which the government regards as providing a strong reason to restrict development when preparing plans, or which indicate that development should be restricted when making decisions on planning applications.

The consultation closes on 2 May, and is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/fixing-our-broken-housing-market-consultation>.

■ Landlords: Regulation

Andrew Stephenson:

[68702]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to (a) promote responsible letting and (b) deal with rogue landlords.

Gavin Barwell:

The Government is committed to building a strong private rented sector, which provides security and stability for both tenants and landlords.

To promote responsible lettings, we have issued 'How to Rent' guidance on gov.uk and made it a legal requirement, since 1 October 2014, for letting and managing agents in England to belong to one of the three Government approved redress schemes, which offer a clear route for landlords and tenants to pursue complaints. The Government announced at Autumn Statement 2016 a ban on letting agent fees paid by tenants, to improve competition in the private rental market and give renters greater clarity and control over what they will pay. And most recently, the Government announced on 28 March that we will make Client Money Protection mandatory for letting and managing agents that handle client money; this will ensure that every agent is giving tenants and landlords the financial protection that they deserve.

The Government is committed to taking action to tackle rogue landlords and agents; the Housing & Planning Act 2016 introduced further powers to help crack down on rogue landlords, including a database of rogue landlords and property agents, banning orders for the most serious and prolific offenders, civil penalties of up to £30,000 and extended rent repayment orders.

■ Leasehold Advisory Service

Justin Madders:

[64504]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make it his policy to require whoever is Chair of the Leasehold Advisory Service to have no business interests in the leasehold sector.

Gavin Barwell:

[Holding answer 23 February 2017]: The terms and conditions of appointment confirm that the Chair of the Leasehold Advisory Service must declare any personal or business interests which may, or may be perceived to, influence their judgements in performing their functions. These interests are included in a register of interests maintained by LEASE which the Chair is obliged to keep up to date. Should a particular matter give rise to conflict of interest, the Chair is required to inform the Board in advance and withdraw from discussions or consideration of the matter. With these safeguards in place we do not consider it necessary to require the Chair to have no business interests in the leasehold sector.

Justin Madders:

[\[64505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make it his policy to require at least one member of the Board of the Leasehold Advisory Service to be an independent representative of leaseholders.

Gavin Barwell:

[Holding answer 23 February 2017]: The main purpose of the Leasehold Advisory Service is to support leaseholders by providing impartial free initial advice. It is desirable for Board members of the Leasehold Advisory Service to have knowledge or experience of the housing sector, particularly issues that affect the residential leasehold sector. However, there is no current or planned requirement for at least one member of the Board of the Leasehold Advisory Service to be an independent representative of leaseholders.

■ Letting Agents: Fees and Charges

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[69338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 25 January 2017 to Question 60219, whether he has set a date to introduce legislative proposals to ban letting agent fees; and on what date he will begin consultation on details of that ban.

Gavin Barwell:

The Government intends to implement the ban on letting agent fees paid by tenants as soon as Parliamentary time allows further to consultation with the sector on the detail of the ban. The consultation will be launched imminently.

■ Newts

Caroline Lucas:

[\[69431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to 2.27 of the Housing White Paper, if he will set out the (a) timeline and (b) process for implementing the new approach to the licensing system for great crested newts; and what additional funding will be available to (i) his Department, (ii) the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and (iii) Natural England to support that implementation.

Gavin Barwell:

The roll-out of the new strategic approach to great crested newt licencing will begin in Kent in 2017-18 and the wider nationwide roll-out to other affected local authority areas will be set up over three years beginning in 2017-18.

Within this timescale, Natural England will consider district licences for 150 local authority areas. This will be based on an assessment of the impact of the development plan and evidence on the distribution of the great crested newt across the district. To achieve this, Natural England is currently working with partners including local authorities, developers, land owners, environmental specialists and conservation groups. The new approach needs no amendments to legislation.

The Department for Communities and Local Government has identified £90,000 of funding within existing budgets for Natural England to support the implementation of the new strategic approach in Kent. The Department for Communities and Local Government will be identifying funding for the nationwide roll-out of the new approach. On-going funding for the schemes will be covered by developer contributions for using the strategic mitigation.

■ Public Lavatories: Disability

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[64049]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to increase the number of Changing Places toilet facilities in public places.

Gavin Barwell:

[Holding answer 22 February 2017]: Government recognises the importance of Changing Places toilets and has worked with organisations such as MENCAP, PAMIS, and the British Toilet Association to support increased voluntary provision over recent years. Since 2007, when the Department for Communities and Local Government became involved with Changing Places toilets, the number of Changing Places in the UK has increased from around 140 to more than 925 today.

For large building developments, guidance on Changing Places was introduced in to Part M (Access to and use of buildings) of the Building Regulations in England in 2013 which states that:

"In large building developments separate facilities for baby changing and an enlarged unisex toilet incorporating an adult changing table are desirable. Facilities incorporating adult changing tables are more commonly known as Changing Places toilets and further guidance is available from the Changing Places Campaign website (www.changing-places.org) or by reference to guidance in section 12.7 and Annex G of BS8300"

Government has also helped people find Changing Places toilet facilities more easily by funding development of a website providing information on the location and details of every registered Changing Place in the UK.

■ Social Services: South Yorkshire

Michael Dugher: [69372]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to paragraph 5.5 of Spring Budget 2017, what estimate his Department has made of how much of the £2 billion of social care funding will be allocated to (a) Barnsley and (b) South Yorkshire.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Department published the allocations for the distribution of the additional funding for adult social care announced at the Spring Budget 2017 online on 9 March, together with an Explanatory Note concerning distribution.

This is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-allocations-of-the-additional-funding-for-adult-social-care>.

■ Starter Home Initiative

Tulip Siddiq: [69293]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many starter homes were built in (a) 2015 and (b) 2016.

Gavin Barwell:

Starter homes form an important part of our action to help over 200,000 people become home owners by the end of the Parliament as set out in our Housing White Paper: *Fixing Our Broken Housing Market*. We have made strong progress developing a framework for starter homes through the Housing and Planning Act 2016; planning reforms; and the £1.2 billion starter homes land fund. We expect the first starter homes to start being built later in 2017.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Business: Data Protection

Louise Haigh: [69146]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate she has made of the number of accounting entities in the UK that exchange data with other such entities in other EU countries.

Matt Hancock:

Large amounts of data are exchanged between the UK and other EU countries. However, it is currently not possible to measure by entity the exact volume or the origin/destination of the data.

■ Charitable Donations

Thangam Debbonaire:

[69157]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the effect on charitable donations of the Information Commissioner's Office investigation into wealth screening by fundraising services.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The Information Commissioner's Office's investigations into charities' fundraising practices, including wealth screening, have focused on non-compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003. We have not made an assessment of any effect on charitable donations resulting from compliance with existing law.

■ Cultural Heritage: North East

Grahame Morris:

[68932]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many artefacts and items held by the (a) National Gallery, (b) British Museum and (c) British Library relate to or have their origin in the North East of England.

Matt Hancock:

The information requested about these museums' collections is not available at this level of detail, due to their size and complexity. However, the British Museum and the British Library do hold significant artefacts with a connection to the North East of England, such as the Vindolanda Tablets in the BM and the Lindisfarne Gospels in the BL.

■ Cybercrime

Andrew Gwynne:

[68382]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 28 February 2017 to Question 64527, when the next regular review of all cyber security standards will be conducted.

Matt Hancock:

The Government keeps the material relating to cyber security standards for which it is responsible - such as the Cyber Essentials scheme - under regular review and updates it as and when required.

For example, following industry and customer feedback, the requirements for the Cyber Essentials scheme were recently updated and can be found at:

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/requirements-it-infrastructure-cyber-essentials-scheme>

The vast majority of technical standards are owned and driven by industry, for example the ISO 27001 range of standards on cyber security. These standards are

usually global in nature, and governments are part of the debate amongst many industry voices when it comes to reviewing and/or amending a given standard.

■ Data Protection

Louise Haigh: [\[69143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Government has conducted contingency planning in the event that the UK does not secure a data adequacy decision with the EU prior to exiting the EU.

Louise Haigh: [\[69326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with her European counterparts on securing a data adequacy agreement with the EU.

Matt Hancock:

As negotiations to leave the EU have not begun, it would be inappropriate to speculate in any detail as to what arrangements we will seek to put in place.

Our objective is to ensure continued data flows between the EU and countries outside the EEA once the UK leaves the EU. In doing so we will be considering all the available options that will provide legal certainty for businesses and citizens alike.

Louise Haigh: [\[69144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Government has reached a decision on whether to support the European Commission in the case of *La quadrature du Net and Others v Commission T-738/16*.

Matt Hancock:

The UK Government has formally intervened in the legal challenge to the EU-US Privacy Shield Agreement lodged at the General Court of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the case of *La Quadrature du Net and others v Commission (Case T-738/16)*.

The UK Government will support the Commission in favour of the EU-US Privacy Shield Decision, against the legal challenge.

Louise Haigh: [\[69145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has held discussions with multinational companies operating within the UK on implementing binding corporate rules in order to enable the flow of personal data after the UK leaves the EU.

Matt Hancock:

We have had various discussions with multinational companies operating within the UK, which among other things, have included discussions on future data flows between the UK and EU.

■ Data Protection: EU Law

Louise Haigh:

[69286]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment the Government has made of the implications of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of *S. and Marper vs United Kingdom* on the UK's ability to secure a data adequacy agreement with the EU.

Matt Hancock:

Our objective is to ensure unhindered data flows between the EU and the UK once the UK leaves the EU. In doing so we will be considering all the available options that will provide legal certainty for businesses and citizens alike.

■ Databases

Amanda Milling:

[69444]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will take steps to map the provision of data centres in England and Wales.

Matt Hancock:

There are several organisations, such as Colo-X, who make freely available, up-to-date maps of commercial colocation data centres in the UK. These maps can be found at: <http://www.colo-x.com/data-centre-database-map/>

■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Brexit

Maria Eagle:

[68518]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 7 March 2017 to Question 65637, non Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Brexit, what (a) EU agencies and other organisations are within her Department's remit, (b) staff time was spent on engagement with those bodies and (c) financial resources were spent on engagement with those bodies in 2015-16.

Matt Hancock:

The following EU agencies and other organisations are within DCMS' remit:

- European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA)
- The Office of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (the BEREC Office)
- European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGAMS)
- Data Protection Supervisor
- European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI)
- Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)

■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Procurement

Louise Haigh: [\[69188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, which projects within her Department have been awarded an amber rating by the Infrastructure Projects Authority at the time of the most recent award.

Tom Watson:

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority gave the 700 MHz Spectrum Clearance programme an Amber Delivery confidence rating in June 2016. This reflected the fact that the programme was in the start up phase and that the completion date for the programme had not been confirmed. The programme has now move into the delivery stage. We expect it to be completed by mid 2020 subject to a review in the Autumn. We have invited IPA will review the programme again later this year.

■ Department of Energy and Climate Change: Staff

Louise Haigh: [\[69140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what proportion of civil servants in her Department are (a) under 30 and (b) over 50 years of age.

Matt Hancock:

a) 24% of civil servants are aged under 30

b) 19% of civil servants are aged over 50, that is aged at least 51.

The figures above include permanent and fixed term employees as well as loans/secondments in to the department and employees on paid maternity leave. The data was sampled on 1st February 2017.

■ Digital technology: Training

Louise Haigh: [\[69066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2017 to Question 66826, on digital technology: training, what estimate her Department has made of the number of adults who lack core digital skills who will be able to receive training through the Digital Skills Entitlement throughout its duration.

Matt Hancock:

The Digital Skills Entitlement will ensure that adults who lack core digital skills can access specified basic digital skills training free of charge where it is made available as part of the publicly funded adult education offer. The level at which this entitlement will be set is still to be decided and we will consult in due course.

■ Digital Technology: Training

Louise Haigh:

[\[69235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2017 to Question 66826, how many of the 4 million digital technology training opportunities referred to in that Answer will be providing basic digital skills.

Matt Hancock:

We envisage that a significant proportion of the 4 million digital skills training opportunities that were pledged by industry in the UK Digital Strategy will focus on the basic digital skills that individuals need to benefit from being online. These includes pledges made by Lloyds Banking Group to provide face to face training for 2.5 million individuals, as well as SMEs and charities in digital skills - including internet banking and Barclays to expand the number of its digital eagles which help people build their internet skills.

■ Electronic Commerce

Tom Watson:

[\[69281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether she has met local councils to discuss making empty buildings available for use by digital start-ups.

Matt Hancock:

DCMS awarded Manchester, Leeds, and Sheffield councils over £11m of grant funding in March 2016 to refurbish existing buildings to establish and develop new work space, business incubation and other services for entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) based in the North of England whose ambitions and business models rely on digital technologies and their applications. My officials regularly meet with their counterparts to discuss progress with these projects.

The Government encourages Local Authorities to think creatively about actions they can take to contribute to the vitality and vibrancy of our town centres. Specifically, local authorities can act as a focal point for economic regeneration efforts in local areas, including making better use of the public sector estate to provide a place for business incubators.

■ Gaming Machines

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[69384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 16 December 2016 to Question 57400, on what date she plans to publish the results of the call for evidence on the Review of Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility Measures.

Tracey Crouch:

We will publish findings and any proposals in due course.

■ Mobile Phones: Competition

Chi Onwurah: [\[69435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the effect of the UK leaving the EU on competition between mobile providers.

Matt Hancock:

The UK's negotiations for exiting the EU are complex and the Government is focused on securing the right deal for Britain. We continue to engage with businesses and key stakeholders. We will listen to their concerns, aim to limit uncertainty in the transition and ensure our new relationship with the EU works for business and consumers.

■ Sports: Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy

Chris Evans: [\[69521\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what advice her Department provides to (a) national governing bodies and (b) medical services on concussion sustained in sporting activities.

Chris Evans: [\[69522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what research her Department has undertaken into the occurrence of chronic traumatic encephalopathy in professional athletes.

Chris Evans: [\[69523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many cases of chronic traumatic encephalopathy have been reported by (a) sports national governing bodies and (b) national medical services in the last five years.

Tracey Crouch:

The Government takes player safety seriously in all sports. I expect National Governing Bodies, as the designated authorities with responsibility to regulate their sport, to monitor and act upon player safety as their highest priority, and be able to demonstrate how they are complying with all the relevant health and safety regulations and practices.

The department does not provide advice to medical services on concussion or on the comparative health risks resulting from taking part in major sports.

Medical research into injuries sustained in certain sports is being carried out by staff at the English Institute of Sport, and work in this area is to be published in the near future. However, this will not focus specifically on chronic traumatic encephalopathy.

National Governing Bodies with significant risk of this type of injury in their sport put appropriate plans in place, issue guidance across their membership such as recent RFU and FA publications, and set elite level protocols, as the designated authorities with responsibility to regulate their sport.

In addition, the department is a member of the Sport and Recreation Alliance's Forum on Concussion which aims to raise awareness and support professionals, students, parents and volunteers to be able to deal better with incidents of concussion.

■ Telecommunications: Infrastructure

Grant Shapps: [\[69524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to incentivise innovation in internet communications infrastructure.

Matt Hancock:

The Government is committed to creating a world-leading digital economy with connectivity wherever people live, travel and work. As part of this, we are investing £1.1bn to boost the UK's digital infrastructure and encourage innovation, including £200m to develop ways to accelerate market delivery of new full fibre broadband networks. Alongside the Spring 2017 Budget, we announced our new 5G Strategy setting out steps for the UK to become a world leader in the next wave of mobile technology. The Budget also included up to £16m for leading UK research institutions to cooperate on a cutting edge 5G facility to trial and demonstrate this exciting technology.

We have also conducted seven pilot projects to test different approaches to providing superfast broadband in the hardest to reach areas, forging new, innovative partnerships and showing that smaller suppliers can successfully deliver infrastructure. In addition, the government continues to work with industry to identify and reduce barriers to deployment of communications infrastructure and we have made significant progress, such as reducing planning burdens and introducing a new 100% business rates relief for new full fibre infrastructure for five years.

■ Voluntary Work: Young People

Philip Davies: [\[69622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what the cost per young person is of the National Citizenship Service programme.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The January 2017 NAO report stated that the National Citizen Service (NCS) cost £1,825 per place for the 2015 programme. This figure took account of both provider costs and NCS Trust costs.

The recently published independent evaluation of the 2015 programme took a different approach and focused only on provider costs. For the summer 2015 NCS programme, this cost per place was £1,620.

We recognise that, as the programme continues to expand, there is a need to focus on reducing the overall unit cost of NCS to drive better value for money. This will continue to be a key focus for the DCMS and the Trust as the programme grows.

DEFENCE

■ Afghanistan: Interpreters

Jim Shannon: [\[69419\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps the Government is taking to ensure the safety in Afghanistan of Afghan interpreters who previously worked for the Government.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Government recognises the vital role local staff, including interpreters, played in operations in Afghanistan, and its debt of gratitude to them. As part of that, we have a permanent expert team based in Kabul to investigate claims from local staff who believe their safety is threatened as a result of their work with the UK. They assist with security advice, relocations to safe areas within Afghanistan and, where necessary, relocation to the UK.

■ Armed Forces: Housing

Douglas Chapman: [\[69280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) service family accommodation dwellings and (b) single living accommodation bed spaces there are in (i) England, (ii) Scotland, (iii) Wales and (iv) Northern Ireland.

Harriett Baldwin:

The quantities of Service Family Accommodation dwellings are shown below as of March 2017.

	NUMBER OF SERVICE FAMILY ACCOMMODATION
England	43,616
Wales	1,087
Scotland	3,279
Northern Ireland	1,566
Total	49,548

The approximate quantities of Single Living Accommodation bed spaces are shown below as of 2016.

	NUMBER OF SINGLE LIVING ACCOMMODATION
England	113,100
Wales	2,600

	NUMBER OF SINGLE LIVING ACCOMMODATION
Scotland	7,700
Northern Ireland	2,600
Total	126,000

■ Armed Forces: Nuclear Engineering

Nia Griffith: [\[69628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many of the pinch point trades his Department is monitoring relate to nuclear; and what the (a) liability, (b) strength and (c) shortfalls in real numbers and percentage figures are for those trades.

Harriett Baldwin:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer my hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Veterans, Reserves and Personnel (Mark Lancaster) gave on 26 January 2017 to Question 61198 to the hon. Member for North Durham (Mr Jones).

Attachments:

1. 61198 - WQnA extract on Armed Forces
[20170126_61198_WQnA_extract_on_Armed_Forces.docx]

■ Armed Forces: Pay

Nia Griffith: [\[69623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraph 2.73 of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body 46th Report, what steps his Department is taking to promote cohesion between Regulars and Reserves as part of the Whole Force approach.

Mark Lancaster:

The Services are committed to achieving culture change to break down barriers between Regulars and Reserves and improve cohesion. This is being addressed through a number of programmes.

We continue to invest in more integrated training and in equipment for the Reserves. Reserves have access to the same equipment and technology as Regulars across all the Services. Army Reserve Units are now commonly paired with Regular Units and train alongside them using the same modern equipment and, when required, may also deploy with them. The Army also employs individual reservists alongside Regular personnel, for example in intelligence roles. The Maritime and RAF Reserves are most often used to provide individuals and small teams for specific roles. Their training is designed to integrate them with the Regulars.

We have streamlined the process for transferring from the Regulars to the Reserves to enable people with key skills to share their knowledge and expertise. We are also

actively working to identify any policy or process issues that may hinder the use of reservists and to remove these barriers wherever possible.

We have developed a set of indicators of culture change and we have put in place a process through which the Services will assess their progress against these indicators and provide evidence of that progress to senior leadership in the Department. This will allow the Ministry of Defence to identify and share examples of good practice as well as issues to be addressed.

These initiatives have begun to have a positive effect. In the 2016 Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey, almost two thirds of Regulars who had served alongside Reservists rated them as professional, with a similar number rating the Reserves' contribution as valuable. This is a firm foundation on which we can build and we are working to do so.

■ Armed Forces: Training

Nia Griffith:

[\[69593\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraph 2.9 of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body 46th Report, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that service personnel are trained to service and repair newly acquired equipment.

Harriett Baldwin:

The single Services are required to consider the impact of any new equipment or upgrade across all the Defence Lines of Development (DLODs). One of these is the training DLOD. Consequently, when new equipment is introduced or upgraded there is a requirement for a training needs analysis which breaks down new training requirement(s). This looks at any training gap against current training and develops training solutions, and recommends an optimal one based on cost, benefit and risk. This process is conducted in accordance with the defence systems approach to training process, which is governed by a steering group of stakeholders from across the DLODs who endorse the training solution and then ensure any required changes are implemented.

■ Babcock International

Brendan O'Hara:

[\[69530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has agreed not to enforce the Key Performance Indicators with Babcock while the current industrial action is underway.

Harriett Baldwin:

We do not comment on the detailed terms and conditions of the contractual arrangements with our suppliers as to do so would prejudice the commercial interests of the parties involved.

■ Islamic State

Tom Brake: [\[69549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what strategic and tactical changes have been made to coalition operations against Daesh since the inauguration of President Trump.

Harriett Baldwin:

In March 2017, US Secretary of State Tillerson hosted the first meeting of all 68 members of the Global Coalition against Daesh since 2015, reaffirming the determination to intensify and accelerate operations to defeat Daesh militarily, stabilise liberated areas, disrupt the flow of foreign fighters, disrupt Daesh's finances, and to counter their propaganda, working with and through local forces.

■ Middle East: Islamic State

Tom Brake: [\[69517\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has made any changes to the definition of civilian casualty in relation to British military action against Daesh in Iraq and Syria since 1 January 2017.

Harriett Baldwin:

No.

Tom Brake: [\[69625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many civilians have been killed or injured by British airstrikes against Daesh in Iraq and Syria since 1 January 2017.

Harriett Baldwin:

We have not seen any evidence that UK airstrikes have been responsible for causing civilian casualties in Iraq or Syria since 1 January 2017. After each strike, we perform a detailed battle damage assessment which includes video evidence which is used to assess the success of the mission.

None of the allegations we have received so far have been found to contain any evidence that RAF airstrikes have caused civilian casualties. While no military operations come without risk, we take all steps necessary to minimise the risk of causing civilian casualties and avoidable damage to civilian infrastructure. All weapons employed by RAF aircraft are delivered in strict accordance with the Law of Armed Conflict and within rigorous Rules of Engagement.

■ Ministry of Defence: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders: [\[69216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Harriett Baldwin:

It is not possible to separate out hotel expenditure from food and drink expenditure.

The table below shows the total Ministry of Defence (MOD) spend on accommodation and subsistence for financial years 2010-11 to 2014-15.

MOD EXPENDITURE ON ACCOMMODATION AND SUBSISTENCE

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
£85,886,070	£76,440,645	£80,739,551	£80,013,645	£78,769,706

The amount spent on hospitality is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The MOD's expenditure on travel and transport for financial years 2010-11 to 2014-15 is shown in the table below.

MOD EXPENDITURE ON TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
£193,872,171	£191,504,947	£185,243,712	£132,405,520	£142,696,241

All staff incurring business expenses of any kind must demonstrate the highest standards of financial propriety and a level of restraint that is commensurate with being a Crown Servant, and sensitive to the need to give full value for money to the taxpayer and maximise the funding available for the front line. The MOD has driven down spending on business travel from around £300 million in 2009-10 to around £200 million a year now.

■ Ministry of Defence: Public Expenditure

Douglas Chapman:

[\[69279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department has spent in (a) England, (b) Scotland, (c) Wales and (d) Northern Ireland in each year since 2012.

Harriett Baldwin:

The following table shows the Ministry of Defence (MOD) expenditure with UK industry in current prices broken down by region for financial years 2013-14 to 2015-16.

Financial Year (£million)	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
England	16,698	16,736	16,275

Scotland	1,303	1,393	1,507
Wales	765	924	870
Northern Ireland	106	111	92

Figures in this table have been rounded to the nearest £1 million.

The MOD does not hold the data for 2011-12 and 2012-13 because the Department stopped making estimates of regional direct expenditure after 2007-08 as they did not directly support our policymaking or military operations. In 2015-16 these statistics were reintroduced in order to help monitor some of the initiatives set out in the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review. A new methodology was developed and applied to the most recent three complete Financial Years. Data for 2016-17 will be published later in 2017 and annually thereafter.

■ Ministry of Defence: Staff

Nia Griffith:

[\[69617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many engineering graduates and apprentices have been recruited to his Department's civilian workforce and trained as nuclear specialists in each of the last five years.

Harriett Baldwin:

This data is not routinely collated but it is estimated that the number of engineering graduates and apprentices that have been recruited or migrated into the Ministry of Defence's civilian workforce, specifically to train in nuclear specialisms, has grown from fewer than 10 to around 30 per year since 2012.

■ Reserve Forces: Pay

Nia Griffith:

[\[69592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraph 2.68 of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body 46th Report, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on tax codes for Reserves; and what steps his Department is taking to review that matter.

Harriett Baldwin:

Ministry of Defence (MOD) and HM Treasury officials have been working together since 2015 to improve processes for Reservist personnel, particularly for those mobilising from and demobilising back into civilian employment. As a result, new internal procedures have been introduced and guidance and instructions issued.

The MOD will continue to review the impact of this revised guidance on Reservist personnel to ensure the new guidelines are operating effectively and see if any further improvements are required. Current guidance on the rights and

responsibilities of Reservists and employers, including payroll reporting, can be found at the following address: <https://www.gov.uk/employee-reservist>

EDUCATION

■ Children: Communication Skills

Michael Dugher: [\[69373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of children did not meet the required standards in speech and language by key stage 1 in (a) Barnsley East constituency, (b) Barnsley, (c) Yorkshire and Humber and (d) the UK in the latest period for which figures are available.

Nick Gibb:

While speech and language are important components of the English National Curriculum and assessments, the Department only collects data of an overall expected standard in reading and writing. Information on the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading and writing is published at national, regional and local authority level as part of the "Phonics screening check and Key Stage 1 assessment" statistical first release.^[1]

Parliamentary constituency level information is not available.

The Department for Education produces statistics on England only. The responsibility for education statistics in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales lies with each devolved administration.

[1] KS1 for 2015/16:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/577812/SFR42_2016_KS1_LA_tables.xlsx (Table 18 by local authorities')

■ Design and Technology: GCE A-level

Tom Watson: [\[69655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of students eligible for free school meals have taken A-level design and technology in each of the last five years.

Tom Watson: [\[69656\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of students eligible for free school meals have taken A-level computer science in each of the last five years.

Nick Gibb:

The Department does not hold information on free school meal (FSM) eligibility for students at the end of A-Level.

The number of students entered for design & technology and computing A levels at the end of A-Level study is published according to their FSM eligibility at school 3 years previously in the underlying data of the 'A level attainment by pupil characteristics' transparency data ^[1].

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-level-attainment-by-pupil-characteristics>

Tom Watson: [\[69657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of students eligible for free school meals have taken GCSE design and technology in each of the last five years.

Tom Watson: [\[69658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of students eligible for free school meals have taken GCSE computer science in each of the last five years.

Nick Gibb:

The tables below provide the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals with entries in computer science and design and technology GCSEs[1] in each of the last five years.

Entries to design and technology GCSEs by FSM status

State funded schools

Pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 (Excluding further education colleges)

Years 2012 to 2016

2016 data is revised all other years are final

PUPILS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS			
Design and Technology[2]	Number of pupils	Number of pupils entered	Percentage of pupils
2012	80,190	23,518	29
2013	85,174	23,364	27
2014	80,627	23,188	29
2015	76,460	21,591	28
2016	72,350	18,846	26

Source: Key Stage 4 attainment data

Entries to computer science GCSEs by FSM status

State funded schools

Pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 (Excluding further education colleges)

Years 2012 to 2016

2016 data is revised all other years are final

PUPILS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS			
Computer Science	Number of pupils	Number of pupils entered	Percentage of pupils
2012	80,190	75	0
2013	85,174	331	0
2014	80,627	1,510	2
2015	76,460	2,962	4
2016	72,350	6,121	8

Source: Key Stage 4 attainment data

[1] Based on GCSE examinations only - excludes equivalents.

[2] Design and Technology entries includes at least one of D&T Electronic products, Food Technology, Graphic Materials, Systems & Control, Textiles Technology, Technology engineering or Product Design.

■ Higher Education: Expenditure

Angela Rayner: [\[69237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills spent on higher education in the 2015-16 financial year.

Joseph Johnson:

This information is available in the Department for Business Innovation and Skills Annual Report and Accounts. Relevant disclosures can be found in the notes to the Statement of Parliamentary Supply on page 115 available online here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bis-annual-report-and-accounts-2015-to-2016>

■ Overseas Students

Martyn Day: [\[69378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that the UK continues to attract international students to study at its universities.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government values the significant contribution that international students make to the UK's universities. We welcome genuine students, and we have no plans to introduce a cap on intake for study. The Government also recognises the benefit that education exports bring to the UK and we want to maximise the opportunities for UK providers in this area. As such, we promote study in the UK through the 'Britain is GREAT' marketing campaign and also through the British Council, which promotes

UK education in over 100 countries, connecting millions of people with the United Kingdom. The UK continues to punch above its weight in terms of market share of international students, attracting the highest numbers after the USA.

■ Overseas Students: Loans

Mrs Anne Main:

[67721]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 65926, on overseas students: loans, for what reason there was an increase in the outstanding balance from 2014-15 to 2015-16; and for what reasons the 18 per cent increase in the outstanding balance sits alongside an 11 per cent increase in the amount lent.

Joseph Johnson:

The total amount loaned out as English student loans in the financial year 2015-16 increased by 11% compared to the financial year 2014-15 due to increasing numbers of students receiving support and a higher proportion of those students being entitled to more financial support as they are on post-2012 tuition fee loan arrangements.

The main reason the outstanding balance of English student loans was 18% higher at the end of the financial year 2015-16 was that more was loaned out (and therefore added to the outstanding balance) than was repaid in the financial year 2015-16.

A more complete breakdown of the English student loan book can be found in table 1 of the Student Loans Company (SLC) Statistical First Release (SFR) Student Loans in England.

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

■ Pre-school Education: Apprentices

Michael Tomlinson:

[69156]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that apprentices currently enrolled on the Early Years Educator programme are able to obtain their Level 3 qualification by fulfilling the requirement of A* to C grades in GCSE English and mathematics.

Michael Tomlinson:

[69162]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that the Skills Funding Agency website reflects the latest guidance on entry requirements for early years educators.

Robert Halfon:

Individuals cannot complete and claim certification for any apprenticeship, including the Early Years Educator (EYE) programme, until all components of the apprenticeship (including English and Maths, where appropriate) are achieved.

The current GCSE English and Maths requirements for EYE staff at level 3 have been broadened to include level 2 functional skills alongside other suitable qualifications. This is in response to the government consultation on the literacy and numeracy requirements for EYE staff and as part of the early years workforce strategy.

The Skills Funding Agency will amend the relevant web pages, apprenticeship funding rules and the Individualised Learner Record validation rules accordingly so that anyone who started an early years apprenticeship on or after 1 September 2014 can now meet English and Maths requirements through the achievement of level 2 functional skills or other suitable qualifications.

■ Pupils: Per Capita Costs

Michael Dugher: [69374]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much was spent on average per pupil in schools in (a) Barnsley East constituency, (b) Putney constituency and (c) the UK in (i) 2015 and (ii) 2016.

Nick Gibb:

School-level figures for spending per pupil are published annually. The most recent figures are available at: <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/download-data> (for maintained schools in financial year 2015-16, select: a) the academic year 2015 to 2016; b) data for All of England; and c) Spend per pupil (grouped data)),

and at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-and-expenditure-in-academies-in-england-2014-to-2015> (for academy schools in academic year 2014/15).

■ Pupils: Yorkshire and the Humber

Rachael Maskell: [68497]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much (a) revenue and (b) capital funding was provided to each pupil in state (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools in (A) York local authority and (B) Yorkshire and the Humber in (1) cash terms and (2) at 2014 prices in 2005-06 and in each year since.

Nick Gibb:

The Department primarily allocates capital and revenue funding at local authority level.

The allocations listed below are for financial years 2011-12 to 2016-17. These include: devolved formula capital, school condition allocations, and basic need allocations. The funding allocated to Yorkshire and Humber in financial year 2013-15 also includes targeted basic need funding.

CAPITAL**ALLOCATIONS(ALL
VALUES £M)**

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-15	2015-16	2016-17
York	7.7	8.6	12.4	9.8	9.8
Yorkshire and Humber	204	181	344	179	180

Funding distributed to academies and Multi Academy Trusts is not included, as they often allocate funding across LA boundaries.

More detail on funding for new free schools, university technical colleges and studio schools; on schools and school blocks being rebuilt under the Priority Schools Building Programmes; and funding allocated through the Condition Improvement Fund can be accessed via the links below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-funding-for-open-free-schools>.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/psbp-list-of-successful-applicants>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/priority-school-building-programme-2-list-of-successful-schools>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/condition-improvement-fund>

The data for capital funding allocated to local areas prior to 2011-12 is not readily available.

The table in the attachment (Annex A) shows average per-pupil revenue funding figures from financial year 2005-06 (DSG baseline) to 2016-17. These figures are in cash terms.

Since 2011-12 schools have received the Pupil Premium which targets funding to help pupils from the most disadvantaged backgrounds achieve their full potential. Total Pupil Premium allocations for York local authority and the Yorkshire & Humber region for each year are shown in the following table in cash terms:

PUPIL**PREMIUM****ALLOCATIONS**

(£ MILLIONS)	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
York LA	1.284	2.567	3.945	5.215	5.139	5.120
Yorkshire & Humber region	65.644	126.372	198.494	262.285	262.888	262.559

The Government publishes GDP deflators that can be used to understand the impact of inflation over time. These are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gdp-deflators-at-market-prices-and-money-gdp-march-2017-spring-budget-2017>.

Attachments:

1. Annex_A [68497 attachment (Annex A PDF version).pdf]

■ Special Educational Needs

Grahame Morris: [68930]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many hours of training in supporting children with special needs newly qualified teachers receive.

Nick Gibb:

To be awarded qualified teacher status (QTS), all teachers must be able to meet the Teachers' Standards at the appropriate level. The standards require teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and must be able to adapt teaching to the needs of all pupils, as well as have an understanding of the factors that can inhibit learning and how to overcome them.

The Government, does not prescribe the content or structure of training courses, and does not maintain a record of the hours of training provided to newly qualified teachers by topics. Teacher-training providers and schools are in the best position to judge these in line with the newly qualified teacher's developmental requirement and local need.

To help support schools and teachers identify and participate in the most effective development activities, the Government published a new Standard for Teachers' Professional Development in July 2016.

The standard can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-for-teachers-professional-development>.

■ Teachers: Recruitment

Ian Murray: [69252]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many bursaries and scholarships were provided under the Your Future Their Future campaign for the academic year 2016-17; and what the value was of each of these.

Nick Gibb:

Initial Teacher Training (ITT) bursaries of varying amounts are available to eligible trainees depending on the academic year in which they undertake their ITT, the subject in which they are training to teach and their highest relevant academic award. The amounts and eligible subjects change each year based on assessment of need informed by the targets and past performance.

Scholarships are awarded to those trainees who have gone through an additional selection procedure over and above that of their chosen ITT provider. These were available in 2016/17 in physics, chemistry, computing and mathematics.

Table 1 shows a breakdown of the total number of trainees who have received training bursaries or scholarships in 2016/17, and the total value of these incentives.

Table 1: Summary of the number of trainees that received Training Bursaries or scholarships in academic year 2016/17, and the total value of these bursaries and scholarships

No OF TRAINEES		TOTAL VALUES	
Bursary	Scholarship	Bursary	Scholarship
16609	326	£190,582,000	£8,725,000

The numbers are based on trainee data supplied by ITT providers, but as the academic year has not yet concluded, it does not take into account trainees that have withdrawn, or deferred. Nor does it take into account reconciliation activity.

Ian Murray:

[\[69255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the budget for the Get Into Teaching campaign was for (a) research, insight-gathering and audience testing, (b) creative development and production, (c) media buying, (d) website design, construction and management, (e) public relations, (f) field activity and partnerships and (g) evaluation in 2016-17.

Nick Gibb:

The budget for the Get Into Teaching campaign for the 2016-17 financial year is shown in the following table:

FINANCIAL YEAR BUDGET (1 APR - 31 MAR)	2016-17
(a) Research, insight-gathering and audience testing	£217,000
(b) Creative development and production	£1,852,000
(c) Media buying	£10,985,000
(d) Website design, construction and management	£578,000
(e) Public relations	£200,000
(f) Field activity and partnerships	£0
(g) Evaluation	£138,000

Ian Murray:

[\[69258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding from the public purse was spent on the Get Into Teaching campaign in 2015-16.

Nick Gibb:

The expenditure for the Get Into Teaching campaign for the financial year 2015-16 is shown in the following table:

FINANCIAL YEARS (1 APR - 31 MAR)	2015-16
Total recruitment marketing	£7,740,000

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Deer

Jim Shannon:

[\[69414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment the Government has made of the potential link between wild deer and the incidence of TB in cattle.

George Eustice:

Routine post-mortem surveillance for TB in deer carcasses has been conducted nationally for many years.

Visible lesions of TB are notifiable to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), who will facilitate the collection and submission for laboratory culture of any affected tissues. Positive culture results are relatively rare. Confirmed TB cases in wild deer may nevertheless trigger enhanced TB surveillance around that case, both to identify whether there has been any spread of disease to cattle herds and to limit the number of affected animals.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Internet

Justin Madders:

[\[69116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the five most visited websites were by staff of her Department in the last year for which figures are available.

George Eustice:

The IT service provider contracted by Defra provides services to other public authorities under the same contract, and in some cases at the same premises. Therefore, the information provided below also includes websites visited by staff from these authorities, as it is not possible to distinguish their visits from those made by Defra staff. Information on websites visited is only available from the service provider for a 6 month period.

Top 5 Websites visited in the past 6 months (28 September – 27 March 2017)

1. bbc.co.uk
2. genesis.naturalengland.gsi.gov.uk
3. edigital.survey.com
4. defra.condecOSOFTWARE.COM
5. google.co.uk

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Management Consultants

Jon Trickett:

[\[69285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 65683, how much of that procurement spending in each of those years related to the services of management consultants.

George Eustice:

Defra has no figures on spending specifically on the services of management consultants. Spend figures recorded under consultancy also include IT consultancy, technical consultancy, legal and financial advice, and project and programme management. Consultancy spend increased significantly in 2013/14 and 2014/15 as a result of third party support on IT programmes, for example Defra's Shared Service Centre and CAP Delivery Programme. There are no separate records for management consultancy.

CATEGORY SPEND BY FINANCIAL YEAR

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Consultancy	7,370,397	4,657,302	3,500,291	12,283,077	20,892,135	9,754,717

■ Diesel Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions

Chris Evans:

[\[69536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the effect of diesel engines on air quality in (a) London and (b) each other region and constituent part of the UK.

Chris Evans:

[\[69538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to tackle high levels of air pollution (a) in and (b) outside of London.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Last year, the Government published the conclusions to its Vehicle Emissions Testing Programme, which provided a valuable insight into diesel car emissions on our roads. Research found higher levels of nitrogen oxides emissions in test track and real world driving conditions for a range of the best-selling passenger diesel cars

compared to laboratory testing. The conclusions of this investigation can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vehicle-emissions-testing-programme-conclusions>

In addition, an assessment of the scale of the air quality problem and its sources within specific regions across the UK was set out in the Government's 2015 national air quality plan for NO₂ and accompanying zone plans, which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/air-quality-plan-for-nitrogen-dioxide-no2-in-uk-2015>

The Mayor of London has responsibility for achieving air quality standards and objectives in London. The Mayor provides the framework and guidance which boroughs use to review and improve air quality within their areas.

The former Mayor announced the Ultra Low Emission Zone back in 2015.

The current Mayor has recently consulted on the introduction of an Emissions Surcharge (the so-called "T-charge") for older, more polluting vehicles driving into and within central London. Later this year he has indicated his intention to consult on proposals to expand the Ultra Low Emission Zone out to the North and South Circular Roads and bring forward its introduction earlier than 2020, along with other measures to improve air quality in London.

More widely, the Government is firmly committed to improving the UK's air quality and cutting harmful emissions. That is why we have committed over £2 billion since 2011 to reduce transport emissions and the Autumn Statement provided a further £290 million to support greener transport. In light of both updated information on real world emissions from diesel vehicles and the High Court judgement last year, we will be publishing a revised air quality plan for consultation by 24 April and a final plan by 31 July.

In addition, we are developing the Air Pollution Action Plan. This is to tackle the five main pollutants: sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, non-methane volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter. The UK has agreed legally binding national ceilings for emissions of these pollutants by 2020 and 2030. The Government is considering how all sectors of the UK economy can contribute to these ambitious targets.

■ Fisheries

Oliver Colvile:

[R] [\[69594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 19 January 2017 to Question 908267, if she will publish a list of the fish stocks of UK interest for which total allowable catches (TACs) are set with advice on maximum sustainable yield (MSY) provided by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea; and how many of those TACs she expects will be fished at or below MSY in 2017.

George Eustice:

The information is in the table attached.

Attachments:

1. PQ 69594 - MSY table [PQ 69594 - MSY table.pdf]

■ Fisheries: Treaties

Kevin Hollinrake:

[\[69231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the Government plans to give notice to terminate the London Fisheries Convention 1964.

George Eustice:

The Government remains fully committed to controlling and managing UK waters after we leave the EU in accordance with our rights and obligations under international law.

We are considering the issue of the London Fisheries Convention carefully to ensure we have full control of UK waters after we leave the EU and, as the Prime Minister said on 29 March 2017, we hope to be able to say something about it soon.

■ Food: EU Law

Grant Shapps:

[\[69525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she plans to repeal EU legislation on the size, shape and appearance of fruit and vegetables for sale in the UK after the UK leaves the EU.

George Eustice:

As we prepare to leave the EU, we are looking at removing rules that are unnecessarily burdensome, focusing instead on what works best for the UK. We want to free our farmers to grow more, sell more and export more British food, whilst upholding our high standards for the environment. No decisions have been taken in relation to individual pieces of legislation, including EU Marketing Standards for fresh fruit and vegetables. We will consult widely with all those affected before making any changes.

■ Land: Walsall North

Mr David Winnick:

[\[69380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the letter from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State of 20 February 2017 to the hon. Member for Walsall North, reference MC421056/ON, which stated that a decision would be reached on the public inquiry into land in Walsall North constituency by the end of March, on what date that decision will be made.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

I can confirm that a decision has now been made in respect of this appeal. I expect the letter setting out my decision in detail to issue imminently.

■ Newts: Licensing

Caroline Lucas: [\[69430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate she has made of the resources, including staff time, needed by Natural England to implement the pilot scheme for the new approach to Great Crested Newt licencing.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Natural England estimates that the Woking pilot has cost approximately £31,000 and involved the equivalent staff time of 2.75 full time employees. The pilot scheme in Kent will cost £180,000, with funding for this being provided jointly from The Department of Communities and Local Government and The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

The new licensing approach replaces site by site licensing with a new system of district planning level licensing with surveys and habitat compensation undertaken proactively at the district level by Natural England and the local authority.

It will reduce costs for Natural England and costs, uncertainty and risk of delay for developers, while at the same time enhancing the conservation status of Great Crested Newts.

■ Squirrels

Jim Shannon: [\[69413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to control and reduce the number of grey squirrels.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The management and control of grey squirrels is a devolved matter.

The Government is committed to working with land owners and other organisations as part of its strategy to support targeted grey squirrel control in the UK.

Defra and the devolved administrations are signatories to the UK Squirrel Accord, which aims to promote a coordinated approach to controlling the grey squirrels and securing the future of our red squirrels and woodlands. Working as part of the UK Squirrel Accord supports the Government to deliver on its grey squirrel action plan for England announced by the Forestry Commission in December 2014.

As part of the Government's long terms strategy for controlling grey squirrel populations, the Animal and Plant Health Agency is currently exploring the potential for developing a fertility control method for grey squirrels. Defra has provided £39,000 to support the initial stages of this research.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Internet

Justin Madders: [\[69117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what the five most visited websites were by staff of his Department in the last year for which figures are available.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Department utilises a shared IT platform with the Cabinet Office, as such we cannot extrapolate this information from the data available. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 3 April 2017 to the Question 69112.

The top five websites visited by Cabinet Office (incorporating the Department for Exiting the European Union and 10 Downing Street) in the past 12 months (March 2016 – March 2017) are;

1. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk>
2. <https://www.google.co.uk>
3. <http://www.bbc.co.uk>
4. <https://civilservicelearning.civilservice.gov.uk>
5. <http://www.bing.com>

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders: [\[69219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how much his Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr David Jones:

Information on ministerial and senior officials gifts, hospitality and travel will be released as part of regular transparency publications on GOV.UK.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 7 January 2015 to Question 4985, what funding his Department gave to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission in (a) 2014-15, (b) 2015-16 and (c) 2016-17.

Alok Sharma:

Whilst there has been significant progress in Afghanistan on human rights since 2001, these gains are fragile and the overall human rights picture remains poor. The UK works closely with the National Unity Government, civil society and the international community to promote the development of human rights and this continues to be a priority for the UK.

We provide support to the development of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) to increase their capacity. Through the FCO Strategic Programme Fund, the UK has contributed the following funding to the AIHRC:

2014-15: £500,000

2015-16: £519,000

2016-17: (Forecast contribution) £320,000

■ Burma: Crimes against Humanity

Mr Gavin Shuker:

[\[69618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of potential crimes against humanity, including mass sexual violence, in Myanmar.

Alok Sharma:

We remain deeply concerned about human rights violations in Burma. I raised our concerns when I met the Burmese Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, U Kyaw Tin, on 27 February at the Human Rights Council in Geneva. During his visit to Burma in January, the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), also raised similar concerns with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as well as military-appointed government ministers. When the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my noble Friend, the Rt Hon. Baroness Anelay of St Johns visited Burma last November, she specifically raised the issue of sexual violence with the Burmese Minister of Defence, where she pressed him to handle allegations of sexual violence against women in a thorough and transparent manner.

The question of whether any crimes under international law have occurred in Burma is a matter for judicial decision, rather than for governments to determine. Our objective remains to end all violations of human rights in Burma, including conflict-related sexual violence.

■ China: Minority Groups

Jim Shannon:

[\[69416\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports his Department has received on the detention of Uyghur, Tibetan and Christian people in China related to the practice of organ harvesting.

Alok Sharma:

We regularly receive reports and updates from non-government organisations (NGOs) covering a wide range of human rights issues in China. For example, I hosted a roundtable in October 2016 with a range of NGOs working in this area to hear their opinions and analysis firsthand. Among other human rights issues, we have on occasion received reports that individuals from certain religious and ethnic minority groups may have had their organs removed after they have passed away without their or their families consent. My officials continue to scrutinise any new evidence presented.

We continue to raise the issue of restrictions on religious freedoms and discrimination against ethnic minorities in China, most recently in our statement to the UN Human Rights Council on 14 March 2017.

■ Diplomatic Service

Keith Vaz:

[\[69323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 16 March 2017 to Question 63102, on diplomatic service, what the (a) name and (b) post is of each of those Ambassadors.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The information requested is personal data and as such we are unable to provide it because doing so would breach the right to confidentiality of those concerned.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Internet

Justin Madders:

[\[69118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the five most visited websites were by staff of his Department in the last year for which figures are available.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The sites which received the most hits from centrally monitored computer terminals across the FCO's UK estate were: an Internal Government Internet site, Google, Google Analytics, Facebook and BBC.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders:

[\[69220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how much his Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The FCO's expenditure is as follows:

a) FCO accounts for all its hotel expenditure under **Accommodation**. The total expenditure is:

£6,567,637 in 2012-13,
£9,846,595 in 2013-14,
£13,835,786 in 2014-15,
£10,252,699 in 2015-16
£9,409,571 for 2016-17 (1st April 2016 to 28th March 2017).

b) FCO accounts for its hospitality expenditure under **Representation of the FCO** and **Business Hospitality**. The total expenditure is

£9,096,057 in 2012-13,
£9,010,820 in 2013-14,
£8,177,552 in 2014-15,
£11,398,281 in 2015-16
£11,723,112 for 2016-17 (1st April 2016 to 28th March 2017).

c) FCO accounts for all its Food and drink expenditure under **Meals**. The total expenditure is

£1,349,255 in 2012-13,
£1,805,092 in 2013-14,
£2,367,609 in 2014-15,
£2,775,632 in 2015-16
£2,165,648 for 2016-17 (1st April 2016 to 28th March 2017).

d) We have interpreted your request for transport as **Travel**. The total expenditure is

£26,518,447 in 2012-13,
£25,683,935 in 2013-14,
£25,834,703 in 2014-15,
£25,222,838 in 2015-16
£21,848,618 for 2016-17 (1st April 2016 to 28th March 2017).

The FCO's travel category includes expenditure on UK air travel; rail; sea ferry; car rental; taxis; children's concessionary journeys; staff travel costs to cover temporary duties overseas; Post air travel; dual work place travel; mileage; seasonal relief travel and floaters travel. These figures exclude expenditure on the FCO's staff travel package. This is an entitlement for staff posted overseas and for their qualifying dependents to travel during an overseas posting.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Overseas Workers

Emily Thornberry: [\[68752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many and what proportion of staff employed by his Department overseas in roles requiring an ability to speak a local language are at the Target Level Attainment for that language.

Boris Johnson:

[Holding answer 27 March 2017]: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has 527 roles occupied overseas where staff are required to speak the local language to at least degree level. As of February 2017, 54 per cent of staff in these roles have reached Target Level Attainment of C1 (which equates to degree level) and have successfully passed the C1 exam. This equates to 287 officers across the network. This is an improvement of 15 per cent since December 2015.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office expects all officers to have reached a minimum level of B2 before going overseas. This is equivalent to A-level. Officers at Post who have not reached their target level are expected to continue their language training with a view to taking the C1 exam within the first year of their posting.

All staff whose roles require an ability to speak the local language undergo a period of full time language training before their deployment overseas. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has recently implemented a series of measures to improve the Target Level Attainment, including measures to ensure officers complete their training before arrival at Post, as well as working with Directorates on succession planning for overseas roles which have a speaker requirement.

■ French Front National

Adam Holloway: [\[69359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the rationale is for the Government's longstanding policy on contact with the Front National in France; and whether he plans to review that policy in the next three months.

Sir Alan Duncan:

It has been the longstanding policy of this and previous governments not to engage with the Front National, based on positions the party has adopted in the past. We keep this policy under review.

■ Gaza: Fuel Poverty

Mr Gavin Shuker: [\[69615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Palestinian authorities on fuel shortages in Gaza.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are deeply concerned by the fuel shortages in Gaza and the serious impact on the humanitarian situation, including by disrupting the delivery of basic services and undermining already vulnerable livelihoods. Addressing Gaza's energy shortfall is

critical. We are in regular discussion with the Palestinian Authority, as well as with the Government of Israel, on this topic to encourage improved coordination and an increase in energy supplies.

■ Iraq: Christianity

Mrs Theresa Villiers: [\[69209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the Iraqi Government on the importance of protecting the religious freedom of Christians in that country.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK consistently urges the Government of Iraq at senior levels to uphold the rights of all Iraq's minorities, including Christians. We also continue to encourage political and religious leaders in Iraq to speak out publicly to condemn sectarian violence. Furthermore, we are working to build international consensus on upholding freedom of religion or belief.

■ Monarchy: Official Gifts

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[69497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with Buckingham Palace on the gift of a gold chain from the alleged Crown Prince Davit of Georgia.

Sir Alan Duncan:

In line with the normal process for accepting gifts, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Buckingham Palace discussed the offer. As this gift was officially supported by the Georgian Government, it was graciously accepted as being in the spirit of the good relations between two close allies.

■ North Korea: Russia

Jim Shannon: [\[69418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports the Government has received on North Korean defectors in Russia being sent back to North Korea.

Alok Sharma:

We are aware of some media reports of North Korean defectors in the Russian Federation being sent back to North Korea.

■ Religious Freedom

Jim Shannon: [\[69539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what guidance has been given to country desk officers on incorporating an understanding of freedom of religion or belief in their work.

Alok Sharma:

Advancing human rights - including the right to freedom of religion and belief (FoRB) - is embedded across the work of our diplomats. In order to enhance the capabilities of staff working to promote FoRB in their country context, the FCO issued a revised toolkit in October 2016. This coincided with our London Conference on FoRB and Countering Violent Extremism, which was attended by a number of country desk officers. The FCO also routinely provides training and seminars to increase religious literacy amongst staff.

■ Somalia: Elections

Jim Shannon:

[\[69417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions his Department has had with the Somali Government on the recent presidential elections in that country.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office engaged with the Federal Government of Somalia and electoral authorities throughout the recent parliamentary and presidential electoral process, emphasising the importance of it being transparent, credible and safe; and that commitments to make the process more inclusive, including increasing female representation, were respected. The recent electoral process should be seen as a stepping stone to one person one vote elections in four years time.

■ Syria: Conflict, Stability and Security Fund

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[69382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 18 December 2015 to Question 19719, how much has been allocated to Syria under the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund in 2016-17.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Syria has been allocated £64.8million by the Conflict Stability and Security Fund for 2016-17.

■ Syria: Military Intervention

Mr Gavin Shuker:

[\[69624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has had recent discussions with his US counterpart on civilian casualties as a result of US airstrikes in Syria.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign Secretary discusses the situation in Syria and the Global Coalition's action against Daesh on a regular basis with US colleagues. He did so most recently during a visit to Washington from 21 to 22 March. As part of the Global Coalition, the

UK is clear that while no military operations come without risk, the RAF takes all steps necessary to minimise the risk of causing civilian casualties.

We are aware of reports of civilian casualties allegedly caused by unilateral US action against Al Qaida targets in northern Syria. We welcome the US undertaking to investigate these reports.

■ USA: Israel

Mr Gavin Shuker: [\[69381\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the US Administration on the potential move of the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign Secretary discussed a range of foreign policy issues, including the Middle East Peace Process, with the US administration during his visit to Washington on 21 and 22 March.

■ Yemen: Famine

Mr Gavin Shuker: [\[69614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Saudi Arabian counterparts on the potential famine in Yemen.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Yemen is one of the most serious humanitarian crises in the world. I regularly discuss the humanitarian situation and the risk of famine in Yemen with a wide range of interlocutors including the UN, international partners, Government of Yemen and humanitarian organisations. I most recently raised this with Saudi counterparts on Wednesday 29 March when I met with General Assiri, Advisor to the Saudi Defence Minister and Spokesman on the Saudi-led Coalition in Yemen.

■ Yemen: Military Intervention

Caroline Lucas: [\[69434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the Saudi authorities about the attack by a helicopter on a boat carrying Somali civilians off the coast of Yemen on 16 March 2017 to establish whether the helicopter that fired on the boat was made in the UK; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has contacted Saudi Arabia regarding this tragic incident and the authorities have committed to make enquiries into the attack.

HEALTH

■ Air Pollution: Greater Manchester

Kate Green:

[\[69505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make an assessment of the potential link between (a) asthma and (b) asthma hospitalisation rates and air pollution in Greater Manchester in (i) children and (ii) adults.

Kate Green:

[\[69515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of air pollution on (a) incidences of asthma and (b) asthma hospitalisation rates for (i) children and (ii) adults living in Greater Manchester in each of the last three years.

Nicola Blackwood:

In 2010, the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollution (COMEAP) published a statement on the evidence linking air pollution with asthma. The evidence confirmed that exposure to ambient concentrations of air pollutants is associated with an increase in exacerbations of asthma in those who already have the condition. The evidence for air pollution causing new cases of asthma is less clear. However, COMEAP concluded that it is possible that air pollution plays a part in the induction of asthma in some individuals who live near busy roads, particularly roads carrying high numbers of heavy goods vehicles.

No specific assessments of the potential effect of air pollution on incidences of asthma or asthma hospitalisation rates for children or adults living in Greater Manchester have been made. There are no plans for Public Health England to make an assessment of the potential effect of air pollution on incidences of asthma or asthma hospitalisation rates in Greater Manchester.

■ Antibiotics: Drug Resistance

Kevin Hollinrake:

[\[69526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he expects the Global Antimicrobial Resistance Innovation Fund to be open to research applications for the repurposing of antibiotics.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government has committed £50 million towards setting up a Global Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Innovation Fund to increase global investment in AMR. The fund aims to leverage substantial new international investment in AMR research and development for new and repurposed antimicrobials and alternative medicines, rapid diagnostic tests, vaccines and other important technologies, interventions and therapies.

Professor Dame Sally Davies, the Chief Medical Officer for England and United Kingdom Government adviser, has appointed an expert advisory board to make recommendations on the scope and focus of the investment.

These discussions are ongoing.

Kevin Hollinrake:

[\[69527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he expects the first pilots of the Global Antimicrobial Resistance Innovation Fund on reimbursement models to incentivise the development of new classes of antibiotics to begin.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Global Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Innovation Fund is a £50 million investment over five years to tackle AMR, with the aim of attracting significant additional investment internationally to stimulate global research. It is not looking at reimbursement models to incentivise the development of new classes of antibiotics or planning to fund pilots at this stage.

Domestically, the Department is working with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry to develop a new reimbursement model for antimicrobials, and has secured broad agreement to principles that would permit a model to 'de-link' company revenues from sales. The aim of this work is to support good antimicrobial stewardship. Discussions with a number of leading pharmaceutical companies have highlighted challenges in evaluating antimicrobial medicines, and the Department is working closely with industry partners to address these.

■ Baby Care Units

Anna Turley:

[\[69577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the report by Bliss, entitled Neonatal care and admissions variation in the provisions for the parents of babies receiving neonatal care; and if he will take steps to reduce those variations.

Mr Philip Dunne:

This Government is committed to improving maternity and neonatal care. In November 2015 my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced a national ambition to halve the number of neonatal deaths, stillbirths, maternal deaths and brain injuries occurring during or soon after birth by 2030. The Department is working closely with NHS England to make progress on the ambition and implement the NHS England led Maternity Transformation Programme, a programme set up to deliver the National Maternity Review's recommendations, outlined in the report Better Births.

The Better Births publication set out the vision for maternity services across England. It also outlined that a dedicated review of neonatal services should be taken forward in light of the overall maternity review findings. Within that context, and linked to NHS England's Maternity Transformation Programme, the Neonatal Critical Care Clinical Reference Group, chaired by Professor Neil Marlow, is carrying out a review of neonatal services. That review is ongoing and will report in September 2017 but it has acknowledged that adequate support and facilities for parents are integral to the provision of centred care.

The review has completed its data gathering stage and will be working with Bliss and other stakeholders to develop recommendations for service improvement, including the support and facilities for parents.

■ Blood: Contamination

Diana Johnson:

[\[69233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 20 February 2017 to Question 63452, on blood: contamination, how many such applications have been received since that date; and how many of those applications have been (a) accepted and (b) rejected.

Nicola Blackwood:

Since 20 February 2017 the scheme has received 15 applications. This is in addition to the 317 applications they received prior to this date. Of these 332 applications in total, 323 have been approved and nine have been declined. All applications are subject to a rigorous review and verification process of the evidence being provided.

■ Cancer: Medical Treatments

Pauline Latham:

[\[69535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to raise the NHS Improvement tariff for photodynamic therapy to cover the full cost of that procedure; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Improvement and NHS England have no plans to change the national prices for 2017/18 and 2018/19 for photodynamic therapy. However, providers and commissioners can agree to vary national prices where this would be in the best interest of patients. These 'local variations' can be agreed in accordance with National Tariff rules on locally-determined prices.

■ Care Homes

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[69386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Answer of 4 March 2016 to Question 29083, how many (a) registered care home and (b) nursing home places there were in (i) 2017, (ii) 2016 and (iii) 2015.

David Mowat:

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. The CQC has provided the following information in the table below.

Number of active care homes and number of care home beds

Date	NUMBER OF ACTIVE CARE HOMES		NUMBER OF CARE HOME BEDS		TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE CARE HOMES	TOTAL NUMBER OF CARE HOME BEDS
	Nursing Home	Residential Home	Nursing Home	Residential Home		
31 March 2015	4,698	12,382	224,751	239,363	17,080	464,114
31 March 2016	4,643	12,122	224,853	237,182	16,765	462,035
29 March 2017	4,504	11,890	221,188	238,765	16,394	459,953

Notes:

- A care home with both service types of 'care home with nursing' and 'care home without nursing' is classified as a nursing home. A residential home is a 'care home service without nursing'.

- Care home bed numbers can change over time. The data supplied is based on the number of beds at date of data extraction, or date of the location's de-activation if it is no longer active.

■ Clinical Commissioning Groups

Rosie Cooper:

[\[69446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assurance process has been in place since clinical commissioning groups were established to ensure good governance and probity; and what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of those arrangements in the Liverpool area.

David Mowat:

NHS England has a statutory duty to conduct an annual performance assessment of every clinical commissioning group (CCG). From 2013-16 this was through the CCG assurance framework. From 2016 this was replaced by the CCG improvement and assessment framework. These frameworks assessed whether CCGs had good governance arrangements.

Liverpool CCG was rated good in the 2015-16 CCG assurance annual assessment. No probity issues have been raised for Liverpool CCG. It has received unqualified opinions in respect of probity and value for money from its external auditors each year.

■ Community Health Services: Liverpool

Rosie Cooper: [\[69437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which NHS rules and guidance allowed for the tendering of the Liverpool community health services contract previously run by Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust; what the legal framework is for the operation of that procurement process; and what the stages are of that procurement process.

Rosie Cooper: [\[69441\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, under which NHS rules the process which awarded Bridgewater NHS Trust the contract to deliver Liverpool Community services was run; and what the legal framework was underpinning that decision-making process.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The legal framework is contained in directions from the Secretary of State to the NHS Trust Development Authority. The procurement process did not trigger the Public Contract Regulations and it was instead structured as a provider to provider transaction.

■ Dental Services: Patient Choice Schemes

Tracy Brabin: [\[69477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department gives to dentists on the currency of their NHS Choices profiles.

David Mowat:

NHS Digital has been working with NHS England and other partner organisations to improve the information available to the public on dentistry on NHS Choices. The first improvements were made earlier this month. These included action to encourage practices to regularly update their profiles and, in particular, information on whether the practice is taking on new patients, which now has a mandatory 90 day review cycle. If this information is not updated or verified as still correct within a 90 day period, it will be temporarily removed from the site. NHS Digital is developing a guidance document to dentists following these changes. This will be made available by early summer to all dental practices in England holding an National Health Service contract.

■ Department of Health: Buildings

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what refurbishments have been carried out by (a) his Department and (b) each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies in (i) 2015-16 and (ii) 2016-17; what the cost of such refurbishments were; what further such refurbishments are planned; and what the estimated cost is of such planned refurbishments.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The attached tables provide the cost of refurbishments carried out by the Department and its non-departmental public bodies in 2015/16 and 2016/17 as well as estimated costs for any currently planned refurbishments. The estimated costs for the Department for 2017/18 are the fit out costs of 39 Victoria Street and the completion of a refurbishment in Wellington House. The fit out of 39 Victoria Street, to make the whole building into usable office space, enables the Department to move from Richmond House to 39 Victoria Street.

Attachments:

1. Refurbishment costs [PQ69203 refurbishment costs.docx]

■ Department of Health: Legal Costs

Jim Shannon: [\[69402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to (a) improve administrative efficiency and (b) reduce expenditure on legal costs.

David Mowat:

The Spending Review settlement for Administration costs set out a trajectory for the Department and its arm's length bodies (excluding clinical commissioning groups) to deliver a 30% real terms (25% cash terms) saving by 2019-20.

In order to meet this challenge the Department launched a change programme in February 2016 to both reduce in size and find more efficient ways of working while continuing to deliver on our priorities. As well as undertaking a restructuring exercise to reduce the number of permanent staff the change programme also includes projects to improve internal business processes, improvements in the use of technology to enable staff to work flexibly and the co-location of all London based staff in a single building.

The Department's arm's length bodies have been allocated savings targets for administration costs across the Spending Review period and are working within their organisations to deliver these efficiencies.

The Department calls on the Government Legal Department for almost all of its requirements for legal services. It currently has a budget of around £10 million which is set at the beginning of each financial year based on business planning for the work it expects to undertake in the year ahead. This process entails careful consideration as to the most effective use of this of this resource, bearing in mind the need to make efficiencies in line with the spending review targets set by HM Treasury.

■ Department of Health: Overseas Aid

Philip Davies: [\[69654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 15 March 2017 to Question 66933, on Department of Health: overseas aid, when each of those projects listed in that Answer were agreed with the stated recipients; and when each such project commenced.

Nicola Blackwood:

The attached table sets out when the Department agreed each of the projects with the stated recipients listed in the answer to Question 66933 and when each project commenced.

Attachments:

1. PQ69654 attached table [PQ69654 attached table.docx]

■ Diseases

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[\[69073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department provides to NHS trusts and other bodies on ensuring equal provision of access to treatments for rare diseases.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government is committed to the implementation of the UK Strategy for Rare Diseases that sets out a long-term strategic vision for the Department and its arm's length bodies in improving the lives of people with rare diseases and conditions.

In their plans for the overall implementation of the Five Year Forward View, NHS England recently announced an intention to publish an implementation plan in 2017/18 setting out its delivery contribution to the UK Strategy for Rare Diseases.

Planned improvements for patients with rare disease must take account of the legal duties of the Secretary of State, NHS England and clinical commissioning groups to have regard to the need to reduce health inequalities including in access to, and outcomes from, health services.

■ Furness Hospital

Rosie Cooper:

[\[69436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will ensure that there will be no appointments to a single management board prior to any clinical commissioning group mergers until the situation that resulted in commissioning the Kirkup report has been satisfactorily resolved.

David Mowat:

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are independent statutory bodies set out in statute, and as such are responsible for recruiting and selecting their leadership team. The appointment of Accountable Officers by CCGs requires authorisation by NHS England. If as suggested the CCGs seek to create a joint management team with a single Accountable Officer shared across two or three CCGs, this will be subject to NHS England's approval. NHS England's process for such appointments is set out in guidance published in March 2017.

There are provisions under section 14G of the NHS Act 2006 (as amended) allowing for mergers of CCGs and there are specific legal factors that NHS England must consider when deciding whether or not to agree the merger.

■ General Practitioners: Greater London

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many (a) general medical services, (b) personal medical services and (c) alternative provider medical services contracts were issued for GP surgeries in (i) Hampstead and Kilburn constituency and (ii) in London in each year since 2013.

David Mowat:

NHS England advises that there have been no General Medical Services (GMS), Personal Medical Services (PMS) or Alternative Provider Medical Services (APMS) contracts procured in the Hampstead and Kilburn constituency since 2013.

NHS England has also confirmed that there have been no GMS or PMS contracts procured across the 32 London clinical commissioning group (CCG) areas for core general practitioner (GP) services since 2013. For APMS contracts across London, the numbers are as follows:

2013: 10 APMS contracts were issued (mostly by the outgoing primary care trusts).

2014: Nine APMS contracts were issued.

2015: Six APMS contracts were issued.

2016: 10 APMS contracts were issued.

2017: 0 APMS contracts have been issued so far, but 15 are currently under procurement.

The above figures exclude short-term caretaking contracts. Such contracts are included in the figures as and when the substantive contract is procured.

The figures consist of a mix of new procurements and re-procurements of existing services where either the contract has expired or has been terminated.

The figures also include contracts procured to provide core GP services. This would not include contracts provided by CCGs for non-core GP services such as community service or out of hospital services.

■ Health Services: Finance

Diana Johnson: [\[69324\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the impact assessment on the consultation on the Special Category Mechanism and Financial and Other Support in England of 7 March 2017, by how much he plans to reduce the discretionary budget in Policy Option 1 of that impact assessment; and by what method his Department estimated the £74 million social value of that reduction.

Nicola Blackwood:

Under Policy Option 1 outlined in the Impact Assessment, the discretionary budget would be reduced by a total of £18.5 million in the current Spending Review period.

Social value is calculated by converting National Health Service funding into units of health called Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALYs). These QALYs are then valued at the Department's standard value for society's "willingness to pay" for a QALY. This approach is standard departmental methodology.

The overall level of funding for the discretionary scheme will be dependent on the uptake of the Special Category Mechanism.

■ Health Services: Weather

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[69388\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Answer of 17 November 2015 to Question 902116, how much additional financial support in winter resilience funds the NHS received in each year from 2011-12 to 2016-17; and on what dates in those years that additional support was allocated.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The following table shows additional funding given to the National Health Service for winter and seasonal resilience between 2011-12 and 2014-15:

YEAR	ADDITIONAL FUNDING	DATE
2011-12	£300 million (winter resilience)	January 2012
2012-13	£330 million (winter resilience)	September 2012
2013-14	£400 million (winter resilience)	November 2013
2014-15	£700 million (winter resilience)	Start of the financial year
2015-16	£400 million (seasonal resilience)	Start of the financial year
2016-17	£400 million (seasonal resilience)	Start of the financial year

■ Hearing Impairment

Jim Shannon:

[\[69404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the NHS is taking to improve the support provided to deaf people; and if he will make a statement.

David Mowat:

In England, clinical commissioning groups are responsible for commissioning the majority of hearing loss services. A small number of specialised services are commissioned nationally by NHS England.

In 2015, the Department and NHS England jointly published the Action Plan on Hearing Loss, which sets out the case for action to tackle the rising prevalence and personal, social and economic costs of uncorrected hearing loss and to address the variation in access and quality of relevant services. The Action Plan sets out key objectives across prevention, early diagnosis, integrated person-centred care, increasing independence and enabling people to partake in everyday activities, including work.

To support the Action Plan, NHS England published, in 2016, a Commissioning Framework for Hearing Loss to ensure a more person centred integrated approach to commissioning and to encourage best practice across hearing loss service commissioners.

The Department has also commissioned the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to develop a clinical guideline on the assessment and management of hearing loss in adults; this is expected in May 2018.

■ Hospital Beds

Michael Dugher:

[\[69375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many hospital bed days were lost in (a) Barnsley, (b) South Yorkshire and (c) the UK as a result of delays in discharging patients each year from 2010 to 2016.

David Mowat:

Data are collected on the total delayed days during each month for all patients delayed throughout the month. The total number of delayed days in each year between 2011/12 (the first full year for which data are available) and 2015/16, for Barnsley, South Yorkshire and England are shown in the table below. As health is a devolved issue, the number of delayed days in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are not collected by NHS England.

Total number of delayed days in Barnsley, South Yorkshire and England

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Barnsley Local Authority	1,053	992	1,104	1,060	1,568
South Yorkshire ¹	23,243	12,465	34,521	37,362	35,959
England	1,373,392	1,380,475	1,413,591	1,624,977	1,809,883

Source: NHS England, Delayed Transfers of Care Data

Notes:

¹ South Yorkshire includes Barnsley, Sheffield, Rotherham and Doncaster Local Authorities.

■ Ibuprofen: Heart Diseases

Jim Shannon:

[\[69403\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with the Royal Colleges on the potential effect of the use of ibuprofen on the heart.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) continuously monitors the safety of all medicines on the market in the United Kingdom and seeks independent expert advice from the Commission on Human Medicines on important new safety issues. Ibuprofen belongs to the class of medicines called non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

Ibuprofen is a widely used and effective medicine for relief of mild to moderate pain including rheumatic and muscular pain and is available on prescription from a doctor and, at low doses, over the counter. It has been known for many years that NSAIDs are associated with a small increased risk of heart attacks or strokes, particularly when used at a high dose and for a long time. A Europe wide review which completed in 2015 concluded that high dose ibuprofen is associated with an increased risk of heart attack and stroke similar to some other NSAIDs, however there was no increased risk of these events seen with ibuprofen at the doses available over the counter.

The MHRA has widely communicated the information and advice to healthcare professionals on the risk of heart attack and stroke with NSAIDs in letters and bulletins, and other publications through liaison with the British National Formulary. In addition, product information (including patient information leaflets) supports informed decision-making in relation to the choice of painkiller.

■ Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group: Pay

Rosie Cooper:

[\[69443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans to publish the findings of the review commissioned by the Prime Minister from NHS England on non-executive salaries in Liverpool.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department has asked NHS England to look into the remuneration of non-executive directors at Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group and to write to the hon. Member once their enquiries are completed.

■ Medical Treatments: Finance

Mark Tami: [\[69492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions he has had with NHS England on improving the way that decisions about the funding of treatments are communicated to patient groups and the public.

Mark Tami: [\[69493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will ask NHS England to make the minutes of the (a) Clinical Priorities Advisory Group and (b) Specialised Services Commissioning Committee publicly available.

Mark Tami: [\[69494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he will take to improve the transparency of decisions made by (a) NHS England, (b) the Clinical Priorities Advisory Group and (c) the Specialised Services Commissioning Committee.

David Mowat:

Patients and patient groups are involved at all stages of the decision making process around the funding of specialised treatments.

Patients are involved in the policy working groups that develop policy propositions, as well the Clinical Reference Groups and National Programmes of Care board which collectively develop policies and which both have patient and public voice members. The Clinical Priorities Advisory Group (CPAG), which makes recommendations around prioritisation, also has an independent lay chair and members. Patients and patient groups can also register as stakeholders and will then be invited to comment on draft policies during stakeholder testing and public consultation. Registered stakeholders are kept informed of progress and are notified when final decisions are made. Patient groups can request a stakeholder surgery with NHS England at any point during the policy development process to raise any issues or concerns they may have.

NHS England ensures that all newly adopted clinical commissioning policies and service specifications are published on its website, and simultaneously cascaded via local commissioning teams to relevant providers and clinical teams. This helps to ensure that patients receive up to date advice on the availability and funding of National Health Service specialised treatments pertinent to them during their clinical consultation.

While the minutes of CPAG are not published, the key information that it used as the basis of its recommendation made on each clinical policy in 2016 was published when the 22 clinical policies went out to public consultation. The methodology used by CPAG to group the policies into five levels has also been published, as have the final recommendations.

The Government has laid out its plans to improve transparency in Specialised Commissioning in its Treasury Minute in response to the 10th Report of the Public Accounts Committee, Session 2016-17, HC397.

Details of its response can be found at the following address from page 53:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/565426/57448_Cm_9351_Treasury_Minutes_Accessible.pdf

The CPAG is not a decision making body – it makes recommendations to NHS England on clinical priorities. Final decisions are made by the Specialised Services Commissioning Committee and the committee's decisions are reported to the NHS England Board and published as part of the Board Papers.

■ Mental Health Services: Southwark

Ms Harriet Harman:

[69653]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many mental health nurses have been employed by the local NHS trust in Southwark in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Three National Health Service trusts in Southwark employ mental health nursing staff. The information for each trust and the total is shown in the following table.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Services: Qualified mental health nursing staff in NHS trusts in Southwark, as at 31 December each year, full-time equivalent

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
NHS trusts in Southwark	1,352	1,302	1,222	1,242	1,244
of which:					
Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust	3	8	5	9	7
King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	1	1	1	1	1
South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust	1,348	1,293	1,216	1,232	1,236

Source: NHS Digital

Notes: South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust is a mental health trust so is the most relevant.

The data above for qualified mental health nursing staff includes the following staff groups:

- Community Psychiatry;
- Other Psychiatry;
- Community Learning disability; and
- Other Learning Disabilities.

■ NHS Blood and Transplant and Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much public funding has been provided to (a) NHS Blood and Transplant and (b) Anthony Nolan in each of the two previous financial years.

Nicola Blackwood:

Information on the public funding NHS Blood and Transplant received in 2014-15 and 2015-16 can be found within its 2015-16 Annual Report and Accounts.

The Department has provided funding of £2,000,000 in 2014-15 and £1,325,057 in 2015-16 to the charity Anthony Nolan to support improving the availability of stem cells for patients requiring a transplant from an unrelated donor.

■ NHS Improvement

Rosie Cooper: [\[69438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how long NHS Improvement should allow for the due diligence regime once a contract is provided to a new supplier; whether due diligence is completed to a specific deadline; and if he will make a statement.

Rosie Cooper: [\[69439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effectiveness of NHS Improvement undertaking the due diligence process on new providers one month prior to the start of a new NHS contract; and if he will make a statement.

Rosie Cooper: [\[69440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of funding allocated to NHS Improvement to undertake appropriate due diligence on NHS contracts.

Rosie Cooper: [\[69495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of NHS Improvement's resourcing to enable it to fulfil its monitor function; what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of NHS Improvement's due diligence processes in regard to the former Liverpool Community Health contract being awarded to Bridgewater; what guidance his Department issues on the timing of due diligence; and whether NHS Improvement was compliant with such guidance in that case.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Improvement is resourced to undertake a number of functions, which include working with National Health Service providers to ensure that due diligence processes are completed in a timely and effective manner. In the case of the Liverpool Community Health contract, the publication of the Care Quality Commission report into Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust led to a pause in the transaction.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[69496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he made of the likely effects of breaking up the former Liverpool Community contract into 13 parts; what discussions he has had with Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group on the potential for that decision to align with a previously agreed joint venture between the Group and Liverpool City Council and Bridgwater; what assessment he has made of the risk of poor governance in decision making; and whether NHS Improvement is sufficiently resourced to take poor decision-making.

Mr Philip Dunne:

No discussions have taken place with Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group on this matter.

NHS Improvement is resourced to undertake a number of functions, which include working with National Health Service providers to ensure that due diligence processes are completed in a timely and effective manner. Quality Impact Assessments and a Financial Assessment were undertaken as part of the pre-assessment process.

■ NHS: Derelict Land

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

[\[69086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with NHS England or other NHS bodies on the future use of the derelict land owned by the NHS in Wood Street in High Barnet that was previously occupied by the Marie Foster charity.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The decision as to whether healthcare should be commissioned from this site rests with Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group. The ultimate disposal strategy which NHS Property Services (NHSPS) will pursue will, of course, depend upon this decision.

NHSPS remain in discussion with the local planning authority on a pre-application basis based on a residential redevelopment of the site, and are awaiting feedback from the latest discussions. The aim of NHSPS is to be in a position to market this site as soon as possible if it were to be declared surplus in whole or part.

■ NHS: Land

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

[\[69084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to ensure that the proceeds of any land sale by the NHS are subsequently used in the local NHS in that area.

Mr Philip Dunne:

It is the Department's policy that, where land or buildings are owned by a hospital provider trust (both National Health Service trusts and NHS foundation trusts), the full capital receipt is retained by that organisation to reinvest in the NHS in that local area.

Proceeds from the sale of properties owned by NHS Property Services are pooled nationally and investments directed to where it is most needed by patients.

Reinvestment decisions will be subject to business case approvals and due process. Further information is available at:

<https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/capital-regime-investment-and-property-business-case-approval-guidance-nhs-trusts-and-foundation-trusts/>

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

[69085]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with NHS England on enabling NHS bodies to retain ownership of land and property that is not needed for healthcare purposes but could potentially derive a rental income.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Government is committed to ensuring that National Health Service property is used in a way that ensures the best possible services for patients, the best value for taxpayers in freeing additional resources for reinvestment in new facilities and services, and which supports wider housing objectives, including by freeing surplus NHS land sufficient for 26,000 homes by March 2020.

It is for individual NHS land owners - predominantly NHS trusts and foundation trusts - to decide whether to sell surplus land outright or whether to pursue alternative models which might include part of full retention of ownership and the derivation of an associated income scheme. These considerations will be based on their local needs and circumstances and will need to support NHS organisations' requirements to secure best value for money.

■ NHS: Private Sector

Jonathan Ashworth:

[69089]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NHS patients were transferred to a private hospital to undertake elective surgery in each year since 2010-11.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Data is not available in the format requested.

■ NHS: Reorganisation

Michael Dugher:

[69376]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what meetings he has had with officials of his Department regarding the effect of sustainability and transformation plans in areas with a shortage of doctors in the last 12 months.

David Mowat:

Sustainability and Transformation Plans are locally developed plans, and it is expected that individual areas will take account of local circumstances including any workforce shortages.

Michael Dugher:

[69377]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what criteria his Department is using to assess whether NHS sustainability and transformation plans have been the result of local community consultation.

David Mowat:

As set out in the NHS Shared Planning Guidance, published in December 2015, the success of Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) will depend on having an open, engaging, and iterative process that involves patients, carers, citizens, clinicians, local community partners including the independent and voluntary sectors, and local government through health and wellbeing boards.

NHS England expects local engagement as part of the STP process, building where appropriate on existing engagement through health and wellbeing boards and other local arrangements. In September 2016 it issued guidance “engaging local people” to support STPs to do this, which can be found here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/engag-local-people-stps.pdf>

Where plans propose service changes, formal consultation will commence shortly in line with good practice and legislative requirements.

Clive Lewis:

[69611]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to oral evidence given to the Public Accounts Committee on 27 February 2017, if he will specify the legal status of the new organisations that will be established under NHS England's Sustainability and Transformation Plans; and what duties and powers to plan and provide health services those organisations will have.

David Mowat:

Sustainability and Transformation Plans are not statutory organisations; instead they represent local organisations coming together to work collectively. The statutory architecture for health and care remains fully in place, as do the existing accountabilities for Chief Executives and Accountable Officers of National Health Service organisations.

■ NHS: Repairs and Maintenance

Tulip Siddiq:

[69510]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost of backlog maintenance for each level of assessed risk was in the NHS (a) in total and (b) for each NHS organisation in each of the last three years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The backlog maintenance cost reported by the National Health Service in total for the last three years is:

	2013-14 £ MILLION	2014-15 £ MILLION	2015-16 £ MILLION
High risk	357	458	776
Significant risk	1,017	1,062	1,568
Moderate risk	1,427	1,551	1,516
Low risk	1,242	1,267	1,115
Total	4,043	4,338	4,975

The data for each NHS organisation is attached.

The Department collects data on backlog maintenance annually from NHS trusts through the Estates Returns Information Collection. The data collected has not been amended centrally and its accuracy always remains the responsibility of the NHS organisations concerned.

Attachments:

1. PQ69510 attached table [PQ69510 attached table.xls]

■ NHS: West Midlands

Ms Gisela Stuart: [\[69518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to NHS England's Delivering the Forward View: NHS Planning Guidance 2016-17 to 2020-21, whether additional funding will be made available to the Birmingham and Solihull Sustainability and Transformation Plan from April 2017.

David Mowat:

On 27 February the chief executives of NHS England and NHS Improvement wrote to Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STP) leaders. They stated the upcoming NHS Delivery Plan will outline the steps NHS England and NHS Improvement will take to help ensure all areas have developed credible implementation plans.

The additional £325 million announced in the Spring Budget will help the STPs with the strongest projects make real progress in improving care for local communities.

This additional resource is solely for use by capital bid projects subject to the usual assurance processes by NHS England and HM Treasury. No decisions have been made regarding the allocation of funds.

■ Nurses: Training

Caroline Lucas: [\[69616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the reasons for the 23 per cent decline in UCAS applications for nursing degrees in 2017; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Potential students have a range of reasons for making the choices they do regarding courses to apply for.

At this stage of the application cycle, based on the data the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service published on 2 February 2017, Health Education England is confident that the National Health Service will be able to fill the number of 2017/18 pre-registration nursing degree training places in England. Entry to nursing, midwifery and allied health profession remains extremely competitive with a ratio from applications this January of nearly two applicants per place, this shows that there is a strong market for students who want to study high-quality nursing degree.

The Government is committed to monitoring the reforms throughout the application process and in doing so is working with Health Education England, Universities UK and the Council of Deans of Health to ensure that students are aware of the benefits of studying to become a nurse.

■ Orthopaedics: Robotics

Jim Shannon:

[69407]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of making available robotic arms on the NHS for people with limb amputations.

David Mowat:

We are aware of a number of recent developments regarding robotic arms and prosthetics, however all of these procedures remain at a relatively early stage and more scientific trials would be needed to demonstrate their efficacy and safety before being considered for routine National Health Service use.

■ Outpatients: Attendance

Margaret Hodge:

[69476]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many outpatient (a) ophthalmology, (b) medical ophthalmology, (c) optometry and (d) orthoptic follow-up appointments for adults over 19-years of age were (i) cancelled or (ii) not attended by the patient in 2015-16.

Margaret Hodge:

[69478]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many outpatient (a) ophthalmology, (b) medical ophthalmology, (c) optometry and (d) orthoptic first appointments for adults over 19-years of age were (i) cancelled or (ii) not attended by the patient in 2015-16.

David Mowat:

The information requested is shown in the following tables.

Counts of first outpatient appointments for treatment specialties ophthalmology, medical ophthalmology, optometry, and orthoptics, that were cancelled by the patient by the hospital or where the patient did not attend for patients aged 19 years and over in England for 2015-16.

FIRST OUTPATIENT APPOINTMENT

19 years and over

Treatment Specialty	Total Appointments	Patient Cancellations	Hospital Cancellations	Did Not Attend
Ophthalmology	2,077,481	162,054	134,566	131,298
Medical Ophthalmology	28,424	1,950	471	3,231
Optometry	14,905	1,731	617	730
Orthoptics	48,496	5,280	2,631	3,703

Counts of follow-up outpatient appointments for treatment specialties ophthalmology, medical ophthalmology, optometry, and orthoptics that were cancelled by the patient by the hospital or where the patient did not attend for patients aged 19 years and over in England for 2015-16.

FOLLOW-UP OUTPATIENT APPOINTMENT

19 years and over

Treatment Specialty	Total Appointments	Patient Cancellations	Hospital Cancellations	Did Not Attend
Ophthalmology	6,535,285	465,080	458,758	407,324
Medical Ophthalmology	93,530	9,324	3,625	6,743
Optometry	30,821	4,102	2,950	2,664
Orthoptics	180,124	20,566	13,710	10,823

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Digital

Notes:

Treatment specialty codes

The following codes were used to identify treatment specialties:

130 - Ophthalmology

460 - Medical ophthalmology

655 - Orthoptics

662 - Optometry

Margaret Hodge:

[\[69487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the median waiting time for a first (a) outpatient ophthalmology, (b) paediatric ophthalmology, (c) medical ophthalmology, (d) outpatient optometry and (e) outpatient orthoptic appointment was in 2015-16.

David Mowat:

The information requested is in the following table.

Median waiting times (days) of first outpatient appointments for treatment specialties ophthalmology, paediatric ophthalmology, medical ophthalmology optometry, and orthoptics in England for 2015-16

TREATMENT SPECIALTY	MEDIAN TIME WAITED (DAYS)
Ophthalmology	41
Paediatric Ophthalmology	56
Medical Ophthalmology	42
Optometry	49
Orthoptics	40

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Digital

Notes:

The following codes were used to identify treatment specialties:

130 - Ophthalmology

216 - Paediatric Ophthalmology

460 - Medical ophthalmology

662 - Optometry

655 - Orthoptics

■ Pharmacy: Finance

Michael Dugher: [\[69455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much funding was allocated by the Government to pharmacies in each year from 1997-98 to 2016-17.

David Mowat:

The current community pharmacy contractual framework and system of payments dates from 2005/06, with remuneration under those arrangements set out in the table below:

FINANCIAL YEAR	REMUNERATION BUDGET (£ BILLION)
2005/06	1.8
2006/07	1.9
2007/08	1.9
2008/09	2.2
2009/10	2.5
2010/11	2.5
2011/12	2.5
2012/13	2.5
2013/14	2.8
2014/15	2.8
2015/16	2.8
2016/17	2.7

The budget figures in the table only cover essential and advanced services, as commissioned centrally under the community pharmacy contractual framework. Community pharmacies are also commissioned locally to provide services, originally by primary care trusts and more recently by NHS England, clinical commissioning groups and local authorities. Information on the level of funding received by community pharmacies for those locally commissioned services is not held centrally.

■ Royal Liverpool Hospital

Rosie Cooper: [\[69442\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what date is planned for the official opening of the new Royal Hospital Liverpool; whether that date is the originally planned date; and whether any structural problems have been identified within the building.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The new Royal Hospital in Liverpool was expected to admit its first patients in the summer of 2017. The projected handover from the contractor to the Trust, following completion of the construction works, was scheduled to be in March 2017. It is then standard to allow a further three months for the Trust to carry out clinical commissioning and for relocation of services before the Hospital is ready to admit patients for treatment. Unfortunately the construction work has been subject to significant delay.

The reasons for delays to the construction timetable have been the discovery of asbestos; issues with using cranes in high winds; a delay in completing a new electrical connection and more recently, the discovery of cracks in some of the concrete beams, for which all remedial work has now been carried out. Clearly, this delay in delivering a new flagship hospital for the people of Liverpool is disappointing. However, we must emphasise that the costs associated with the problems to the new building have to be met by the building contractor and do not fall on the National Health Service. The Trust does not make any payment until the new hospital is finished and is available for use.

Currently the Trust is expecting the contractor to hand over the building at the end of February 2018. The move is then expected to be completed 14 weeks after the handover date.

■ Soft Drinks: Sugar

Jim Shannon:

[\[69412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the Government is taking to encourage soft drinks companies to reduce the amount of sugar in their products.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government announced a soft drinks industry levy, which will be paid by the producers and importers of added sugar soft drinks to encourage them to remove added sugar from their products. Any drinks that remain out of scope of the levy will be included in Public Health England's sugar reduction programme.

■ Spinal Injuries: Sports

Jim Shannon:

[\[69408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many spinal injuries there have been related to (a) rugby, (b) football and (c) other sports in each of the last five years.

David Mowat:

This information is not collected.

■ Stem Cells: Donors

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Answer of 8 March 2016 to Question 28969, what information his Department holds on the number of (a) people who were registered as stem cell donors with the Anthony Nolan and NHS Stem Cell Registry and (b) such people who were from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds in 2015-16 to date.

Nicola Blackwood:

The total number of registered donors on the Anthony Nolan and NHS Stem Cell Registry and the numbers of registered donors from black and minority ethnic backgrounds are reported in the 2016 Anthony Nolan annual report.

■ Travel: Vaccination

Stephen Timms: [\[69273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department provides to NHS trusts and other bodies to ensure equal provision of access to pre-travel immunisations.

Nicola Blackwood:

The National General Medical Services contract regulations state that all general practitioner contractors providing vaccines and immunisations must provide them to all patients, as specified within the relevant Statement of Financial Entitlement (SFE). The SFE supports the regulations and outlines the travel vaccinations required for patients who intend to travel abroad.

Contractors who offer and provide immunisations as part of additional services must follow the guidance and information set out in the information against infectious disease (the Green Book). In addition the National Travel Health Network and Centre provides advice and guidance to general practitioners and independent providers about all travel vaccinations.

HOME OFFICE

■ Asylum: Housing

Stuart C. McDonald: [\[69586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the Home Affairs Select Committee report, Asylum accommodation, published on 17 January 2017.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Government is carefully considering the Twelfth Report of the Home Affairs Select Committee and will respond in due course.

■ Cryptography

Louise Haigh: [\[69333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has held discussions with Counter Terrorism Command on encryption technology.

Louise Haigh: [\[69334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment has been conducted of the consequences for (a) the UK economy and (b) national security of banning end-to-end encryption.

Louise Haigh: [\[69335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what consultation she has conducted with (a) financial services firms, (b) legal services firms, (c) the technology sector and (d) identity verification providers on her policy to abolish end-to-end encryption.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Government is keen to ensure that the correct balance is struck between protecting information online and the need for our police and intelligence agencies to read, subject to appropriate authorisation, encrypted messages of those who plan and commit terrorist attacks and serious crimes when it is both necessary and proportionate to do so. We continue to work with all those with an interest in this issue, from law enforcement and the security and intelligence agencies to communications service providers.

It is important to remember that we already have well-established, constructive working relationships with major technology companies. And we will continue to engage with them, along with other partners, to find a solution that both permits law enforcement and the security and intelligence agencies to get the information they need, whilst also protecting privacy.

Last week's attack has highlighted the need for a proper public debate on this issue. The Government will be working with internet companies to ensure they fulfil their moral and social responsibility to help our police and security services to keep us all safe.

■ Home Office: Internet

Justin Madders: [\[69120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the five most visited websites were by staff of her Department in the last year for which figures are available.

Sarah Newton:

The Home Office only retains website data for a period of six months. Analysis of data for the period 00:00 19 September 2016 to 00:00 18 March 2017 shows the top 5 sites by recorded Website hits are:

- [Issiprod.service-now.com](https://issiprod.service-now.com)

- ping.chartbeat.net
- platform.twitter.com
- horizon.fcos.gsi.gov.uk
- ctldl.windowsupdate.com

■ Human Trafficking: Children

Fiona Mactaggart: [\[69432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how the evaluation of the National Referral Mechanism will examine the effectiveness of that mechanism for children.

Fiona Mactaggart: [\[69433\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the evaluation of the National Referral Mechanism pilot will be completed; and if she will make a statement.

Sarah Newton:

The National Referral Mechanism pilot has been testing a new model for identifying and referring victims, processing cases and making effective decisions. The pilot has been dealing with both child and adult potential cases of modern slavery and the evaluation will consider decision making and timeliness for both cohorts. The final stage of the evaluation is currently underway and it is anticipated that the findings will be ready for publication summer 2017.

■ Immigrants

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 20 January 2016 to Question 22366, how many migrants granted leave to remain in the UK did not have no recourse to public funds conditions imposed on them because of exceptional circumstances in each year since 2010-11.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I am sorry, but data is not held in the requested format and to establish whether a migrant did not have the no recourse to public funds condition imposed due to exceptional circumstances would require individual examination of records. This would incur disproportionate cost.

Total grants of leave to remain can be found in table ex_01_q in the Home Office's Immigration Statistics October - December 2016 release, available for download at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2016> with the data tables at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2016/list-of-tables#extensions>

■ Immigration: EEA Nationals

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 21 March 2017 to Question 68205, what the Government's policy is on retrospective removal of the status of non-UK EEA nationals who have already automatically achieved permanent residence status by exercising their treaty rights as an EEA national in the UK for five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

On 29 March, the Prime Minister formally notified the EU of the Government's decision to invoke Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union and withdraw from the EU. In future the Free Movement Directive will no longer apply and the migration of EU nationals will be subject to UK law. The notification letter makes clear that the Government wants to strike an early agreement about the rights of EU citizens who are already living in the UK, and UK citizens living in the EU, giving citizens as much certainty as possible.

■ Marriage Certificates: Mothers

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 9 February 2016 to Question 25738, what recent steps her Department has taken to amend marriage certificates to include mothers' names.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 2 December 2016, UIN 55490.

■ Organised Crime: Northern Ireland

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[68899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she plans to take to ensure that the International Anti-Corruption Co-ordination Centre liaises with the Northern Ireland authorities over organised criminal activity across the land border with the Irish Republic.

Mr Ben Wallace:

At the London Anti-Corruption Summit in May 2016 the UK committed to establishing the new International Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre (IACCC). The IACCC will be hosted by the UK's National Crime Agency (NCA) in London and will bring together specialist law enforcement officers from multiple foreign jurisdictions into a single location to coordinate the global law enforcement response to allegations of grand corruption.

The NCA leads the UK's fight to cut serious and organised crime. As officers from the NCA will be permanent members of the new IACCC any allegations of grand corruption requiring a global law enforcement response will be automatically referred to the IACCC. The IACCC does not become operational until April 2017.

You will also be aware that as part of the Fresh Start agreement the NCA is committed to working closely with the Police Service of Northern Ireland and HM Revenue and Customs to prioritise investment in the investigative capacity to tackle criminality linked to paramilitary groups, including those in border areas, and have submitted a proposal for consideration to be part of a team with the three agencies working closely together.

Alongside the Fresh Start agreement a Joint Agency Task Force was established that is led by senior officers from PSNI and An Garda Síochána and will enhance the operational response to cross-border criminality, of which the NCA is a member.

Finally, a response to allegations of corruption in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic would not normally need to involve the IACCC as there are already strong bilateral law enforcement relationships in place. However, the NCA would consider the appropriate response to allegations of corruption in consultation with Police Service Northern Ireland in Northern Ireland and in liaison with An Garda Síochána in the Irish Republic.

■ Police

Lyn Brown: [\[69588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will respond to the Reshaping policing for the public report, published by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary on 25 June 2015; and if she will make a statement.

Brandon Lewis:

The Government welcomed receipt of the report from HMIC's National Debate Advisory Group (NDAG) in which a number of recommendations were made. The Home Secretary wrote to Sir Tom Winsor, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary on 24 June 2015, welcoming the report and informing him that officials would work with the NDAG and other policing partners to consider further the issues raised and recommendations contained in the report.

■ Police: Mental Health Services

Lyn Brown: [\[69422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of the legislative framework for police powers regarding mental health.

Lyn Brown: [\[69423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of recent progress with the Crisis Care Concordat following the withdrawal of Mind's secretarial support.

Lyn Brown: [\[69425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the viability of mental health street triage services in police forces following the end of

police innovation funding; and whether she plans to provide any additional resources to facilitate the continuation and development of such services.

Lyn Brown:

[69451]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effects of different police forces using different approaches to dealing with people with mental health problems; and if she will make a statement.

Lyn Brown:

[69452]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effects on (a) police force workload, (b) police force welfare and (c) the risk to public welfare of the legal right of NHS services to refuse to treat people experiencing mental health crises where the only alternative is the use of police custody as a place of safety.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office together with their colleagues in the Department of Health have provided support mental health professionals and the police in England and Wales to enable them to work together to co-ordinate the right responses to people experiencing a mental health crisis.

Between October 2013 and May 2015 the Department of Health funded Street Triage pilots in nine areas. NHS England subsequently published an evaluation into its effectiveness in November 2015. Street Triage schemes now operate in over 25 police force areas for which funding is provided by local partners for example Police and Crime Commissioners and Clinical Commissioning Groups. The Home Office has awarded £155,220 through the Police Innovation Fund to support a North Wales Police Mental Health Triage project. North Wales Police will evaluate the work following the end of the Home Office funding period on 31 March 2017.

Police forces may apply for future funding for Street Triage through the Police Transformation Fund.

For those arrested in England on suspicion of committing an offence and taken to police custody Liaison and Diversion schemes, commissioned by NHS England to a national model, operate in over 50% of police forces areas and will be rolled out nationally by 2020/21. These schemes aim to identify, assess and refer people with mental health and other complex needs into appropriate support and treatment and where appropriate may influence sentencing options. The Department of Health has funded an evaluation into the effectiveness of Liaison and Diversion which is due to report in 2019.

Crisis Care Concordat partnerships have been established in England and Wales since 2015 and play a pivotal role in coordinating these approaches and improving mental health crisis care pathways. Whilst financial support for Mind's secretariat has been withdrawn, we remain committed to ensuring the Crisis Care Concordat continues to progress and a national steering group is taking this forward.

To assess the adequacy of the legislative framework a joint review of policing powers within the Mental Health Act 1983 was conducted by the Home Office and Department of Health during 2014. Following this review both the Home Office and Department of Health are engaged in preparations for forthcoming changes to the Mental Health Act 1983 as contained in the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and which are designed to further improve the response to those in mental health crisis.

To support these legislative provisions we have recently allocated some £15m in funding to 88 projects across 40 Crisis Care Concordat partnerships to improve places of safety provision and ensure that people in mental health crisis are not detained in police stations. A further £15m of funding has been announced to continue this work.

These steps have been successful in reducing the use of cells and National Police Chiefs Council data highlighted a 54% reduction in the use of cells as places of safety from 2014/15 (4,537 occasions) - 2015/16 (2,100 occasions).

■ Right of Abode: Veterans

Peter Kyle: [\[69321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 29 February 2016 to Question 28086, when the decision on whether to grant the right of abode to former British-Hong Kong servicemen is expected to be made.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We have received representations on behalf of former members of the Hong Kong Military Service Corps. These are being given full consideration.

■ Social Media: Counter-terrorism

Louise Haigh: [\[69275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's press release of 26 March 2017, on social media companies, how she defines the term necessary hashtags.

Sarah Newton:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 3 April 2017, UIN 69424.

Louise Haigh: [\[69278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent (a) meetings or (b) discussions she has had with people who understand the necessary hashtags.

Louise Haigh: [\[69332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions she has had with Facebook on its co-operation in counter-terrorism activity.

Sarah Newton:

This Government is committed to taking robust action to tackle radicalisation online, counter the poisonous ideology promoted by extremists, and remove harmful terrorist related material from the internet.

We have developed strong relationships with social media and internet companies in countering terrorism and extremism online. We are working closely with these companies to ensure that harmful content is swiftly removed from their platforms, and to ensure terrorists have no safe spaces to operate online. We meet with them regularly at both Ministerial and official level.

Louise Haigh:

[\[69424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to her public statement of 26 March 2017, what her Department's definition of necessary hashtags is.

Sarah Newton:

The Home Secretary was referring to image hashing, the process of detecting the recurrence an image or video online.

Hashing has proved effective in the removal of images of child sexual exploitation and has been used by a number of organisations including the Internet Watch Foundation and INTERPOL.

In December 2016 at the EU IT Forum, Facebook announced the development of a cross-industry shared hashing database to improve the detection and removal of terrorist content online. The implementation of this database will help to clear large caches of known terrorist content from a range of online platforms.

The Home Secretary is continuing to challenge Communications Service Providers to improve the automation of detection and subsequent removal of new terrorist content online with the formation of a new industry led forum which will, amongst other things, lead on technical innovations.

■ UK Visas and Immigration: Staff

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[69205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of UK Visas and Immigration staff were employed to process citizenship applications in each month since January 2016.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

ONS release annual figures on breakdown of Civil Servants across all government departments.

For 2016, there were 26,540 FTE under the Home Office which is the home department of UK Visas and Immigration.

Staff resources are moved between teams as the demands of the work require and have been supported from other departments with cross-working throughout 2016.

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of UK Visas and Immigration staff were employed to process applications for documents certifying permanent residence status for UK-resident EEA nationals in each month since January 2016.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

ONS release annual figures on breakdown of Civil Servants across all government departments.

For 2016, there were 26,540 FTE under the Home Office which is the home department of UK Visas and Immigration.

Staff resources are moved between teams as the demands of the work require and have been supported from other departments with cross-working throughout 2016.

■ Unmanned Air Vehicles: Surveillance

Lyn Brown: [\[69449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the merits of the use of drones for forensic imaging as a substitute for crewed police air surveillance capacity.

Brandon Lewis:

This is an operational decision for the police. Decisions on provision of police crewed surveillance in England and Wales are made by the National Police Air Service (NPAS). Drone use is not currently part of their operating model. I understand there are discussions ongoing in policing about the future use of drones.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Afghanistan: Domestic Violence

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the Answer of 7 July 2015 to Question 4985, what funding her Department has provided for services in Afghanistan providing legal advice to women who are victims of domestic violence in the last three years.

Rory Stewart:

The UK is committed to supporting women who are victims of all forms of violence in Afghanistan. From 2014-2016 the UK funded a £3.1m programme which helps women who have been victims of violence to get the justice they deserve. The programme trained hundreds of government officials, community members, police, judiciary, religious leaders, and law students on the Ending Violence Against Women law. It also established a hotline that provided counselling and legal support to survivors of violence which took over 25000 calls from over two years from women who had been victims of domestic and other forms of violence.

Between 2016 and 2018, the UK is providing £3.1m to UNFPA to establish Family Protection Centres in hospitals that provide health, counselling, legal services and referrals to women who have been victims of violence in Afghanistan.

■ Department for International Development: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders:

[\[69223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Rory Stewart:

DFID spend on hotels, hospitality and transport since 2009/10 is shown in the table below:

2009/10	£14,321,441
2010/11	£9,566,599
2011/12	£11,300,024
2012/13	£11,491,665
2013/14	£11,850,595
2014/15	£11,107,650
2015/16	£8,671,557

■ Developing Countries: Nutrition

Tom Brake:

[\[69506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government plans to take to promote good nutrition in developing countries (a) before and (b) after the G7 meeting in May 2017.

James Wharton:

DFID will co-host a call to action on nutrition with the World Bank in Washington in April and will continue to emphasise the importance of nutrition with our G7 partners. We continue to support a range of nutrition programmes in countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East and remain on track to meet the government's commitment to improve the nutrition of 50 million people by 2020.

■ East Africa: Food Aid

Tom Brake: [\[69507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government plans to take with its international partners to increase the level of food available to Somalia and South Sudan.

James Wharton:

The UK is leading on the international response to the food crises in Somalia and South Sudan. DFID quickly responded to the crises, announcing £100m of life-saving emergency assistance for South Sudan and £110m for Somalia. UK food assistance will directly reach 1.5 million people across the two countries. The UK Government has also provided £10m in aid-match funding to the Disasters Emergency Committee's East Africa Crisis Appeal to encourage the public to donate. By matching public donations pound for pound, the Government is boosting the difference Britons can make. We are lobbying the international community to step up financial support, pressing for political solutions to the conflicts that are driving the crises, and helping to negotiate safe access so that urgent aid, including food, can reach those in need.

■ India: Overseas Investment

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[69480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many people have benefited from improved energy access as a result of the 540MW Adhunik Power and Natural Resources Limited power project in Jharkhand which was funded from the Commonwealth Development Corporation.

Rory Stewart:

CDC does not have a \$100m investment in Adhunik Power and Natural Resources Limited. In 2008, CDC committed \$100m to an investment fund (the India Infrastructure Fund) aimed at promoting development and economic prosperity by improving infrastructure in India. That fund has made multiple investments including the investment in Adhunik Power.

At optimal capacity utilisation, the Adhunik plant provides sufficient power to cater to the needs of 3.44 million people.

■ Occupied Territories: Overseas Aid

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assistance her Department has provided to the Occupied Palestinian Territories in each year since 2010-11.

Rory Stewart:

The amounts of DFID official bilateral assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territories since financial year 2010/11 are set out below. The final figure for 2016/17 will be published in mid-2017.

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL DFID BILATERAL ASSISTANCE (£)
2010/11	73,572,000
2011/12	91,212,000
2012/13	87,735,000
2013/14	93,859,000
2014/15	83,404,000
2015/16	77,351,000

■ Syria: Politics and Government

Tulip Siddiq: [\[69511\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the Answer of 18 December 2015 to Question 19719, on Syria, what progress her Department has made in delivering basic governance in Syria since 2015-16.

Rory Stewart:

In Syria, we deliver basic governance by supporting local councils in moderate opposition areas to deliver basic services in response to needs identified by their communities. In 2016, UK support helped local councils provide over 2.3 million Syrians with improved infrastructure; including new roads, electricity grids and waste collection services.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Department for International Trade: Internet

Justin Madders: [\[69122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the five most visited websites were by staff of his Department in the last year for which figures are available.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade's (DIT) staff use legacy IT systems provided by a range of partners including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy as well as IT systems directly procured since the Department's incorporation in November 2016.

For those systems managed directly by DIT we are investigating how to provide the data requested and will respond to the hon. Member in due course. A copy of my reply will be placed in the libraries of the house.

■ Department for International Trade: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders: [\[69224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how much his Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Greg Hands:

The Department for International Trade will be releasing its first full year travel and subsistence spend in its Annual Reports and Accounts.

■ Exports: Government Assistance

Grahame Morris: [\[69460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what support he plans to provide to assist first-time export businesses; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

The Department for International Trade supports first-time exporters through a variety of tailored services.

Our digital platform GREAT.GOV.UK provides businesses access to millions of pounds' worth of potential overseas business to help them start or continue exporting; and provides a new searchable export directory to match businesses according to the worldwide demand for UK goods and services.

UK Export Finance (UKEF), the UK's export credit agency, helps UK companies of all sizes and in all sectors win, fulfil and get paid for exports. Its regional Export Finance Managers are the first point of contact for guidance for UK exporters, including first time export businesses.

■ Exports: Licensing

Grahame Morris: [\[69459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what guidance is available to businesses on obtaining an export license.

Greg Hands:

Guidance on the GOV.UK website covers export controls and export licensing, including which exports are controlled, how to apply for a licence and exporter responsibilities. In addition we run introductory and intermediate training events, up and down the country, on different aspects of exports controls. Exporters may also sign up for regular bulletins on changes in policy and licensing.

■ Foreign Investment: Dispute Resolution

Stephen Gethins: [\[68867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what representations his Department has received from civil society organisations on the EU's proposed multilateral investment court.

Stephen Gethins: [\[68868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what representations his Department has received from EU institutions and member states on the EU's proposed multilateral investment court.

Stephen Gethins: [\[68869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what representations his Department has made to EU institutions and member states on the EU's proposed multilateral investment court.

Stephen Gethins: [\[68870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment his Department has made of the potential use of the EU's proposed multilateral investment court.

Greg Hands:

The European Commission has proposed a multilateral investment court (MIC) to replace traditional investment dispute settlement mechanisms in individual trade and investment agreements. This initiative is at an early stage and there are as yet no detailed proposals regarding how a MIC would function or be resourced.

The Government is engaging with EU institutions and member states through the Council as the proposal is developed. The European Commission has recently completed a public consultation on the MIC. The Government encouraged key stakeholders from across the civil society, business, arbitration and legal communities to engage in this exercise.

■ Overseas Trade: India

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[69481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps his Department is taking to improve bilateral trade with India.

Greg Hands:

The Prime Minister's first bilateral visit beyond Europe was to India. Joined by my Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade and myself, she led a UK business delegation, to meet with key Indian businesses and senior officials.

She met Prime Minister Modi, opened the India-UK Tech Summit, and announced £1.2bn of commercial deals. Both governments committed to building the "closest possible trade and economic relationship".

My Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade co-chairs the India/UK Joint Economic and Trade Committee, and established a Joint Working Group to review and strengthen our trading relationship, both now and when we leave the EU.

UK Export Finance has considerable appetite to support UK exports to India and welcomes new applications for support.

JUSTICE

■ Administration Of Justice: Pregnancy

Chris Elmore: [\[69379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the potential obstacles faced by pregnant women in accessing justice; and what steps she plans to take to remove such obstacles.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The Government's reforms to the scope of civil legal aid were designed to refocus funding on those who need it most and for the most serious cases in which legal advice and representation was justified.

We have specifically protected legal aid (both for initial advice and representation), subject to the statutory means and merits tests, for civil legal services provided in relation to contravention of the Equality Act 2010. Publicly funded advice continues to be available for Employment Tribunal discrimination claims, and publicly funded advice and representation is available in the Employment Appeal Tribunal. This therefore includes funding for new and expectant mothers who may have experienced discrimination.

■ Legal Aid Scheme: Domestic Violence

Tom Watson: [\[69519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the potential effect on domestic violence victims of having to pay a fee to GPs to provide evidence of eligibility to legal aid.

Tom Watson: [\[69590\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress her Department has made on removing the fee GPs charge for providing a letter of evidence for domestic violence victims to access legal aid since 7 February 2017.

Sir Oliver Heald:

As I outlined in my previous answer of 6 March 2017 (65872 and 65873), we will be announcing details of the full extent of our proposals in relation to domestic violence evidence requirements for legal aid in private family law fairly shortly.

■ Legal Aid Scheme: Immigration

Kate Green: [\[68866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) children under 18- years of age and (b) young people aged 18 to 24-years old received legal aid funding for immigration cases in each year since 2009-10.

Kate Green: [\[68894\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) children under 18 and (b) young people aged 18 to 24-years of age (i) applied for legal aid through the Exceptional Case Funding Scheme (ECF) and (ii) were granted ECF in immigration cases in (A) 2013-14, (B) 2014-15 and (C) 2015-16.

Kate Green: [\[68895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) children under 18 and (b) young people aged 18 to 24-years of age received legal aid funding in each of the last seven years.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2013 was introduced under the Coalition Government and took effect in April 2013. Section 10 of the Act provided for the Exceptional Case Funding scheme, to address those cases which would not ordinarily be eligible for legal aid under the post-LASPO regime, but where an individual's Convention rights would be breached in the absence of having funded representation.

Applications to the Exceptional Case Funding scheme for immigration matters, by age of applicant, April 2013 to March 2016

FY

APPLICATION

RECEIVED	UNDER 18	18-24
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Apr 2013 - Mar 2014	0	12
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Apr 2014 - Mar 2015	14	39
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Apr 2015 - Mar 2016	15	59
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Applications to the Exceptional Case Funding scheme for immigration matters, which were granted ², by age of applicant, April 2013 to March 2016

FY

APPLICATION

RECEIVED	UNDER 18	18-24
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Apr 2013 - Mar 2014	0	0
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Apr 2014 - Mar 2015	4	8
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Apr 2015 - Mar 2016	12	40
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As the ECF scheme has developed, providers have familiarised themselves with the legislative framework, which has also been clarified by various judgements during this time. This has led to an increase in the volume of successful applications.

The Legal Aid Agency publishes data on an annual basis which shows uptake broken down by age group including children under 18 and young people. Data covering up to and including the financial year 2015/16 is available at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/533053/legal-aid-statistics-england-and-wales-client-diversity-data.csv. Data covering the following financial year will be published on 30 June 2017.

Legal help/controlled legal representation completed matters and civil representation certificates closed ¹ for immigration matters, by age of applicant, April 2009 to March 2016

Period	Under 18	18-24
Apr 2009 - Mar 2010	12,187	24,366
Apr 2010 - Mar 2011	13,129	23,586
Apr 2011 - Mar 2012	8,137	15,331
Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	5,175	12,268
Apr 2013 - Mar 2014	4,050	9,883
Apr 2014 - Mar 2015	4,479	8,947
Apr 2015 - Mar 2016	4,876	9,508

¹ Includes some instances where a proportion of the costs are met by the opponent

The LASPO Act removed some types of immigration cases from the scope of the legal aid scheme, reflecting the decrease in volumes since its inception in April 2013.

Matters closed in the periods shown above will not necessarily have commenced in the same period.

Legal help/controlled legal representation completed matters and civil representation certificates closed ¹ for immigration matters, by age of applicant, April 2009 to March 2016

Period	Under 18	18-24	Unknown
Apr 2009 - Mar 2010	12,187	24,366	2,955
Apr 2010 - Mar 2011	13,129	23,586	1,526
Apr 2011 - Mar 2012	8,137	15,331	1,120
Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	5,175	12,268	1,110
Apr 2013 - Mar 2014	4,050	9,883	1,313
Apr 2014 - Mar 2015	4,479	8,947	1,443
Apr 2015 - Mar 2016	4,876	9,508	1,552

¹ Includes some instances where a proportion of the costs are met by the opponent

The LASPO Act removed some types of immigration cases from the scope of the legal aid scheme, reflecting the decrease in volumes since its inception in April 2013. Matters closed in the periods shown above will not necessarily have commenced in the same period.

■ Members: Correspondence

Louise Haigh:

[\[66332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when she plans to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Sheffield, Heeley of 15 February 2017 on section 67 of the Serious Crime Act 2015.

Sir Oliver Heald:

A reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Sheffield, Heeley of 15 February 2017 was sent on 30 March 2017.

The Government has repeatedly made clear that it is committed to commencing section 67 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 and the new offence will come into effect on 3 April 2017.

■ Pregnancy: Discrimination

Tulip Siddiq: [69320]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many tribunal cases there were related to section 18 of the Equalities Act 2010, workplace pregnancy and maternity discrimination in (a) 2015-16 and (b) 2016-17.

Sir Oliver Heald:

Information on the number of employment tribunal cases related to section 18 of the Equalities Act 2010, workplace pregnancy and maternity discrimination can be found in the official published statistics at the following link, for the period up to December 2016:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunals-and-gender-recognition-certificate-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2016>

The January to March 2017 figures are not yet available, but will be published on 8 June 2017.

■ Prison Officers: Industrial Disputes

Grahame Morris: [69542]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will give prison officers the right to take industrial action in cases where authorities refuse to address a health and safety grievance.

Elizabeth Truss:

In answer to the Right Honourable Gentleman, we do take any health and safety matters raised seriously and particularly so in the context of prison safety where I have been clear as to this being our priority. It is unlawful for prison officers to take industrial action and that includes the example provided in the question. Such action immediately places the safety of staff and prisoners at risk. I hope that the Right Honourable gentleman would agree that the right way to deal with any health and safety grievance raised by prison officers is through the continuation of local dialogue and then potentially further discussion at a regional and national level if an agreed way forward cannot be found. We are, for example, currently working constructively with the Prison Officers Association to address a number of health and safety actions which were discussed at a national level and jointly agreed in November 2016.

■ Prisons: Port Talbot

Liz Saville Roberts: [69078]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what category of offenders will be detained in the proposed new prison at Port Talbot.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[69082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the number of jobs which will be created during the (a) construction and (b) operation of the proposed new prison in Port Talbot.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[69083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate she has made of the cost to the local health service of a new prison in Port Talbot.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[69130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate she has made of the cost of designing and building a new prison in Port Talbot.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[69131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate she has made of the cost to the local police service of a new prison in Port Talbot.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[69132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the capacity of the proposed new prison in Port Talbot will be.

Elizabeth Truss:

We will close down ageing and ineffective prisons, replacing them with buildings fit for today's demands. We are investing £1.3bn to build up to 10,000 new prison places with better education facilities and other rehabilitative services. On 22 March 2017, my Rt Hon friend, the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice announced plans for the building of four new prisons in England and Wales, replacing old and overcrowded establishments with new, fit for purpose buildings.

As well as creating modern establishments fit for the twenty-first century, the proposed new builds will act as a boost to regional economies across the country – creating up to two thousand jobs in the construction and manufacturing industries and new opportunities for local businesses.

The plans include a new prison in Port Talbot in South Wales. The Ministry of Justice intends to apply for planning permission soon.

At this stage it is too early to give an estimate of the cost of designing and building the new prison but we will seek to ensure value for money for taxpayers. With regard to funding arrangements for health and police services, we will engage with relevant public sector partners to ensure they are able to develop suitable plans for the new prison.

■ Rape: Trials

Ms Harriet Harman: [69629]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will list the judges who have allowed evidence of a rape complainant's previous sexual history without an application being made ahead of trial in each of the last five years.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ Reoffenders

Philip Davies: [69621]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the reoffending rate is for each community rehabilitation company by category of offence.

Elizabeth Truss:

One year proven reoffending rates for the first cohort managed under our probation reforms will be published in the quarterly proven reoffending statistics bulletin in October 2017, which will be available on GOV.uk.

Interim Payment by Results figures, based on a shorter reoffending period than the final results, were published on 27 October 2016 and 26 January 2017. These can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/proven-reoffending-statistics-quarterly-january-to-december-2014> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/proven-reoffending-statistics-april-2014-to-march-2015>

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

■ Keith Palmer

Tim Farron: [69272]

To ask the Leader of the House, whether he will consider honouring PC Keith Palmer with a shield in the Chamber like those which commemorate hon. Members killed in war or by terrorist acts.

Mr David Lidington:

The House authorities will consult PC Palmer's family and the Metropolitan Police about the most appropriate form of memorial.

The hon. Member may wish to know that PC Palmer's name has already appeared on the website of the Police Roll of Honour Trust. He will also be remembered permanently at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire where UK Police Memorial provide a lasting tribute to the sacrifices that police officers make.

■ Short Money

John Spellar:

[\[69330\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, pursuant to the Answer of 17 March 2017 to Question 67233, on Short money, when he plans to publish the breakdown of staff salaries paid for from that Short money funding allocation.

Mr David Lidington:

Parties in receipt of Short Money are required to provide the Accounting Officer of the House of Commons with a certificate of an independent auditor to confirm that all expenses in respect of which the party received financial assistance were incurred exclusively in relation to the party's parliamentary business. In addition, parties must now provide information relating to staffing and other costs as set out in resolutions dated 23 March 2016 and 7 July 2016.

The deadline for providing this information for the 2016/17 financial year is 31 May 2017 and details will be added to Parliament's website as soon as is practically possible after this date.

SCOTLAND

■ Scotland Office: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders:

[\[69345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much his Department spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

David Mundell:

The Scotland Office do not separately record the costs of food and drink and some of this expenditure is likely to be included within the hospitality costs.

The costs in each of the last five years of hotels, transport and hospitality are shown below:

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Hotels	£35,640	£62,117	£67,550	£108,619	£107,531
Hospitality	£25,466	£37,865	£24,973	£9,905	£8,987
Transport	£223,129	£314,755	£282,086	£306,765	£338,992

TRANSPORT

■ Aircraft: Defibrillators

Corri Wilson: [\[69274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the Government plans to make the carriage of defibrillators compulsory on aeroplanes.

Mr John Hayes:

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) is responsible for the regulations relating to equipment to be carried on aircraft operating in Europe and competent national authorities, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) being such a body in the UK, are responsible for oversight of the compliance. The EASA regulations do not require aircraft to carry defibrillators.

Corri Wilson: [\[69448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many British people (a) suffered and (b) died as a result of cardiac arrests while on a plane in each of the last five years; and if he will assess the potential merits of introducing statutory proposals on ensuring the availability of defibrillators on planes after the UK leaves the EU.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government does not hold specific data relating to how many British people suffered, or died, as a result of cardiac arrests on-board aircraft. However cases of sudden cardiac arrest are very rare when compared to the number of passengers carried.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) is responsible for the regulations relating to equipment to be carried on aircraft operating in Europe and competent national authorities, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) being such a body in the UK, are responsible for oversight of the compliance. The EASA regulations do not require aircraft to carry defibrillators.

Most UK operators, including all long-haul operators, already carry defibrillators.

The Government is considering carefully all the potential implications arising for our aviation industry from the UK's exit from the EU, including the implications for the continued participation in the EASA system.

■ Aviation: Fuels

Richard Burden: [\[69591\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policy on decarbonising UK aviation of the International Council on Clean Transportation report, entitled Mitigating international aviation emissions: Risks and opportunities for alternative jet fuels, published on 22 March 2017.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government recognises the need for action at a global level to address CO2 emissions from aviation. To this end, the UK plays a key role in the work of the UN's International Civil Aviation Organisation, including as an active participant in the development of the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation. We welcome the publication of the report and we are considering it carefully in relation to this work.

We are also taking action at a national level to encourage the development and supply of lower carbon jet fuels. We have consulted on proposed amendments to the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligations Order to include support for the use of sustainable alternative fuels in aviation. We will publish the outcome of the consultation in due course.

We have made £20 million available through the National Productivity Investment Fund to leverage private sector investment to help develop and commercialise alternative fuels. This can reduce the carbon impact of aviation and heavy goods vehicles, and capitalise on the industrial opportunities for growth and jobs.

■ Department for Transport: Internet

Justin Madders:

[\[69126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the five most visited websites were by staff of his Department in the last year for which figures are available.

Mr John Hayes:

The top five most visited websites by staff is set out in the table below. The date range for this information is from 1st January 2016 – 31st December 2016.

DFT (c)	DVLA	DVSA	VCA	MC A
google.co m	http://vidio.springserve.com		Informati on not collected	Informati on not collected
msn.com	http://t.lkqd.net	bbci.co.uk		google.co m
google.co. uk	http://ads.adaptv.advertising. com	bing.com		
gstatic.co m	https://hangouts.google.com	bbc.co.uk		
twitter.com	http://event-log.videe.tv	civilservice.gov. uk		

■ Department for Transport: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders: [\[69227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr John Hayes:

The table below reflects expenditure incurred by the Central Department over the financial years 2011/12 – 2015/16, split by the categories requested.

EXPENDITURE	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Hotels & Subsistence	£1,076,328	£1,196,281	£1,196,334	£873,395	£840,278
Hospitality & Catering	£73,252	£53,398	£69,167	£106,501	£111,843
Transport	£2,351,001	£2,292,028	£2,695,434	£2,349,957	£3,107,503

Please note that the Department for Transport's financial systems record both; hotel accommodation and subsistence, and hospitality and catering as combined categories that cannot be split further.

■ Garages And Petrol Stations: Prices

Victoria Atkins: [\[69135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on the extent of price differentials between motorway and non-motorway service stations; and if he will make a statement.

Mr John Hayes:

The Department does not monitor the pricing of fuel at Motorway Service Areas or on Trunk Roads.

However, the Department does monitor areas of concern raised by road users in order to make improvements and Highways England are monitoring the price of fuel solely for evaluating the impact of the motorway fuel price signs trial.

■ Highway Code

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[69534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of introducing within the Highway Code a universal duty to give way when turning at junctions.

Andrew Jones:

We have not yet made any assessment of the merits of this change but are consulting with relevant colleagues and stakeholders, particularly those involved with pedestrian safety and disability groups, about the impacts of such a change. We would need to be convinced that safety and accessibility would be maintained or enhanced if a universal duty to give way when turning at junctions were introduced.

■ Large Goods Vehicles: Fuels

Chris Evans:

[\[69537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps the Government is taking to encourage hauliers to switch to alternatives to diesel engines.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government has implemented measures to encourage the uptake of alternatively-fuelled commercial vehicles. These include increasing rewards for renewable gaseous fuels under the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation, the £11m Low Carbon Truck Trial, extending the Plug-in Van Grant to encompass heavier lorries, and a £20m Future Fuels for Flight and Freight Competition. We have also committed £20 million funding to enable the freight and logistics sector to trial the very latest in innovative low and zero emission vehicle technologies in their fleets.

■ Manchester Piccadilly Station

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[69245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made for future capacity needs of Manchester Piccadilly station in (a) 2018-19, (b) 2019-20, (c) 2020-21 and (d) 2021-22.

Paul Maynard:

The franchises have set out their plans to meet passenger needs in Manchester through the franchise period. In addition, as part of planning the next control period we are assessing the requirements for passenger capacity into Greater Manchester. This capacity can be provided by more frequent or longer trains. This process is on-going. A number of announcements will be made in the coming months which will state the outcomes desired from the rail industry in the next control period. This will be followed up later in the year with a strategy for the government's priorities for investment in the railway.

■ Motorcycles: Noise

Sir Hugo Swire:

[\[69266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of legislation governing noise from motorcycles.

Sir Hugo Swire: [\[69267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to reduce the level of acceptable noise from motorcycles in the next 12 months.

Sir Hugo Swire: [\[69269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many prosecutions there have been for motorcycles exceeding acceptable noise levels in each of the last five years.

Sir Hugo Swire: [\[69270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with industry to better regulate noise emissions from motorcycles.

Mr John Hayes:

Technical standards for noise from new motorcycles are set at an International level by both the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). These have recently been updated to better reflect real driving conditions.

The European Commission is obliged to investigate ways to improve legislation further and to introduce more stringent limits by 2021. They are currently conducting research with the aim of agreeing limit values, and the UK will continue to play a key role in these negotiations through our membership of the UNECE in Geneva.

The industry are fully engaged at the UNECE discussions and Department for Transport officials hold routine discussions outside of this forum.

Prosecutions are a matter for the Ministry of Justice.

Sir Hugo Swire: [\[69268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the penalty is for motorcycles exceeding permissible noise levels on roads.

Mr John Hayes:

Regulation 54 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 as amended, requires exhausts and silencers to be maintained in good working order and not altered so as to increase noise. Regulation 97 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 provides that "no motor vehicle shall be used on a road in such a manner as to cause any excessive noise which could have been avoided by the exercise of reasonable care on the part of the driver."

It is an offence under section 42 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to use on a road a motor vehicle which does not comply with these requirements. This is punishable on summary conviction by a fine at level 3 on the standard scale for vehicles with fewer than 8 seats (including motorcycles).

■ Network Rail: Finance

John Redwood: [\[69360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, by what date all the derivatives owned by Network Rail are scheduled to have expired or been closed out.

Paul Maynard:

The last derivative will mature on 30th September 2027.

John Redwood: [\[69361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what forecast has been made of the overall profit or loss of the derivatives held by Network Rail in the last five years.

Paul Maynard:

The overall profit and loss is recorded as "Other gains and losses" in Network Rail's Annual Report and Accounts. The following movements have been recorded:

2016 -£65m

2015 -£41m

2014 £304m

2013 -£43m

2012 -£567m

■ Parking: Private Sector

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[69532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reason the public purse contributes to the cost of private parking firms receiving drivers' details from the DVLA; and if he will make it his policy that such firms pay the full cost to receive such details.

Andrew Jones:

The law allows the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) to release vehicle keeper information to those who can demonstrate a reasonable cause to receive it.

The DVLA's charges for releasing data are intended to recover the full cost (including overheads) of providing the information so that the DVLA neither profits at the expense of customers nor makes a loss for taxpayers to subsidise. Over time, the costs of individual DVLA services can slightly increase or decrease, depending in part on the volume of requests, leading to a small surplus or deficit in the short term.

However, the DVLA keeps fees and charges under review so that the public purse does not, over time, contribute to the cost of private parking firms receiving vehicle keepers' details from the DVLA.

■ Railway Signals: Digital Technology

John Redwood: [\[69363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the programme for introducing digital signalling on the rail network.

Paul Maynard:

The Department is working with Network Rail and the industry to assess the case for an accelerated roll out of digital signalling technologies, which is affordable, and targeted at areas where capacity and performance are needed most.

This work includes developing options and a business case for the £450m of National Infrastructure Investment Fund allocation announced in the Autumn Statement last year.

■ Railways: Greater Manchester

Andrew Gwynne: [69246]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made on the electrification of the line between Manchester Victoria and Stalybridge.

Paul Maynard:

Network Rail are on site and will soon start to install the foundations east of Manchester Victoria in preparation for wiring.

■ Railways: Repairs and Maintenance

John Redwood: [69362]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the cost overruns on major projects at Network Rail have been in the last five years.

Paul Maynard:

The rail regulator, Office of Rail and Road, publishes annual efficiency and finance assessments of Network Rail. These includes their assessments of Network Rail's performance in relation to both major enhancement projects and other areas of spend. In their assessment of 2015/16 the ORR noted an 'enhancements underperformance of £115m'.

These annual assessments can be found here:- <http://orr.gov.uk/rail/economic-regulation/regulation-of-network-rail/monitoring-performance/efficiency-and-finance-assessment>

This Government has been clear about the affordability and deliverability challenges faced in the current investment programme (Control Period 5 2014-2019). This is why in 2015 Sir Peter Hendy was asked to replan the programme to put it on a more sustainable footing.

Following Sir Peter's review we have revised our approach to major projects. The effective governance the Department has put in place is helping to manage the programme within the fixed funding available.

■ Railways: WiFi

Louise Haigh:

[\[69092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the data demand per train for onboard WiFi by the completion of the franchise renewal process in 2028.

Paul Maynard:

The estimated data demand for on board wi-fi for a train is determined by the average journey duration, number of people on the train and the applications passengers are using. Today, an allowance of 30MBytes per passenger journey equates to 60-100GBytes per train per month, which is expected to rise to 300-500GBytes as demand increases.

To ensure that connectivity keeps pace with expected consumer demand, Train Operating Companies (TOC's) will have an obligation to increase the minimum data allowance by 25% year on year once the service is fully available.

■ South West Railway Line

Sarah Olney:

[\[69457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the increase in suburban services on a Sunday serving (a) Kingston, (b) Richmond and (c) New Malden as a result of First MTR South Western Trains Limited being awarded the South Western rail franchise.

Paul Maynard:

From December 2018 First MTR South Western Trains Limited expect to run an enhanced service on Sundays, with a frequency equivalent to a weekday off-peak service after 1pm on many routes, including to and from Kingston, Richmond, and New Malden.

■ South West Railway Line: Railway Stations

Sarah Olney:

[\[69513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential improvements to stations serving Richmond Park constituency as a result of First MTR South Western Trains Limited taking over the franchise for South Western.

Paul Maynard:

First MTR South Western Trains Limited expect to invest in improvements to passenger facilities at stations across the South Western franchise network. The operator will develop its detailed plans for where these improvements will be delivered as it takes over the franchise.

■ South West Railway Line: Rolling Stock

Sarah Olney: [\[69445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what improvements are planned to rolling stock on routes serving Richmond Park constituency after First MTR South Western Trains Limited begin operating the South Western rail franchise in August 2017.

Paul Maynard:

By December 2020 First MTR South Western Trains Limited expect to introduce 750 new carriages for use on routes to Reading, Windsor & Eton Riverside, Shepperton, Woking, and Guildford. These modern trains will provide an improved journey experience with fast reliable Wi-Fi, enhanced Passenger Information Systems, air conditioning, power sockets, and toilets.

■ South West Railway Line: WiFi

Sarah Olney: [\[69456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether First MTR South Western Trains Limited will provide WiFi on (a) stations and (b) rolling stock when it begins operating the South Western rail franchise in August 2017.

Paul Maynard:

First MTR South Western Trains Limited expect to offer free Wi-Fi at all of the mainland stations they will manage by March 2020. Free Wi-Fi is expected to be available on all of the South Western mainland fleet by the end of 2018.

■ St Pancras Station: Immigration Controls

Lyn Brown: [\[69164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the change in the amount of time taken to access the platforms at St. Pancras International station since the introduction of e-Passport gates.

Paul Maynard:

The Department for Transport does not hold information on the number of ePassport gates present at St Pancras International, or on their operation. Passports and immigration are the responsibility of the Home Office and UK Border Agency.

Lyn Brown: [\[69210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many ePassport gates are in place at St Pancras International Station; and what proportion of those gates have been fully functional for each day since their introduction.

Paul Maynard:

The Department for Transport does not hold information on the number of ePassport gates present at St Pancras International, or on their operation. Passports and immigration are the responsibility of the Home Office and UK Border Agency.

■ Volkswagen

Mary Creagh:

[\[69282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 27 March 2017 to Question 68777, if he will provide the number of (a) Audis, (b) SEATs, (c) VW commercial vehicles and (d) VW private cars to which fixes had been applied by the time of the January and February meetings.

Mr John Hayes:

During my meetings with representatives from Volkswagen on 16th January and 6th February, I was informed of the overall number of 'fixes' that had been applied to the 1.2 million affected vehicles and pressed them to ensure these were being implemented as quickly as possible for UK consumers.

Officials meet with Volkswagen on a monthly basis and are provided with the detailed information requested. This is set out in the table and includes the most recent meeting on 20th March 2017.

		NUMBER OF VEHICLES REPORTED 'FIXED' ON:	
		17 th January 2017	20 th March 2017
	21 st February 2017		
Audi	142,452	175,507	197,521
SEAT	15,438	25,253	29,844
VW commercial vehicles	11,395	20,839	25,088
VW passenger cars	167,560	228,991	262,162

WALES

■ Wales Office: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders:

[\[69229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how much his Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Guto Bebb:

The Departmental spend on hotels, hospitality, food and drink and transport in each of the last five years is set out in the table below:-

FINANCIAL YEAR	HOTELS£	HOSPITALITY£	FOOD AND DRINK £	TRANSPORT*£
2011/12	27,305	0	0	217,565
2012/13	35,765	0	5,297	262,513
2013/14	43,099	0	6,836	194,502
2014/15	42,834	8,439	6,285	164,712
2015/16	19,506	0	5,641	114,035

*Spend on transport relates to Ministerial cars, hire cars, rail and air.

The expenditure from 2011-12 to 2013-14 includes spend by the Commission on Devolution. The transport costs reduced in 2014-15 and further in 2015-16 with the former Secretary of State for Wales giving up use of his Ministerial car. The impact of these savings is shown in part in financial year 2014-15 and in full in financial year 2015-16. Spend on hospitality and food and drink relate to Ministerial and Commission on Devolution functions.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Civil Partnerships

Caroline Lucas: [\[69447\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2017 to Question 67372, on civil partnerships, if she will set out (a) how and (b) within what timeframe the Government intends to undertake its assessment of the impact of equalisation of civil partnerships between same and different sex couples, in accordance with the judgment of the Court of Appeal in *Steinfeld and Another v Secretary of State for Education* (2017); and if she will make a statement.

Caroline Dinenage:

As the Government has said previously, we carried out a consultation on the future of civil partnerships in 2014. The review found that there was no clear consensus on the future of civil partnerships. Given the lack of any consensus, the Government did not change the Civil Partnership Act 2004.

The decision not to change the law was judicially reviewed last year and the Government won in the High Court. The Court of Appeal recently dismissed an appeal against the High Court judgment and confirmed that the Government's approach is lawful.

We welcome the Court's ruling. We will carefully consider this judgment and its implications before deciding on our next steps.

We understand that the claimants in this case have requested an appeal of the Court's decision.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Autism: Employment

Cat Smith:

[69612]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the National Autistic Society's report, The autism employment gap: too much information in the workplace, published in October 2016, if he will make it his policy to increase the number of people with autism in employment.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Government is committed to increasing the number of people with disabilities or long-term health conditions, including autism, in employment and there are a range of programmes and initiatives to support them. By March 2017, 1,000 Job Centre Plus staff have been trained to give claimants who have autism the best possible support with their claims.

New measures to help people with autism were launched on 27 March, to mark World Autism Awareness Week. This includes a Disability Confident autism toolkit, which provides comprehensive information on autism and hidden impairments, as well as guidance on employment and local authority services. This Toolkit has been promoted to all government departments.

In addition, the Department has helped to develop a Disability Passport - About Me - to support people with autism who are seeking jobs and those helping them. Disabled people can share it with their work coach or adviser, to help improve communication and put any reasonable adjustments in place at the earliest opportunity.

Finally, Improving Lives – the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper' sets out the Government's proposals for improving work and health outcomes for disabled people and people with long-term health conditions. We are now considering consultation responses and the next steps for longer term reform.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Maladministration

John Nicolson:

[69158]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much has been written off by his Department as a result of maladministration in the last five years.

Caroline Nokes:

The total amount written off by the department for the last five years is available in the public domain via the links below to the Annual Report and Accounts.

2011/12

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214340/dwp-annual-report-and-accounts-2011-2012.pdf

2012/13

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/264555/dwp-annual-report-accounts-2012-2013.pdf

2013/14

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/323953/dwp-annual-report-accounts-2013-2014.PDF

2014/15

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445950/dwp-annual-report-and-accounts-2014-to-2015.pdf

2015/16

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/534933/dwp-annual-report-and-accounts-2015-2016.pdf

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Official Hospitality

Justin Madders:

[69230]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much his Department has spent on (a) hotels, (b) hospitality, (c) food and drink and (d) transport in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Caroline Nokes:

There are around 80,000 staff working at DWP across over 900 sites, with many leaders, junior and above, managing staff across a number of sites. The table below provides figures for spend on hotels, hospitality, and transport. For 2015-16, this is an average annual spend of only £102.41 on transport, 4p on hospitality, and £406.77 on hotels per person.

HEADING / FINANCIAL YEAR		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
		£	£	£	£	£
a)	Hotels	4,986,727	6,022,646	7,023,593	8,124,094	8,695,414
b)	Hospitality	649	868	4,220	4,826	3,081
d)	Transport	32,570,479	30,555,273	33,379,690	32,648,395	34,539,050

The Department does not separately record amounts spent on food and drink.

■ Employment and Support Allowance

Grahame Morris:

[69483]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he plans to announce the list of conditions that would exempt a person from an employment and support allowance reassessment.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave to a previous question 64797

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-questions-answers/?page=1&max=20&questiontype=AllQuestions&house=commons%2clouds&use-dates=True&answered-from=2015-05-07&answered-to=2017-03-22&dept=29&uin=64797+>

■ Housing Benefit: Young People

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[69486]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will place in the Library details of the evidence required of claimants of the housing cost element of universal credit aged between the ages of 18 and 21 to whom paragraph 4A does not apply as detailed under paragraph 4B, parts a, b, c, d, e, f and g; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Nokes:

DWP will gather information to determine eligibility for many of these exemptions, such as whether the claimant has responsibility for a child or is exempt from the shared accommodation rate, as part of the standard claims process. Where a claimant qualifies for such an exemption no further information will be required.

For other exemptions, we will not expect a claimant who tells us that they are unable to live with their parents or that they have been subjected to domestic violence, for example, to provide documentary evidence. A reference from a third party – such as a local authority or a relevant charity – would be acceptable.

■ Jobcentres: Plaistow

Lyn Brown:

[69163]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make an assessment of the effect of the closure of Plaistow Jobcentre Plus on people with (a) learning disabilities, (b) autism, (c) sensory impairment and (d) others who find it difficult to travel independently.

Damian Hinds:

Throughout the development of the proposals for Plaistow Jobcentre the department has been mindful of the impact on staff and customers as part of its duties under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Statistical analysis of the potential impact of the proposals on people with the protected characteristics has informed high-level decision-making so far. As we obtain further local, site-specific information we will

ensure any issues identified are also taken fully into consideration when the final decisions are made.

Existing DWP processes make provision for those unable to travel independently to their designated Jobcentre.

Lyn Brown:

[69587]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the closure of Plaistow Jobcentre Plus on increased journey times and travel costs for people currently using that job centre.

Damian Hinds:

We have sought to minimise the impact on claimants travel as far as possible. The new sites at Canning Town and Stratford are 1.4 miles and 1.6 miles respectively from the existing site and Jobcentre Plus is able to reimburse travel costs for those claiming Jobseekers' Allowance or the equivalent claimants in Universal Credit for any attendance above their fortnightly signing appointment. In addition, those claiming Employment and Support Allowance and Income Support are not generally required to attend their local jobcentre regularly.

Throughout our planning we calculated distances and journey times to Canning Town and Stratford using a variety of methods to ensure accuracy, including online tools and timetables, information collected on local public transport routes, and input and scrutiny from local DWP staff and management. Rather than assess the travel time from customers' homes to their current and proposed new jobcentre, we have focused instead on the distances between existing and proposed jobcentre locations to help customers better understand any differences in distance. This is to reflect the fact that people who travel to the jobcentre will use whichever type of transport suits their personal circumstances, they may not be starting their journey from their home, and not all those who use our services are claimants.

In addition, throughout the development of these proposals, the department has been mindful of the impact on staff and customers as part of its duties under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Statistical analysis of the potential impact of the proposals on people with the protected characteristics has informed high-level decision-making so far. As we obtain further local, site-specific information we will ensure any issues identified are also taken fully into consideration when the final decisions are made.

■ Jobcentres: West Bromwich

Tom Watson:

[69155]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many public access computer terminals there are for searching Universal Jobmatch and applying for universal credit across the Jobcentre Plus network in West Bromwich East constituency.

Damian Hinds:

West Bromwich Jobcentre sits in the West Bromwich East constituency. We currently have 21 computer terminals available for customers to use within West Bromwich Jobcentre to search Universal Jobmatch and to apply for universal credit.

The 21 computers also allow the Work Coaches to support customers who have limited knowledge of how to use a computer properly, particularly searching for jobs through the daily Job Clubs or one to one support.

We offer daily Job Clubs to all age groups, matching customers to vacancies, Apprenticeships and Traineeships and a triage service where employers are on site offering an immediate opportunity for customers to be seen by a variety of employers on the day.

Vulnerable customers are also given one to one support when either making new claims or again searching for jobs.

We work with a number of partner organisations across the Borough and within the West Bromwich East constituency, such as Sandwell Women's Enterprise Development Agency who have 11 computers offering CV and Job search support to unemployed customers / constituents.

West Bromwich Library has 44 computers for constituent use.

Sandwell College have in excess of 260 main terminals and 60 laptops, offering on site or virtual learning from home for all unemployed people and both full and part time students.

■ MAXIMUS Health and Human Services

Grahame Morris:

[\[69498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what penalty payments the Government received from Maximus related to that company's employment and support allowance contract.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Department considers this information to be commercially sensitive and release would prejudice the interests of the service provider (Centre for Health and Disability Assessments – a MAXIMUS company) and the Department's future dealings with it. Contractual remedies are in place if the provider fails to deliver against the service standards and service credits would be applied when appropriate.

■ Pension Protection Fund

Mrs Anne Main:

[\[69152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when the proposed changes to the Pension Protection Fund's compensation cap extension will be implemented; and if he will make a statement.

Richard Harrington:

The regulations to implement the increase in the Pension Protection Fund's compensation cap for long service were laid on 7 March 2017, and subject to Parliamentary approval, will come into force on 6 April 2017.

■ Personal Independence Payment

Tom Brake: [\[69242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what (a) training and (b) guidance personal independence payment assessors receive in the social model of disability.

Penny Mordaunt:

During the assessment the health professional focuses on the functional impairment an individual faces in their environment.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Epilepsy

Kate Green: [\[69579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with epilepsy who were previously in receipt of disability living allowance and have undergone a review to assess their eligibility for personal independence payment (PIP) have appealed the decision on their claim for PIP at tribunal to date.

Penny Mordaunt:

The number of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) appeals heard for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) re-assessment claims for people with a primary disabling condition of epilepsy to 31st December 2016 is 1,700.

Kate Green: [\[69580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with epilepsy who were previously in receipt of disability living allowance and have undergone a review to assess their eligibility for personal independence payment have applied for mandatory reconsideration of the decision on their claim to date.

Penny Mordaunt:

The number of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Mandatory Reconsiderations raised for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) re-assessment claims for people with a primary disabling condition of epilepsy to 31st January 2017 is 7,100.

Kate Green: [\[69581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral Answer by the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work on 27 March 2017, Official Report, columns 22-23, how many people with epilepsy who have migrated from disability living allowance to personal independence payment have had their award (a) increased, (b) reduced and (c) held at the same rate to date.

Kate Green:

[\[69582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with epilepsy who were previously in receipt of disability living allowance have undergone a review to assess their eligibility for personal independence payment to date.

Penny Mordaunt:

The number of DLA claimants with a primary disabling condition recorded as epilepsy who were previously in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and have undergone a Personal Independence Payment Reassessment between 1st October 2013 and 31st October 2016 is 15,000.

The outcomes of these reassessments are shown in the table below.

RE-ASSESSMENT OUTCOME	EPILEPSY
Award Increased	4,300
Award Unchanged	1,100
Award Decreased	2,300
Disallowed post referral to the AP	6,600
Disallowed pre referral to the AP	700
Withdrawn	100
Total	15,000

Kate Green:

[\[69583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral Answer by the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work on 27 March 2017, Official Report, columns 22-23, what experience and qualifications the healthcare professionals providing clinical support in assessment centres have in relation to epilepsy.

Kate Green:

[\[69585\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral Answer by the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work on 27 March 2017, Official Report, columns 22-23, what training those independent assessors receive on epilepsy.

Penny Mordaunt:

All Health Professionals undertaking assessments on behalf of the Department must be registered practitioners who have also met requirements around training, experience and competence. 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.

A senior Personal Independence Payment (PIP) clinician will in all cases be a Health Professional who is experienced in PIP and has a proven excellent track record in

quality and other performance metrics and has been successful at interview for a clinical management position.

All Health Professionals complete training on neurological conditions including epilepsy during their initial training. They also practise several clinical scenarios involving epilepsy as part of that initial training course.

In addition to the introductory training and mentoring support, they also have access and can refer to clinical reports on epilepsy which can be reviewed at any point before during or after an assessment has taken place.

Kate Green: [\[69584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral Answer by the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work on 27 March 2017, Official Report, columns 22-23, what training those decision-makers receive on epilepsy.

Penny Mordaunt:

All Health Professionals complete training on neurological conditions including epilepsy during their initial training. They also practise several clinical scenarios involving epilepsy as part of that initial training course.

In addition to the introductory training and mentoring support, they also have access and can refer to clinical reports on epilepsy which can be reviewed at any point before during or after an assessment has taken place. Health Professionals also have ongoing access to online tools and wider clinical support to continue their professional development in undertaking functional assessments.

■ Social Security Benefits: Repayments

Mrs Anne Main: [\[69239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department enforces the repayment of any benefit payment made into an account after the death of the person entitled to that benefit.

Caroline Nokes:

The enforcement of repayment of any benefit overpayment can only be made in the civil court, under the provisions of the Social Security and Administration Act 1992.

If, following the death of a claimant, monies continued to be paid into their account, there is no statutory right under social security legislation to enforce repayment of those monies. We would try to recover any payments made after death on a voluntary basis but could not enforce recovery against any estate as the monies were not properly due to the deceased and do not therefore form part of the deceased's estate.

There are occasions where the payment continues after death because, for example, a third party has not reported the death to the relevant authorities, including the department. In such circumstances, the department would consider referring any evidence or information it held of possible fraud to the Crown Prosecution Service for consideration of prosecution.

The decision on whether or not to prosecute lies entirely with the Crown Prosecution Service, and any related recovery of monies or confiscation of assets would be made by the court.

■ State Retirement Pensions: Age

Grahame Morris: [69541]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of regional variations in life expectancy when reviewing the state pension age.

Richard Harrington:

The Government will present its first Review of the State Pension age to Parliament in May 2017. It will consider the reports produced by the Government Actuary and the independent reviewer John Cridland CBE. The Review will be forward looking and will not recommend State Pension age changes to be made before 2028. Any proposed changes would be brought for Parliamentary consideration and would require primary legislation.

The Office of National Statistics published figures on life expectancy at birth and at age 65 by local areas for the UK last November, as part of their publication on health state life expectancies. The publication and accompanying data can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandlifeexpectancies/bulletins/healthstatelifeexpectanciesuk/2013to2015>

■ State Retirement Pensions: Self-employed

Grahame Morris: [69620]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the Government's decision to abolish Class 2 national insurance contributions on the ability of self-employed people to access a full state pension.

Richard Harrington:

Following the abolition of Class 2 National Insurance contributions from 2018/19 the self-employed will continue to have access to the new State Pension. Self-employed people with annual profits above a new Small Profits Limit will gain access to the new State Pension based on Class 4 National Insurance contributions. The Small Profits Limit will be set at the same level as the annualised Lower Earnings Limit for employees which is £5,876 in 2017/18. Those with profits below the Small Profits Limit who don't already have a full National Insurance contribution record will be able to access the new State Pension through earnings subject to payment of Class 1 Primary (employee) contributions; National Insurance credits; or payment of Class 3 voluntary contributions.

■ Universal Credit

Grahame Morris: [69540]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the time taken between opening a new claim for universal credit

and receiving the first payment on people's (a) financial security, (b) housing security and (c) ability to access work opportunities.

Grahame Morris: [\[69544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to review the waiting time between opening a new claim for universal credit and the receipt of an initial payment.

Grahame Morris: [\[69547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will introduce an interim payment for when a person opens a claim for universal credit.

Damian Hinds:

The Universal Credit assessment period and payment structure is a fundamental part of the design; it helps reduce welfare dependency by mirroring the world of work, where 75% of people are paid monthly.

The Department has a number of safeguards in place to help claimants transition to Universal Credit. Universal Credit Advances are available, which give the claimant up to 50% of their indicative monthly award, including housing costs, to support them until they receive their first monthly payment. We believe that this satisfies the same need as an interim payment.

We also work closely with landlords, Local Authorities and community organisations to ensure that claimants are supported in understanding their new responsibilities for housing costs, and verifying those costs quickly, which in turn enables the Department to make payments on time, and claimants to stay up to date with the payments to their landlord.

In addition, Work Coaches can use the Flexible Support Fund to help claimants access work opportunities soon after they have made their claim.

■ Universal Credit: Disability

Grahame Morris: [\[69546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to ensure that severely disabled people unable to work will not be financially disadvantaged by the introduction of universal credit.

Damian Hinds:

DWP understands that claimants with disabilities or health conditions may face extra challenges in their lives which cost money. Universal Credit is simpler and fairer than the legacy system and is designed to target resources at those that need them most.

Universal Credit makes the system easy to understand and focuses resources on those most in need. We have raised the level of support to those who are severely disabled or with the most serious health conditions. This gives substantially more support than the current support component in Employment and Support Allowance.

No-one who is already receiving disability benefits whose circumstances remain the same will lose out in cash terms as a direct result of the move to Universal Credit.

There will be transitional protection for those claimants with existing premiums whose Universal Credit would be less than under the old system where their circumstances remain the same.

■ Universal Credit: ICT

Mr Andrew Smith: [\[69485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what records his Department keeps of when the universal credit IT system is not functioning.

Damian Hinds:

The Department keeps records of all incidents where the UC IT system is not available for use, either by DWP staff or by customers where the services are delivered digitally. These records are held electronically in other systems specifically used to record and manage such incidents and provide information that allows the Department to track performance and continuously improve the quality of service it delivers.

■ Universal Credit: Overpayments

Grahame Morris: [\[69500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will write off overpayments of universal credit caused by official error.

Caroline Nokes:

Legislation enables the recovery of all Universal Credit overpayments, including those caused by official error. There are no plans to change the Universal Credit policy on recovering official error overpayments, a policy which is designed to protect the public purse. The Secretary of State does of course have discretion not to seek recovery in exceptional cases.

■ Universal Credit: Part-time Employment

Grahame Morris: [\[69545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of conditionality within universal credit in cases where part-time employees use holiday entitlement from work.

Damian Hinds:

For the first time, Universal Credit (UC) allows us to support people who are in work and on low incomes to progress. We are currently running a large scale Randomised Control Trial (RCT) to test whether conditionality can be used effectively to support people to progress. This will contribute to the evidence base about what works, which will inform the design of our future in-work service.

The Department has made no assessment of the effect of conditionality within Universal Credit where part-time employees use holiday entitlement from work.

■ Work Capability Assessment

Grahame Morris:

[\[69482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will introduce the mandatory recording of capability assessments for employment and support allowance and personal independence payments.

Penny Mordaunt:

There are no plans to introduce the mandatory recordings of assessments for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

Whilst there is no legal need to record assessments, claimants can request in advance that their ESA assessment is recorded. This is explained to claimants in the letter inviting them to their face-to-face assessment.

On 13 March a small-scale pilot started to test whether there are any benefits to audio recording PIP face-to-face assessments. Once the results of this pilot have been processed and evaluated, we will be able to make further decisions on whether DWP will consider recording PIP assessments in the future.

However, assessment recording will always be entirely voluntary and subject to claimant consent.

■ Work Capability Assessments

Grahame Morris:

[\[69499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many assessments Maximus completed within the first year of that company's employment and support allowance contract.

Penny Mordaunt:

In Year 1 (1 March 2015 – 29 February 2016) of their contract, Centre for Health Disability Assessments (CHDA) delivered a total of 792,302 Work Capability Assessments and 111,720 other assessments. For Year 2, the number of assessments completed overall by CHDA increased to 945,343 and 108,943 respectively. CHDA is a MAXIMUS Company.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Russia: Guided Weapons

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[68829]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the deployment by Russia of Iskander missiles to Kaliningrad constitutes a breach of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty; and if he will make a statement.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 28 March 2017. The correct answer should have been:

Sir Alan Duncan:

The INF Treaty is a ~~bilateral~~ Treaty between the US and Russia, ~~and other~~ **successor States of the Soviet Union**, so it would be for those ~~States~~ **countries** in the first instance to determine any breaches. Iskander is usually regarded as a short-range rather than an intermediate-range missile. The INF Treaty plays a vital role in maintaining Euro-Atlantic security, and we urge Russia to ensure full and verifiable compliance.

We and our NATO Allies monitor closely the deployment of Russian military assets to Kaliningrad. NATO has made clear that Russia should avoid all actions that could destabilise security in its neighbourhood.