

Daily Report

Tuesday, 18 April 2017

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 18 April 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:46 P.M., 18 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

■ Harassment: Court Orders

Jess Phillips: [\[70106\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what training is available for Police and Crown Prosecution Service staff on the nature and enforcement of restraining orders.

Jeremy Wright:

The CPS has bespoke e-learning training regarding restraining orders, which is available to all prosecutors through the Prosecution College. The training enables prosecutors to fully understand the principles and practical issues involved when an application is made to a court to put a restraining order in place for the protection of victims.

The CPS will always prosecute criminal breaches of restraining orders where the test set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors is met. Offending committed in breach of, or whilst subject to, a court order is likely to be seen as increasing the culpability of the suspect and, therefore, increasing the public interest in bringing a prosecution.

The College of Policing sets the standards for the police and the use of restraining orders is referred to in a number of areas across the College's curriculum.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Biofuels

Barry Gardiner: [\[70181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies on full and proper accounting of woodchip biomass of the Chatham House report entitled The Impacts of the Demand for Woody Biomass for Power and Heat on Climate and Forests, published in February 2017.

Jesse Norman:

In 2015/16, all woodchip used in the electricity sector was sourced from the UK, with a very small amount from Ireland (less than 0.1% of biomass in 2015/16^[1]). Almost all woodchip used in the Renewable Heat Incentive was sourced from the UK, with a small amount from European sources. Our subsidy schemes fully account for the carbon emissions associated with the supply chain (harvesting, processing, transporting) and from changes in land use within the forestry sector.

To receive government support for heat and power generation from biomass, all biomass must comply with the UK's sustainability criteria, which includes a minimum

60% greenhouse gas lifecycle saving and for the biomass to be sourced from sustainable managed forests.

[1] <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications-and-updates/biomass-sustainability-dataset-2015-16>

■ Bob Diamond

Caroline Lucas:

[69516]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986, if his Department and its associated agencies will make an assessment of whether Bob Diamond, former Chief Executive of Barclays Bank, is a fit and proper person to be a director of a UK-based company.

Margot James:

While the law does not impose a fit and proper person test on individuals seeking to be appointed as company directors, if there is evidence that a director has committed misconduct, disqualification action may be brought against them.

Such action is usually taken by the Insolvency Service, either following an investigation into a company's failure as part of its formal insolvency, or following an investigation into an active company.

■ Carbon Emissions

Barry Gardiner:

[70162]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that the emissions reduction plan will halve carbon dioxide emissions from energy and industry in each progressive decade of the plan's implementation.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Government remains committed to its 2050 target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% relative to 1990 levels. We have already made good progress towards this as the latest confirmed figures show UK emissions in 2015 were 38% lower than in 1990. Within this, emissions in both the power and industry sectors have nearly halved since 1990.

■ Company Law

Dan Jarvis:

[69393]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will provide a date of publication for the Corporate Governance White Paper.

Margot James:

We have received a wide range of thoughtful and constructive responses to the consultation on the Government's Corporate Governance Reform Green Paper. We are very grateful to all those who have contributed to the debate, and will respond once we have fully considered their views.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Staff**Jon Trickett:**[\[70077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many people are currently employed by his Department.

Margot James:

As at 31 March 2017 core BEIS employed 3,336 staff (headcount) on its payroll which includes permanent Civil Servants, Fixed Term Appointments, Short Term Appointments and BEIS staff on loan out to other Government Departments.

■ Economic Growth**Chi Onwurah:**[\[69463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans the Government has to give local councils a role in developing the Government's industrial strategy and to enable them to support local economic growth.

Margot James:

To deliver an effective Industrial Strategy that works for everyone, it is important to build on local strengths to boost growth nationwide. We want the whole country to be engaged, from businesses, workers, consumers, the research community, and from local leaders – including councils.

The Industrial Strategy Green Paper marked the beginning of our consultation. Since its publication we have been engaging extensively with key stakeholders, including local councils and Local Enterprise Partnerships. We will of course continue to work with local councils, as they have an important role to play in a successful Industrial Strategy.

■ Energy Intensive Industries: Feed-in Tariffs and Renewables Obligation**Tom Blenkinsop:**[\[69716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much public funding has been provided to (a) energy intensive industries and (b) UK steel producers under the Renewables Obligation and Feed-in Tariff schemes in the last 12 months.

Jesse Norman:

The Renewables Obligation (RO) and small-scale Feed in Tariffs (FIT) schemes support the generation of renewable electricity and are funded from levies on electricity supply.

Over the past 12 months the government has provided over £190m in compensation payments to eligible businesses for the indirect costs of the Renewables Obligation (RO) and small scale Feed in Tariffs (FIT) schemes. Of this we have paid over £54m to the steel sector.

■ Energy: Housing

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[69551]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 23 March 2017 to Question 68609, what estimate his Department has made of the average (a) spend on household energy bills as a percentage of household expenditure and (b) real term spent per household on energy bills in each year since 2010.

Jesse Norman:

The average expenditure on household energy bills as a proportion of total expenditure is as follows:

	PROPORTION OF TOTAL EXPENDITURE SPENT ON DOMESTIC
2010	4.5%
2011	4.6%
2012	4.7%
2013	5.1%
2014	4.9%
2015/16	4.4%

Based on data from ONS's living costs and food survey (table A6):

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/expenditure/datasets/detailedhouseholdexpenditurebygrossincomedeclinegroupuptablea6>

The average annual bills in real terms from 2010 are as follows:

	STANDARD ELECTRICITY	GAS	COMBINED
2010	£474	£564	£1,038
2011	£503	£605	£1,108
2012	£523	£662	£1,185
2013	£547	£690	£1,237
2014	£552	£701	£1,253
2015	£541	£662	£1,203
2016	£533	£592	£1,125

Based on a fixed consumption of 3,800kWh for standard electricity and 15,000kWh for gas. Data are taken from tables 2.2.1 and 2.3.1 of energy prices:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/annual-domestic-energy-price-statistics>

■ Post Offices: Closures

Rachael Maskell:

[69763]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what information his Department holds on how many and which post offices were subject to temporary closure in (a) 2010-11, (b) 2011-12, (c) 2012-13, (d) 2013-14, (e) 2014-15, (f) 2015-16 and (g) 2016-17; and what the length of the temporary closure was in each such case.

Margot James:

As the provision of its post office branches is the responsibility of Post Office Limited, the Department does not hold this information.

I have asked Paula Vennells, the Chief Executive of Post Office Limited, to write to the Hon Member on this matter and provide the information requested. A copy of her reply will be placed in the libraries of the House.

■ Post Offices: Cowes

Mr Andrew Turner:

[69937]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the compliance of the Post Office with the Code of Practice on Public Consultation and Communication in relation to the relocation of Cowes Post Office.

Margot James:

The provision and location of individual post office branches is the operational responsibility of Post Office Limited.

When the Post Office proposes to relocate a branch it consults locally in line with its Code of Practice, which has been agreed with the UK consumer watchdogs, on the matter before reaching a decision. We believe Post Office has complied with its code with regard to the Cowes relocation.

■ Regeneration: EU Grants and Loans

Chi Onwurah:

[69462]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government plans to develop schemes to replace existing EU regeneration funding after the UK has left the EU.

Margot James:

As set out in the Industrial Strategy Green Paper, the Government is carefully considering the future of European Structural and Investment Funds following the

UK's exit from the European Union. We welcome views on this, including through responses to the Green Paper consultation, which was open until 17 April.

■ **Tidal Power: Swansea Bay**

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[69571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether (a) a lease has been granted from the Crown Estates for the development of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon and (b) contracts for four different strike prices have been received; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

In respect of (a) the responsibility for deciding whether to grant a lease rests with the Crown Estate and not the Department. We understand that discussions are ongoing but as yet a lease has not been granted. In respect of (b) the Contract for Difference negotiations are commercially sensitive and it is not appropriate for us to comment on the proposals that have been received.

CABINET OFFICE

■ **Aviation: Emergency Services**

Byron Davies:

[\[69872\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if the Government will assess the potential merits of donating a fleet of 10 single piston-engine, high-wing aircraft to the UK Civil Air Patrol on the condition that they provide support to emergency services on a voluntary basis.

Chris Skidmore:

HM Government is grateful to all those who voluntarily offer their support to the emergency services and communities in emergencies. It currently has no plans to provide hardware to UK Civil Air Patrol.

■ **Cabinet Office: Security**

Jon Trickett:

[\[70017\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many security passes giving access to his Department's premises are currently valid.

Jon Trickett:

[\[70034\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many security passes giving access to his Department's premises have been issued in each year since 2010.

Jon Trickett:

[\[70055\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people holding security passes for other Government Departments are granted access to his Department's premises with that pass, by Department.

Chris Skidmore:

Civil Servants have the ability to work flexibly across government sites where there is a business need to do so. The issuing of all passes is controlled by the local Departmental Security teams who follow strict procedures and protocols. Information on the number of people holding security passes for other government departments who are granted access to the Cabinet Office premises is not centrally recorded.

My department has issued a total of 12,065 building access passes since 2010.

My department has 2,506 active passes.

■ **Cabinet Office: Staff****Jon Trickett:****[70079]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people are currently employed by his Department.

Chris Skidmore:

This information is available in the ONS Public Sector Employment Statistics last published on 15 March 2017:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/datasets/publicsectoremploymentreferencetable>

■ **Domestic Violence****Jim Shannon:****[69854]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government is taking to support people who have been affected by domestic violence to participate in the electoral process; and if he will make a statement.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government is determined that those whose personal safety would be at risk if their details appeared on the electoral register should be able to register anonymously. Those escaping domestic abuse should be able to participate in our democracy without compromising their safety. An anonymous registration scheme that works for the most vulnerable in society is an essential part of a democracy that works for everyone.

I published proposals on 3 March 2017 to make anonymous registration more accessible in England and Wales. I will work with the Scottish Government in the coming months to ensure we can together deliver these reforms in a way which reflects and respects the differences in law and in practice in Scotland. The Northern Ireland Office will consider whether any of the proposed reforms should also be made in Northern Ireland.

■ Government Departments: Digital Technology

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[69711\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 23 March 2017 to Question 68395, on digital technology, which experts he consulted in assessing the risks arising from component, platform and capability reuse.

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[69712\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 23 March 2017 to Question 68395, what assessment he has made of any potential security risks arising from component, platform and capability reuse beyond central government of GOV.UK (a) Notify and (b) Pay; and what steps the Government is taking to mitigate such risks.

Chris Skidmore:

In accordance with the HMG Security Policy Framework, all GDS products, including GOV.UK Notify and Pay, are subject to an ongoing, through-life information risk management activity to ensure that we identify information security risks and treat them proportionately and cost-effectively.

As part of this ongoing activity, risk assessments and security checks ('IT healthchecks') based on National Cyber Security Centre guidelines are carried out by independent experts and Privacy Impact Assessments are used to assess the potential impact to any personal data being processed.

Security considerations form an integral part of the pilots we are undertaking to explore how GOV.UK Pay, GOV.UK Notify and similar products can be made available to the wider public sector.

Risk mitigation activities may include the implementation of, or changes to, staff clearances, procedures, processes, software source code, service architecture, release process and monitoring or alerting as required to effectively treat risks where they exceed tolerance.

■ National Cyber Security Centre

Jim Shannon:

[\[69853\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what contribution the National Cyber Security Centre is making to the Government Transformation Strategy; and if he will make a statement.

Chris Skidmore:

The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has been established as the UK's definitive technical authority on cyber security. The Government Transformation Strategy describes how the Government Digital Service will help departments design services and internal processes that are cyber secure from inception. All new government services must meet mandatory security design features stipulated by GDS and the Cyber and Government Security Directorate that have been developed in conjunction with the NCSC. The NCSC website also provides comprehensive guidance on cyber security good practice for use by the public sector and industry.

■ Prime Minister: Staff

Jon Trickett: [70093]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people are currently employed by 10 Downing Street.

Chris Skidmore:

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

Information about the number of people employed in my department, correct as of December 2016, can be found online at

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/datasets/publicsectoremploymentreferencetable>.

■ Prime Minister: Uber

Wes Streeting: [69905]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many meetings were held between civil servants, advisers or Ministers of 10 Downing Street and Uber between May 2010 and July 2016.

Chris Skidmore:

Details of Ministers and Permanent Secretary meetings with external organisations, are published routinely on Gov.uk

Information about meetings between other Civil Servants and external organisations is not centrally held and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Wes Streeting: [69983]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make an assessment of (a) the relationship between civil servants, advisers and ministers working at 10 Downing Street and Uber and (b) any potential effect on government policy of that relationship between May 2010 and July 2016.

Chris Skidmore:

Ministers and civil servants, including special advisers, routinely meet a wide variety of external organisations, including those involved in the digital economy. As part of the Government's transparency agenda, Ministerial meetings with external organisations are published on GOV.UK. Similar information is published in respect of Permanent Secretary meetings.

The Government is aware of some concerns regarding the increase in the size of the private hire market and the impact of new and innovative ways of working on traditional business models. The Government supports choice for consumers and wants to see both taxis and private hire vehicles prosper.

■ Self-employed: West Midlands

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[70164\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people are currently registered as self-employed in (a) Coventry South constituency, (b) the city of Coventry and (c) the West Midlands.

Chris Skidmore:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response to PQ70164 [PQ 70164 v.02.pdf]

■ Taxis: Greater London

Tom Watson: [\[69746\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether representations were made by or on behalf of the former Prime Minister to the former Mayor of London on the regulation of the taxi and private-hire industry in London.

Chris Skidmore:

The information requested is not centrally held and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

More broadly, I would note that the Government is aware of concerns regarding the increase in the size of the private hire market and the impact of new and innovative ways of working on traditional business models. The Government supports choice for consumers and wants to see both taxis and private hire vehicles prosper.

■ Viscount Rothermere

Tom Watson: [\[70011\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 30 March 2017 to Question 62917, whether any other such meetings have been omitted from the official records on gov.uk.

Tom Watson: [\[70012\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 30 March 2017 to Question 62917, for what reason the meeting of 11 February between David Cameron and Lord Rothermere was omitted from the original record on gov.uk.

Chris Skidmore:

We have taken the opportunity to review the returns, and have updated the records on GOV.UK to ensure full transparency on meetings with senior media executives.

This was simply an administrative oversight by diary officials. This was an informal occasion in a social setting, and not a formal government meeting, it was not recorded on the return by accident.

TREASURY■ **British Home Stores: Pensions****Bill Esterson:**[\[70167\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the contribution made to the BHS pension fund by Sir Philip Green came from his personal income; and how much income tax was paid on that contribution by Sir Philip Green.

Mr David Gauke:

HM Revenue and Customs has a statutory duty of confidentiality and therefore is unable to comment on individual cases.

■ **Business: Competition****Mr Dominic Raab:**[\[909636\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what measures he is taking to improve the UK's economic competitiveness.

Simon Kirby:

In any modern economy improving competitiveness means boosting productivity, as it is the key long-term driver of economic prospects. This government has taken significant steps to tackle this issue, investing an additional £23bn in areas crucial to productivity through the National Productivity Investment Fund. At budget we went further, providing an additional £500m per year of spending to support improvements in technical education.

■ **Civil Service****Paul Flynn:**[\[69717\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the (a) impact on and (b) additional cost to the Civil Service of negotiations on the UK leaving the EU.

Mr David Gauke:

HM Treasury is responsible to Parliament for the control of public resources – this includes overall responsibility for ensuring good value for money and setting departmental budgets. This responsibility remains as we prepare to leave the EU.

However, to ensure those closest to the decisions have the authority to manage public money efficiently and effectively, departments have a certain level of autonomy over expenditure which is not novel, contentious or repercussive.

Therefore, whilst HM Treasury has oversight of policies with significant spending implications, the Treasury will not monitor each individual cost incurred to prepare for EU Exit, including those relating to the Civil Service. This treatment is in line with the spending framework applied to all other expenditure.

■ Coinage

Justin Madders:

[\[69472\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the manufacturing cost per unit is for the (a) current and (b) new £1 coin.

Simon Kirby:

The total cost of producing UK coinage is provided annually in the Treasury Annual reports and Accounts. However, the cost of producing individual denominations of UK coins is commercially sensitive information.

The government is satisfied that the new £1 coin represents value for money and delivers significant improvements in security.

The use of nickel-brass in the material composition of the new coin will enable The Royal Mint to reuse metal obtained from withdrawn round £1 coins for use in the new coin, generating a saving for taxpayers.

■ Crossrail Line: Scotland

Ian Murray:

[\[69573\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much the Scottish Government has received related to Barnett consequentialia resulting from the London Crossrail Project; and what assessment has been made of the value of that project to Scottish businesses.

Mr David Gauke:

The Barnett formula is applied to all changes in funding for UK government departments in areas that are devolved. The Scottish Government has received Barnett consequentialia from Crossrail in the usual way, as set out in the Statement of Funding Policy. These budgetary changes have been reflected in the Scottish Government's own budget allocations.

Crossrail is an example of how investment in big infrastructure projects creates jobs and business opportunities right across the UK, with a total of 15 suppliers based in Scotland supplying goods or services for Crossrail.

■ Debts: Scotland

Drew Hendry:

[\[69466\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the Debt Arrangement Scheme in Scotland; and if he will make a statement.

Simon Kirby:

In its response to the Independent Review of the Money Advice Service (March 2015), the coalition government agreed to review the legal framework for debt administration, and to consider the impacts of additional statutory protections for consumers.

As I said in Parliament on 29 March, the government is looking carefully at a breathing space scheme for England and Wales, and fully supports the principles of

better debt management and lower levels of problem debt. However, any new spending proposals must be considered carefully. The government will continue to look into the options for a breathing space scheme.

■ **Foreign Exchange: Small Businesses**

Martyn Day: [\[69488\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of non-transparent pricing structures in foreign currency exchange on UK small businesses which trade overseas.

Martyn Day: [\[69490\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made on the effect of non-transparent or opaque pricing structures used by foreign currency providers on competition for consumers.

Simon Kirby:

A competitive and transparent financial services sector is vital to ensuring that the UK economy delivers for consumers and businesses.

The Government has not yet made an assessment of the effect of pricing structures used by foreign currency providers on competition for consumers or UK small businesses which trade overseas but, as with all policy areas, keeps transparency of foreign exchange fees under review.

The Government is currently conducting research on the effects of transparency on consumer decisions to inform its policy approach. The Government has recently consulted on draft regulations for the implementation of the Second Payment Service Directive, and will respond in due course.

■ **National Insurance Contributions: Older Workers**

Jon Trickett: [\[69806\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of the value of national insurance contributions forgone by the Exchequer from people who are above state pension age but who are in employment.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs currently estimate that the National Insurance contributions foregone from employees and self-employed people of pensionable age would be around £1.1 billion in 2014-15, based on the State Pension Ages for that year.

The estimate is based on the latest available Survey of Personal Incomes (2014-15).

■ Royal Bank of Scotland: Closures

Catherine West: [69995]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many local bank branches of the Royal Bank of Scotland have closed in each of the last five years.

Catherine West: [70128]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions his Department has had with (a) Professor Griggs and (b) the British Bankers' Association on the independent review of the British Bankers' Association Industry Protocol.

Catherine West: [70129]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of recommendations made by Professor Griggs in the independent review of the British Bankers' Association Industry Protocol.

Catherine West: [70130]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has had discussions with representatives of Lloyds Bank on the closure of its local bank branches across the UK.

Catherine West: [70155]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether officials of his Department have met with officials from HSBC recently to discuss the closure of local banks across the UK.

Catherine West: [70187]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions officials in his Department have had with officials in RBS on the closure of local bank branches across the UK.

Catherine West: [70188]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the efficacy of the Access to Banking Protocol.

Catherine West: [70205]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has received representations from (a) parliamentarians, (b) members of the public and (c) professional bodies on the closure of local bank branches and the effect on local communities.

Simon Kirby:

The Treasury does not collect data relating to bank branch closures.

Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. Details of ministerial and permanent secretary meetings with external organisations on departmental business are published on a quarterly basis and are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>

The Chancellor of the Exchequer and other Treasury Ministers receive numerous representations concerning the impact of bank branch closures, which are taken into consideration in the development of Government policy. However, decisions on the opening and closing of individual bank branches are taken by the management of each bank on a commercial basis without intervention from Government. For this reason, the Government welcomed the industry-wide Access to Banking Protocol and Professor Griggs' independent 'one year on' review, published last November.

While banks and building societies need to balance customer interests, market competition, and other commercial factors when considering their strategy, the Government is pleased to see that the industry is committing to further improvements to protect those affected by branch closures.

■ Royal Bank of Scotland: Incentives

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[69689\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government had discussions with Royal Bank of Scotland on the recent giving of bonuses to nine executives of that bank.

Simon Kirby:

The Government's stake in the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) is managed at arm's length by UK Financial Investments (UKFI).

UKFI is responsible for engaging with RBS to ensure that remuneration policies are designed to pay the minimum necessary to attract and retain the staff needed to advance the Government's objective of managing the shareholding in a way that represents value for money for the taxpayer.

As part of this process, UKFI advises ministers on RBS's remuneration plans.

■ Taxis: Exhaust Emissions

Wes Streeting:

[\[69903\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the likely effect of changes in vehicle excise duty in April 2017 on (a) zero emission capable taxis and (b) costs for individual buyers of such taxis.

Jane Ellison:

Taxis are considered cars for the purposes of VED. As such, new taxis purchased after 1 April 2017 will be treated under the new VED system. We expect zero emission capable taxis to be available on the market in the second half of 2017. If these are priced at above £40,000 they will be liable for an additional rate in the first five years of the Standard Rate, as with any other car.

The Government is investing to help make taxis greener and cleaner, reaffirming our commitment to improving the UK's air quality. The Department for Transport announced last month £64 million to promote the take up of zero emission capable taxis in cities across the country.

■ Taxis: Greater London**Tom Watson:****[69745]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether representations were made by or on behalf of his predecessor to the former Mayor of London on the regulation of the taxi and private-hire industry in London.

Mr David Gauke:

As you would expect, the previous Chancellor had discussions with the former Mayor on policies in which they have a shared interest, including London taxis and private hire vehicles among many other transport and economic policy areas.

■ Treasury: Data Protection**Tim Farron:****[69813]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) official and (b) official sensitive documents have been recorded as lost by his Department since 8 May 2015.

Simon Kirby:

Our records show that (a) no official and (b) four Official Sensitive documents have been recorded as lost by HM Treasury since 8 May 2015.

■ Treasury: Staff**Jon Trickett:****[70096]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people are currently employed by his Department.

Simon Kirby:

The number of people employed by HM Treasury are published in the Workforce Management Information reports which can be found via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/workforce-management--2>

■ Welfare Tax Credits: Farmers**Margaret Greenwood:****[70169]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many farmers are currently in receipt of tax credits.

Jane Ellison:

Data held by HM Revenue and Customs on tax credit claimants does not specify where claimants are farmers.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS■ **St Botolph's Church Peterborough****Mr Stewart Jackson:**[\[70163\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what discussions she has had with the Diocese of Peterborough on the proposals for alterations to St Botolph's Church in Longthorpe, Peterborough; and if she will make a statement.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

St Botolph's in Longthorpe is a 700 year old church. The interior is by no means original, having been altered and changed over the centuries. All parishes that wish to alter their church interiors are required to seek advice and permission from a variety of bodies before a reordering can take place. Parishes undertaking such large scale reordering schemes do not therefore do so lightly. The usual reasons are that the interior no longer serves the needs of the parish and worshipping community. This appears to have been the case at St Botolph's where members of the congregation need wheelchair access.

The Church Buildings Council of the Church of England were asked to advise the local Diocesan Advisory Committee in Peterborough when the scheme was initially proposed in 2015 and were supportive of the change. The alterations proposed make reasonable adjustments to the building, which will facilitate the smoother operation of services, funerals and weddings. They will also enable the priest to face the congregation during services, provide wheelchair access and offer a larger children's area.

When considering potential alterations, the Church and the Diocesan Consistory Courts must balance the needs of the congregation and parish against any architectural merit the existing furniture or layout may have. When a reordering is done well it often brings with it very positive opportunities for community and congregation to offer new facilities, events and activities, which ultimately bring the Church back to its original purpose to be a space for all in the local community.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT■ **Dental Health****Steve McCabe:**[\[65413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 9 February 2017 to Question 62638, how his Department ensures local authorities meet statutory requirements on oral health.

Mr Marcus Jones:

I refer the hon. Member to my answer to Question UIN 67864 on 20 March 2017.

■ Digital Technology: Non-domestic Rates

Tom Watson:

[\[69575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what recent assessment he has made of the role of business rates in developing the digital economy.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Rateable values are set independently of ministers by the Valuation Office Agency. All telecom and technology properties are assessed for business rates in the normal way to the common standard of rateable value. At Spring Budget 2017 the Government announced a £435 million package to support businesses in England facing the steepest increases in business rates following the revaluation.

■ Homelessness

Andy Slaughter:

[\[70014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 29 March 2017 to Question 69065, on sleeping rough, in what areas the Government plans to spend the £550 million to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

Mr Marcus Jones:

We are spending over £550 million to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in England by 2020 following the 2015 Spending Review. This includes protecting £315 million homelessness prevention funding that goes to local authorities. We also increased central government funding for homelessness programmes to £149 million, which includes £50 million for the Homelessness Prevention Programme to deliver an end-to-end approach to prevention and £61 million to implement the Homelessness Reduction Bill and support local authorities with new burdens. In addition, we are spending £100 million to deliver at least 2,000 low-cost move-on accommodation places, to enable people leaving hostels and refuges to make a sustainable recovery from a homelessness crisis.

■ Housing: Sales

Dr Tania Mathias:

[\[69701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of requiring the seller of a property to pay for, arrange and make available to potential buyers a survey of that property prior to sale, and for the buyer to reimburse that cost upon completion.

Gavin Barwell:

The Government has been clear in its intention to publish a call for evidence looking at the process of buying and selling a home. We will use the responses received from this call for evidence to determine which changes have the greatest potential to improve the consumer experience. This call for evidence will be launched in the coming months.

■ Land Use

Thangam Debbonaire:

[69702]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 1 February 2017 to Question 5198, on housing: construction, what the sources are of the independent estimates of land ownership referred to.

Gavin Barwell:

The analysis comes from Savills (2016) and is based on land registered with Land Registry. The report is indicative of the magnitude of local government land ownership, including all registered operational land in the public sector. The report is available from Savills via the following link:

http://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/141280/202113-0

■ Land Use: Bristol

Thangam Debbonaire:

[69762]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 1 February 2017 to Question 51988, what proportion of that Government land which is planned for release for building homes is within Bristol; what proportion of land in Bristol is owned by Government departments; and how much of that land so owned is suitable for the building of homes.

Gavin Barwell:

As set out in the Public Land for Housing Annual Report, by 30 September 2016 the total housing capacity of land either identified for sale or already sold by all departments contributing to the programme was 145,492, against a target of 160,000 units. A total of 101 of these units are in Bristol. This does not include local authority owned land.

Cabinet Office records show that central government owns 945 hectares of freehold land and buildings in Bristol, comprising of 145 separate sites. This represents 2.3 per cent of land in the area.

Not all of this is surplus and it would be for the local planning authority to determine what land is suitable for housing.

■ Non-domestic Rates: Schools

Peter Kyle:

[69397]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the effect of charging business rates for properties with solar panels on state schools in England and Wales.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Business rates are based on valuations from the Valuation Office Agency, made independently of ministers, and we do not intervene in their independent assessments. We have put in place a £3.6 billion transitional relief scheme for

England to support those rate payers facing increases at the 2017 revaluation.
Business rates policy in Wales is devolved to the National Assembly for Wales.

■ **Parking: Data Protection**

Jo Stevens:

[\[70213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make it his policy to carry out an assessment of the effect on privacy and industry regulation of the practice of private car parking companies distributing third parties information from the DVLA vehicle keeper database.

Mr Marcus Jones:

My Department has no plans to carry out an assessment, but we are carefully reviewing the case for reform of the private parking sector.

The Information Commissioner's Office carried out an audit in March 2016, and judged the DVLA's procedures to offer high assurance that processes to mitigate the risks of non-compliance with the Data Protection Act are in place.

■ **Private Rented Housing: Carbon Monoxide**

Ms Margaret Ritchie:

[\[70160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions his Department has had with landlords on the adequacy of smoke and carbon monoxide alarm regulations in the private rented sector.

Gavin Barwell:

The Government introduced the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) regulations in 2015 to protect private sector tenants from death or injury in the home caused by smoke and carbon monoxide poisoning. The Government plans to conduct a review of the regulations by the end of 2017.

My officials meet regularly with associations of landlords, and will of course discuss with them the review of the regulations.

■ **Rented Housing: Carbon Monoxide**

Ms Margaret Ritchie:

[\[70158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to meet with the (a) National Landlords Association and (b) Scottish Association of Landlords to discuss the effectiveness of the carbon monoxide alarm regulation ahead of the planned review in October 2017.

Gavin Barwell:

The Government plans to conduct a review of the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) regulations 2015 regulations by the end of 2017. The Department meets regularly with the National Landlords Association and other landlord and tenant representatives.

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 apply in England only. There are separate requirements for Scotland under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.

Ms Margaret Ritchie:

[70159]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of making it compulsory for landlords to provide a carbon monoxide alarm in properties with any fuel burning appliance to improve safety for tenants.

Gavin Barwell:

Solid fuel appliances are responsible for a disproportionate number of carbon monoxide deaths and injuries compared to other combustion appliances.

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) regulations 2015 require landlords to have a carbon monoxide alarm in any room containing a solid fuel burning appliance (e.g. a coal fire, wood burning stove) in their rented properties. Additionally, landlords are already required to carry out an annual gas safety check and to service and repair gas appliances to ensure they are maintained in a safe condition.

■ **Small Businesses: Non-domestic Rates**

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[69560]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what support he is providing to businesses that are no longer eligible for Small Business Rate Relief as a result of the Mazars-v-Woolway judgment of 29 July 2015; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Supreme Court judgement in the case of Woolway (VO) v Mazars LLP will bring simplicity and consistency to the rating system. The Valuation Office Agency are responsible for implementing the decision independently of Ministers. We will keep this matter under review. From April we are permanently doubling small business rate relief meaning 600,000 small businesses will pay no business rates at all.

■ **Social Services: Finance**

Gareth Thomas:

[69610]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what formula his Department used to determine the allocation of additional funding for adult social care referred to in paragraph 5.5 of the Spring Budget 2017; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Explanatory Note published alongside the allocations on 9 March (www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-allocations-of-the-additional-funding-for-adult-social-care) provides a detailed explanation of the formulas used to determine

the allocation of additional funding for adult social care announced in the Spring Budget.

■ **Waveney District Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council**

Dr Poulter:

[\[69471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he plans to take to facilitate the merger of Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils to form a new East Suffolk Authority.

Mr Marcus Jones:

We have received a proposal for a merger from Suffolk Coastal and Waveney district councils, which the Secretary of State will carefully consider together with any representations and supporting evidence before reaching an initial decision as to how he is minded to proceed. He intends to announce this initial decision as soon as practicable, after which there will be a reasonable period for those interested to submit representations, which the Secretary of State will carefully consider before reaching any final decision.

■ **Wind Power: Decommissioning**

Mr David Nuttall:

[\[69944\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what his policy is on the decommissioning of windfarms.

Gavin Barwell:

Planning guidance is clear that Local Planning Authorities should ensure turbines are removed when no longer in use and land is restored to an appropriate use. Local Planning Authorities can use planning conditions to ensure this happens. Wind farms, like other developments granted planning permission must be constructed and operated according to the decision notice issued and any specific conditions attached to the notice.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ **Betting Shops**

Dan Jarvis:

[\[69665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of introducing a cumulative impact test to enable councils to reject applications for new betting shops where there are already existing clusters of such shops in an area.

Tracey Crouch:

The Government is alive to the concerns around clustering of betting shops. Since 2015, planning permission has been required for any new betting shops on the high street. In addition, the Gambling Act 2005 requires local authorities to set out in a

statement of policy the principles by which it manages the gambling environment in the local area. The statement can be used to set out reasons for why it would be inconsistent with licensing objectives to grant additional licences in a given location e.g. safeguarding children or the vulnerable. The Gambling Commission advise that the use of the licensing statement of policy varies from one LA to another, but where it is used effectively and updated regularly it can be an effective tool at rejecting and/or imposing conditions on new licences.

■ **Broadband: High Peak**

Andrew Bingham: [\[70199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many successful applications for the Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme there have been in High Peak constituency since that scheme's introduction.

Matt Hancock:

There have been 401 successful applications in Derbyshire to date, and 147 installations have been made following these applications. We do not have a breakdown of applications at constituency level.

■ **Data Protection Act 1998**

Louise Haigh: [\[69672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of which sections of the Data Protection Act 1998 will be repealed in order to ensure consistency with the General Data Protection Regulations.

Matt Hancock:

The Government is still assessing the best legislative approach to incorporating the GDPR into UK law. We will make an announcement in due course.

■ **EU Exit and Trade Committee**

Louise Haigh: [\[69253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, for what reasons she is not a member of the European Union Exit and Trade Committee.

Tracy Brabin: [\[69660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, for what reason she is not a member of the Government's European Union Exit and Trade Committee.

Matt Hancock:

The list of Cabinet Committees and Implementation Taskforces, and their membership, is published here; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-cabinet-committees-system-and-list-of-cabinet-committees>. Other Ministers attend the European Union Exit and Trade Committee where the agenda item concerns their portfolio.

■ Members: Correspondence**Mr David Winnick:**[\[69743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when she plans to respond to the letter of 7 March 2017 from the hon. Member for Walsall North on behalf of a constituent, on internet speeds.

Matt Hancock:

A letter was sent to Hon Member on 6th April.

■ Primary Education: Sports**Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[69696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate her Department has made of the proportion of primary school children who do not receive two hours of sport and physical education each week; and if she will make a statement.

Tracey Crouch:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer to PQ 68370 from the Member for Crewe and Nantwich, the Minister for Children and Families. School sport is a matter for the Department of Education.

■ Sky: 21st Century Fox**Diana Johnson:**[\[69643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to her oral contribution of 6 March 2017, Official Report, column 589, on BSkyB's proposed takeover of News International, when she intends to write to the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North setting out the precise details of the law.

Matt Hancock:

The Secretary of State wrote to the Hon. Lady on 10th March in response to her specific question. The letter was copied to all Members who spoke during the debate on the 6 March [Official Report Vol 622; Col 589] and a copy placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

■ Sports: Drugs**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[69981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 27 March 2017 to Question 68575, on sports: drugs, if she will specify what steps her Department is taking to prevent doping in amateur competitive sport.

Tracey Crouch:

UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) collaborates with a number of partners including National Governing Bodies of sport, law enforcement and Government departments to help prevent doping in sport. Central to this approach is anti-doping education, which is vital at all levels of sport. We would encourage every sport to invest more into

preventing doping in sport and ensure that they have a robust anti-doping strategy in place to safeguard their sport from elite level to grassroots.

In addition, Government is undertaking its requisite triennial review on UKAD and its functions. The review will consider the efficiency, effectiveness and governance of UKAD and how it is preparing for the future. As part of the review a call for evidence was launched on 30 March.

■ **Sports: Governing Bodies**

Dan Jarvis: [\[69952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, by what date sports national governing bodies are required to enact all necessary reforms set out under the new national code for sports governance.

Tracey Crouch:

National Governing Bodies are expected to have an agreed plan in place with UK Sport and Sport England, which sets out how they will meet the governance code reforms, by April 2017.

The plans need to set out how they will comply with all aspects of the code by 31st October 2017.

NGBs will not receive any funding from UK Sport or Sport England until their plans have been agreed by both organisations. Funding will also be contingent on NGBs being fully compliant with the code by 31st October.

■ **Telephone Services: Fees and Charges**

Tim Farron: [\[70149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has undertaken any research on the effect of the UK leaving the EU on consumer phone bills and mobile roaming charges.

Matt Hancock:

The same rules and laws will apply on the day after Brexit as they did before, including for roaming.

DEFENCE

■ **Adam Werritty**

Jon Trickett: [\[69897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many times he has met Mr Adam Werritty since he became Secretary of State for Defence.

Sir Michael Fallon:

None.

Jon Trickett:

[\[69898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many times Mr Adam Werritty has been received on his Department's premises since May 2015.

Mark Lancaster:

None.

■ **Afghanistan: Armed Conflict**

Dan Jarvis:

[\[70209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what lessons he has learnt from the recent fall of Sangin, Helmand province, to the Taliban.

Dan Jarvis:

[\[70211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what additional support the Government will provide to the Afghan Government following the fall of Sangin, Helmand province, to the Taliban.

Mike Penning:

The UK Government continues to make a key contribution to NATO's non-combat train, advise and assist mission which is helping the Afghan National Defence and Security forces to build security and stability for the long term. The Afghan Security Forces are in the lead for delivering their own security and it is right that they make their own decisions about how they manage their forces to best achieve this. They have shown great professionalism and resilience in managing security and countering terrorism, including from Daesh's affiliate in the region.

■ **Aircraft Carriers: Helicopters**

Douglas Chapman:

[\[69865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2017 to Question 68785, what steps he plans to take in response to the finding of the National Audit Office in paragraph 1.12 of its report on Delivering Carrier Strike, published in March 2017, that the commitment to integrate and support battlefield helicopter operations from the Queen Elizabeth Carriers is yet to be fully funded.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Department continues to refine plans and costings for the integration of Battlefield Helicopters into the Queen Elizabeth Class Aircraft Carriers in line with the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review.

■ **Armed Forces: Career Development**

Nia Griffith:

[\[69642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraphs 5.9, page 55, of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body 46th Report, published in March 2017, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that service personnel are able to raise concerns

about their employment and responsibilities without fear of negative consequences on their careers.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is committed to making the service complaints process as fair, effective and efficient as it can be. Our people need to have confidence that any issues arising from their Service can be raised and will be investigated and resolved without negative consequences on their careers. Our new service complaints system was implemented on 1 January 2016 and is designed to provide quicker outcomes, and to promote greater confidence in the system, including through the use of more open communications. The new system also replaced the Service Complaints Commissioner with a new Ombudsman with increased powers which we expect will give our Armed Forces personnel increased confidence that the internal service complaints system is fair, efficient and effective.

On 3 April 2017 the Service Complaints Ombudsman published her annual report for 2016 on the fairness, effectiveness and efficiency of the service complaints system. The Ombudsman reported on the working of her office and the new service complaints system in 2016, and the MOD will now carefully consider the findings and recommendations made in the report to see how we might further improve the process.

■ **Armed Forces: Deployment**

Kirsten Oswald:

[69709]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Written Statement of 18 April 2016, HCWS 678, on Armed Forces update, when he will provide the House with the annual update on embedded personnel for the year 2016.

Mike Penning:

The written statement, 'UK Embedded Forces', of 17 December 2015 (HCWS431) informed the House that future updates would be published annually through the Ministry of Defence's annual report and accounts (ARAC). Page 28 of the linked report for financial year (FY) 2015-16 refers:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/558559/MoD_AR16.pdf .

Figures for FY 2016-17 will be published via the 2016-17 ARAC later this year.

Attachments:

1. HCWS431 - UK Embedded Forces [20151217_WMS_UK_Embedded_Forces.docx]

■ **Armed Forces: Dual Nationality**

Grant Shapps:

[69398]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will re-align the Royal Navy's rules on the eligibility of dual nationality candidates for pilot and observer aircrew positions with those of the Royal Air Force.

Grant Shapps:[\[69399\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reason the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force have different rules on the eligibility of dual nationality candidates for pilot and observer aircrew positions.

Mike Penning:

Employment restrictions due to nationality status may be imposed within certain Royal Navy and Royal Air Force Branches for security reasons. Such restrictions may be considered on a case by case basis during the initial recruiting process.

The different aircraft types and scale of aircrew numbers required by each Service, may result in these restrictions being imposed on individuals at different stages through the recruiting and training process.

■ Armed Forces: Housing**Nia Griffith:**[\[69392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department has spent on substitute service (a) family and (b) single accommodation in each year from 2010 to 2017.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence has spent the following amounts on substitute service family accommodation:

FINANCIAL YEAR (FY)	EXPENDITURE (£MILLION)
2010-11	27.48
2011-12	29.49
2012-13	32.68
2013-14	28.69
2014-15	22.47
2015-16	23.45
2016-17	15.17 (forecast)

The overall costs include rent, Council tax and water rates. Please note the costs for FY2016-17 are as forecast at the end of March 2017 and could change slightly before year end.

Information on substitute single service accommodation could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Rachael Maskell:[\[69396\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the capacity is of (a) service family and (b) single living accommodation in the City of York local authority area.

Mark Lancaster:

There are 327 Service Family Accommodation dwellings and approximately 1,500 Service Living Accommodation bedspaces within the area covered by the City of York Local Authority.

Nia Griffith:[\[69641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraphs 4.12 and 4.13 of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body 46th Report, what mechanisms his Department has in place to monitor CarillionAmey's improvements.

Mark Lancaster:

The National Housing Prime contractor CarillionAmey, with support from the Ministry of Defence (MOD), has ensured that performance levels against their Improvement Plan have been met and sustained since May 2016. MOD officials continue to work closely with CarillionAmey to monitor and drive further improvements going forward and representatives from both organisations meet fortnightly to review performance.

■ Armed Forces: Married People

Mrs Anne-Marie Trevelyan:[\[69632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many personnel presently serving in the (a) Navy, (b) Army and (c) RAF have a spouse or family member who is a veteran, serving personnel or a reservist.

Harriett Baldwin:

This information is not held in the format requested. However, the Department does hold information on the number of Regular Service personnel who have chosen to declare that they are either married to, or in a registered civil partnership with, another Regular Service person. These figures are provided below, broken down by Service as at 1 February 2017:

SERVICE	NO OF REGULAR SERVICE PERSONNEL
Royal Navy/Royal Marines	1,090
Army	2,370
Royal Air Force	2,210

■ Armed Forces: Pay

Nia Griffith:

[\[69607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to page 28, paragraph 3.34 of the 46th Report of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body, published on 28 March 2017, what the implications are for his policies on recruitment and retention payments; and if he will make a statement.

Mike Penning:

The Ministry of Defence takes seriously the recommendations of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body. Recruitment and Retention Payments (RRP) are paid at Departmental discretion to recruit and retain individuals in specific cadres. It is, therefore, right that RRP is removed when the Department is no longer able to retain the services of an individual to whom RRP is paid.

■ Armed Forces: Recruitment

Brendan O'Hara:

[\[69858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he has plans to review the safeguards on consent to enlistment in the light of the Committee on the Rights of the Child's finding in 2016 that such safeguards were insufficient.

Harriett Baldwin:

Ministry of Defence policies on under-18s in the Armed Forces are robust and comply with national and international law. In addition to the comprehensive welfare system that is in place for all Service personnel we remain fully committed to meeting our obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and have taken steps to bestow special safeguards on young people under the age of 18.

Our recruiting policy is absolutely clear. No one under the age of 18 can join the Armed Forces without formal parental consent, which is checked twice during the application process. In addition, parents and guardians are positively encouraged to be engaged with the recruiting staff during the process. Furthermore all Service personnel have a statutory right to claim discharge up to their 18th birthday, and the right of discharge is made clear to all Service personnel on joining the Armed Forces.

■ Armed Forces: Surveys

Nia Griffith:

[\[69631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to increase response rates (a) to the armed forces, (b) families and (c) the reserves Continuous Attitude Survey.

Mark Lancaster:

The Armed Forces constantly strive to sustain and improve the response rates for the three Continuous Attitude Surveys (CAS). We do this in various ways, including by reducing the burden on respondents by ensuring that the number of questions is

minimised and that they are written in a straightforward way. We also ensure that the surveys reach their intended audience by tracking their distribution and using nominated points of contact at unit level to assist with the distribution of surveys and with communications. Units are given their individual response rates so they can gauge where they rank against other units and the chain of command is held responsible for maximising response rates.

The Department and the chain of command provide clear messages about the importance of responding to the surveys and we also ensure that the most convenient methods for responding to the survey are available to respondents, including opening up the surveys to be completed online. In addition, Service personnel, some of whom do not have regular access to IT systems, have the option of completing a paper survey.

Our approach is supported by an integrated CAS communications strategy with various communication methods employed, both centrally and through each of the Services. Messages are communicated using various channels including through announcements on the Ministry of Defence and single Service intranet sites, and regular adverts on British Forces Broadcasting Services. There has been an increased emphasis on social media for the 2017 surveys, including the use of Twitter. Use is also made of relevant networks and publications to spread communications more widely, for example through Soldier magazine and the Service Families Federations. The importance of participation in the CASs and the actions taken as a result, are included in Senior Command briefings. Email and postcard reminders are sent out to coincide with other communication efforts.

Each survey has a Service infographic summarising key findings, and these are included in communications as well as standalone posters. In addition, all findings from the CASs are published on the gov.uk website.

■ Imphal Barracks

Rachael Maskell:

[69391]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) current spend and (b) estimated total spend is of refurbishing Imphal Barracks in York in order to accommodate 1st Division Headquarters for (i) office and (ii) accommodation upgrades.

Mark Lancaster:

The current spend of refurbishing Imphal Barracks in York is £1.4 million and the estimated total spend is £12.7 million. It is not possible to separately identify spending for office and accommodation upgrades for the current or total spend.

While there is no defence requirement for Imphal Barracks after 2031, the necessary refurbishment works represent value for money to avoid any costly repairs and to ensure the site remains safe and compliant for the occupants over the next 15 years.

■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

Douglas Chapman:

[\[69866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to page 31 of the National Audit Office report, Delivering Carrier Strike, published in March 2017, what steps his Department plans to take to ensure that the project team for the Lightning II programme is not under-resourced.

Harriett Baldwin:

Defence Equipment and Support is considering the optimum size of the Lightning Project Team as part of its wider Transformation programme. The next phase will be to recruit personnel to meet the resource requirement.

■ Merlin Helicopters

Douglas Chapman:

[\[69867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2017 to Question 68695, if he has made an assessment of the implications for the availability of Merlin helicopters for the future mainline task group of the findings of the National Audit Office at paragraph 1.9 of its report on Delivering Carrier Strike, published in March 2017.

Harriett Baldwin:

HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH will change the way the Royal Navy (RN) operates and this has been planned for accordingly. While there will be challenges through the transition to the new carriers, we are confident the RN will be able to meet its operational commitments.

■ Military Bases: City of York

Rachael Maskell:

[\[69633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which military units and agencies are currently based in the City of York at (a) Imphal Barracks, (b) Queen Elizabeth II Barracks and (c) Towthorpe Lines; and how many square metres of accommodation each such military unit and agency occupies.

Mark Lancaster:

The following military units and agencies are currently based in the City of York:

At Imphal Barracks:

- Headquarters 1st (United Kingdom) Division
- 2 Signal Regiment
- 12 Military Intelligence Company, 1 Military Intelligence Battalion
- 1 Investigation Company, Special Investigation Branch Regiment
- Headquarters York Garrison Medical Centre
Ministry of Defence Police
Military Provost Guard Service
Army Welfare Service Team Office & National Intake and

Assessment Team Office Help Information Volunteer Exchange Regional Command
North Educational Training Service

- 3 Army Education Centre
- Personnel Security Army
- Environmental Health Team
- Army Equipment Care Inspection Team
- Regional Command Personnel
- Army Recruitment and Training Division – Army Career Centre North
- United Kingdom Security Vetting
- Kohima Museum
- Defence Fire & Rescue
- Defence Infrastructure Organisation
- Carillion Amey
- ATLAS
- Sodexo
- ICS / ISS

At Queen Elizabeth II Barracks:

- Headquarters 2 Medical Brigade
- 34 Field Hospital
- 1st (UK) Division Operational Shooting Training Team
- 4 Infantry Brigade Cadet Training Team Army Outreach Team
- Army Training Unit (North East)
- Queen Elizabeth Training Centre
- Dental Centre
- Yorkshire (North and West) Army Cadet Force Headquarters
- Strensall Army Cadet Force Detachment
- Army Welfare Service Site Office
- Help Information Volunteer Exchange

At Towthorpe Lines:

- Army Medical Services Training Centre

Information is not held on the square metres of accommodation each military unit and agency occupies; however in total Imphal Barracks is 287,200 square metres, Queen Elizabeth II Barracks is 6,343,900 square metres and Towthorpe Lines is 24,200 square metres.

■ Ministry of Defence: EU Exit and Trade Committee

Tracy Brabin: [69661]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reason he is not a member of the Government's European Union Exit and Trade Committee.

Mike Penning:

The list of Cabinet Committees and Implementation Taskforces, and their membership, is published on the GOV.UK website at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-cabinet-committees-system-and-list-of-cabinet-committees>

The Secretary of State for Defence attends the European Union Exit and Trade Committee where the agenda concerns his portfolio.

■ Ministry of Defence: Procurement

John Woodcock: [69938]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make an assessment of the potential cost saving of a competitive tendering process for requirements management systems.

John Woodcock: [69939]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on what basis the choice of a requirements management system for his Department is made; and for what reasons there is not an open competition related to that system.

John Woodcock: [69940]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the contract to provide requirements management and systems engineering tools to Defence Equipment and Support will be advertised.

John Woodcock: [69946]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, by what procurement process the requirements management and systems engineering tools for Defence Equipment and Support (DES) will be advertised; and whether there will be separate procurement processes for the software tools component and the provision of training and consultancy services for DES.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence is in the early stages of considering its future requirements management system. It is likely that existing Crown Commercial Services frameworks will be utilised to compete the future requirement, although the procurement process and associated timings are still being scoped.

■ Syria and Iraq: Military Intervention**Kirsten Oswald:** [\[69710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Government's response to the Defence Committee on UK military operations in Syria and Iraq, published on 9 March 2017, HC 1065, whether the UK has conducted airstrikes against the leadership of Jabhat Fatah al-Sham.

Mike Penning:

The UK has not conducted any airstrikes against Jabhat Fatah al-Shams.

■ Wildcat Helicopters**Douglas Chapman:** [\[69880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2017 to Question 68787, if he will place the feasibility study on the tactical data link for the Wildcat helicopter in the Library.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Wildcat tactical data link study contains information related to Armed Forces potential future capability. It therefore cannot be published as this would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

EDUCATION**■ Apprentices: Taxation****Daniel Kawczynski:** [\[69956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to monitor the quality of training provided through the apprenticeship levy.

Robert Halfon:

Quality is at the heart of our apprenticeships reforms. Employers are designing new high quality apprenticeship standards providing the valuable skills they need, overseen from 1 April by the new Institute for Apprenticeships. Rigorous end-point assessments and grading will raise the quality of apprenticeships giving employers confidence that apprentices are 'job-ready' because they have to demonstrate full occupational competence in order to pass.

The Apprenticeships Levy comes into effect on 6 April 2017. We are putting control of funding firmly in the hands of employers, so they can invest in quality training.

The Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers was published on 14 March 2017. Only providers listed on the Register are approved to deliver apprenticeship training to employers from May 2017 and all will be subject to enhanced monitoring and assurance.

■ Children: Day Care

Angela Rayner:

[\[69914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2017 to Question 62482, on children: day care, of those children who will not be eligible for the 30 hours of free childcare, how many will not be eligible because their parents are (a) unemployed, (b) earning below the minimum requirement and (c) earning over £100,000 a year.

Caroline Dinanage:

As per the answer of 7 February 2017 to Question 62482, we have provisionally estimated from the Survey of Personal Incomes and the Family Resources Survey that, of those currently in receipt of the 15 hours free entitlement, approximately 520,000 will not be eligible for the additional 15 hours. The additional 15 hours is an entitlement to support parents in work. The estimated breakdown in terms of the reason for these children not being eligible is: a) 400,000 children because one or both of their parents are not in work, b) 110,000 children because one or both of their parents are earning below the minimum threshold; and c) 10,000 children because at least one of their parents is earning above the maximum threshold.

It is important to remember that all 3- and 4-year olds are entitled to the 15 hours a week universal early education entitlement, regardless of whether their parents are in work. The most disadvantaged two year olds are also entitled to 15 hours a week of funded early education. Lower income parents who do not meet the income criteria for 30 hours may be able to claim up to 70% of their childcare costs through tax credits, or 85% of their childcare costs through the childcare element of Universal Credit.

Lucy Powell:

[\[69951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of extending the early education offer for working parents with three and four-year olds to 30 hours per week on the availability of provision for three and four-year olds who are entitled to 15 hours per week and receive that provision in maintained nursery schools and nursery classes.

Caroline Dinanage:

The Government remains strongly committed to the universal entitlement for three- and four-year-olds because of the evidence that it promotes school readiness and longer-term outcomes, particularly for the most disadvantaged children. A number of 30 hours early implementer areas are focusing on ensuring that disadvantaged children remain able to access the free entitlement, including in maintained nursery schools.

Most maintained nursery schools are located in disadvantaged areas, and are strongly focused on supporting the communities they serve. We do not expect them to offer the 30 hours entitlement at the expense of disadvantaged children in receipt of the universal entitlement. We would, however, encourage maintained nursery

schools to consider a range of options for being involved in the delivery of the 30 hours entitlement, including working in partnership with other providers.

Lucy Powell:

[69953]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the extension of early education for three and four-year olds with working parents to 30 hours per week on the availability of places for disadvantaged two-year olds receiving 15 hours per week.

Caroline Dinéage:

We remain strongly committed to providing 15 hours of free early learning a week to disadvantaged two year olds because evidence tells us that early education promotes school readiness and longer-term outcomes, particularly for the most disadvantaged children.

Data collected in January 2016 shows that take up of this programme is growing, with 68% of two year olds benefitting from funded early learning, and we continue to support local authorities to increase take up further. We have provided local authorities with estimates of the number of children who may be eligible in their areas from September, so they can plan and ensure there are enough places available to accommodate all the Government's childcare offers. We have increased the national average funding rate for the two year old entitlement from £5.09 to £5.39 an hour, to help ensure childcare providers continue to provide the places parents need to access their entitlement. We will also continue to provide lists of eligible parents to local authorities so that they can promote the entitlement directly to those who could benefit.

A number of early implementer areas are focusing on ensuring that disadvantaged children remain able to access the free entitlement and looking at the impact of 30 hours in areas with high levels of maintained provision.

■ Children's Centres

Angela Rayner:

[70121]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 12 December 2016 to Question 57066, how many Sure Start children's centres there were in England in 2016.

Angela Rayner:

[70127]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 6 December 2016 to Question 55895, how many Sure Start children's centres closed in England in 2016.

Caroline Dinéage:

Since January 2016, real-time data on children's centres and sites has been supplied by local authorities via the Department's EduBase portal at:

<http://www.edubase.gov.uk/edubase/search.xhtml?clear=true>.

Based on information supplied by local authorities, there were 3,315[1] children's centres and sites at the beginning of the 2016 calendar year; and 66[2] children's centres closed in 2016.

Councils are merging centres to allow services to be delivered more efficiently. Where they decide to close a children's centre, councils must demonstrate that children and families, particularly the most disadvantaged, will not be adversely affected and that they will not compromise their duty to have sufficient children's centres to meet local need.

[1] The number of children's centres and sites at the beginning of 2016 is based on information supplied by local authorities, as at 31 March 2017 at 10:25 am. This figure could change if local authorities report additional closures that took place prior to 2016.

[2] The number of children's centres that closed in 2016 is based on information supplied to Edubase, as at 31 March 2017 at 10:25 am. This figure could change if local authorities report additional closures that took place in 2016.

■ **Class Sizes**

Angela Rayner:

[69908]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average pupil to teacher ratio was in (a) primary and (b) secondary schools in England in each year since 2005.

Nick Gibb:

The pupil teacher ratios in primary and secondary schools in England, from 2005 to 2015, are published in table 17a within the statistical first release 'School Workforce in England, November 2015' available at the following web link:

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

■ **Department for Education: Data Protection**

Tim Farron:

[69817]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) official and (b) official sensitive documents have been recorded as lost by her Department since 8 May 2015.

Caroline Dinenage:

There have been nine cases recorded of documents lost by the Department for Education since 8 May 2015, of which four were recovered. These documents were classified OFFICIAL but none were caveated as OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE.

■ **Department for Education: Security**

Jon Trickett:

[70021]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many security passes giving access to her Department's premises are currently valid.

Caroline Dinenage:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ **Department for Education: Staff****Jon Trickett:**[\[70083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many people are currently employed by her Department.

Caroline Dinenage:

The table below shows the published headcount data for the Department for Education at 28 February 2017. The published data does not include staff who transferred into the Department from the former BIS; these will be included in the published data from March 2017.

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION	2813
Education Funding Agency	998
National College for Teaching and Leadership	313
Standards and Testing Agency	117

■ **Department for Education: Written Questions****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[69566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when she plans to Answer Question 68291, tabled by the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish on 16 March 2017, on Two Trees School, Denton.

Nick Gibb:

Parliamentary Question 68291 was answered on 29 March 2017.

■ **Eleven Plus****Catherine McKinnell:**[\[69798\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will take steps to redesign the 11-plus test to insulate it against non-academic factors such as parental engagement or income.

Catherine McKinnell:[\[69799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will take steps to make the 11-plus test fairer for those with special educational needs.

Nick Gibb:

As part of the 'Schools that work for everyone' consultation, we sought views from respondents about requirements that may apply to new or expanding selective schools. These requirements would be in addition to those that already apply to selective schools, including under the Equality Act 2010. This includes making

reasonable adjustments so that all children, including those with special educational needs, can access their provision and facilities.

The consultation has closed, and we are analysing the responses. We expect to publish our formal response to the consultation in the spring.

■ Health Services: Vocational Guidance

Ian Lavery:

[69737]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to encourage young people to work towards a career in healthcare.

Robert Halfon:

Schools have a statutory duty to secure independent careers guidance for 12- to 18-year-olds. This must include information on the full range of education and training options, including apprenticeships. An equivalent requirement is also in place for 16- to 18-year-olds in sixth form colleges and further education colleges.

The Careers & Enterprise Company offer support to schools and colleges by increasing the level of employer input into careers, inspiration and enterprise programmes. This will open young peoples' eyes to choices and opportunities available in healthcare and other professions, broadening horizons and raising aspirations. The Company has introduced a nationwide network of Enterprise Advisers who are working directly with over 1,500 schools and colleges to increase the number and effectiveness of their employer interactions.

'Inspiring the Future' is an example of the programmes available to schools and colleges to bring young people closer to the world of work. Over a million new connections have been made between young people and employee volunteers via 'Inspiring the Future' and its 'Inspiring Women' and 'Primary Futures' Campaigns. They have enabled volunteers from a range of sectors and professions, including healthcare, to talk to young people about their jobs and career routes.

Apprenticeships provide routes into a variety of careers in healthcare, enabling young people and adults to earn while they learn in a real job, and improve their prospects for the future. There are a large number of apprenticeships ranging from Intermediate to Degree Level available across England for clinical and non-clinical roles in the health sector including Health and Social Care, Clinical Support and Healthcare Science.

Our 'Get In Go Far' apprenticeships communications campaign promotes the benefits of apprenticeships to young people, their influencers and employers.

■ ICT: GCE A-level

Tom Watson:

[69680]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of 16 to 18-year old students took A-level computer science in each of the last five years.

Nick Gibb:

The proportion of students who have taken computer science A level in the last five years is published as part of the “A level and other level 3 results: 2015 to 2016 (revised)” statistical first release (SFR).[1]

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/a-level-and-other-16-to-18-results-2015-to-2016-revised> (“Maths and science tables: SFR05/2017” document, table 13a)

■ ICT: Primary Education**Tom Watson:****[69751]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate her Department has made of the average proportion of a school day which was spent on teaching computer skills in primary schools in the last academic year for which data is available.

Nick Gibb:

The information requested is not centrally collected. A question was asked however, in the National Foundation for Educational Research Teacher Voice Survey in May 2016 at the request of the Department of Education. The question asked respondents:

“Approximately how many minutes of teaching time they spent in the average week across a range of subjects, both in subject specific lessons and as a part of other lessons”.

The results showed that across all the primary Key Stages, the median teaching time spent on Computing was 45 minutes as part of subject specific lessons whilst the median time spent on teaching Computing as a part of other lessons was 20 minutes. Both the report from this survey and the data tables containing this information are publicly available on GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-voice-omnibus-may-to-july-2016-survey-dfe-questions>

■ Pre-school Education**Angela Rayner:****[69907]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many state-maintained nursery schools there were at the end of each year since 2009; and how many such schools there were in the most recent period for which figures are available.

Caroline Dinenage:

Table 2a of “Schools, Pupils and Their Characteristics January 2016” sets out the number of maintained nursery schools in each year from 2009 to 2016. 2016 is the most recent period for which figures are available. The figures are shown in the table below:

YEAR:	NUMBER OF MAINTAINED NURSERY SCHOOLS
2009	438
2010	428
2011	423
2012	423
2013	417
2014	414
2015	411
2016	406

During this period, the total number of pupils in maintained nursery schools has increased from 37,285 in 2009 to 43,730 in 2016. These figures can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2016>

■ Primary Education: Assessments

Lilian Greenwood:

[69606]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many times she or Ministers of her Department have held meetings or had discussions on the reception baseline assessment with representatives from (a) the Centre of Evaluation and Monitoring, Durham University, (b) Early Excellence, (c) GL Assessment and (d) the National Foundation for Education Research since September 2015.

Nick Gibb:

Details of meetings held by Ministers at the Department for Education with the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring - Durham University, Early Excellence, GL Assessment or the National Foundation for Education Research to discuss the reception baseline assessment since September 2015 are shown in the table below:

MINISTER	DATE	ORGANISATION	PURPOSE OF MEETING
Nick Gibb	2 September 2015	Early Excellence	Discuss the reception baseline assessment.

MINISTER	DATE	ORGANISATION	PURPOSE OF MEETING
Nick Gibb	10 May 2016	Robert Coe, Director of the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring Durham University.	Seminar on primary assessment with educational experts and departmental officials.

In meeting educational experts, and in all its work, the Department is mindful of the need to manage appropriately any potential conflict of interest.

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[69644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 13 March 2017 to Question 66862, whether it is her Department's policy to allow parents to withdraw their children from statutory assessments in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Nick Gibb:

As most parents recognise, assessment is an important part of primary education to help identify how their children are performing in key subjects.

The responsibility for making the final decision about whether it is appropriate to enter an individual pupil for the statutory assessments resides with that pupil's head teacher, using their professional judgment. As statutory assessments are a fundamental part of our primary education system, it is not the Department's policy to allow parents to withdraw their children from them.

■ Primary Education: Digital Technology

Tom Watson:

[\[69828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment she has made of the potential use of computer programming in primary schooling.

Nick Gibb:

The Government is committed to ensuring that pupils receive high quality computing education. That is why we have introduced computing as a National Curriculum subject at all four Key Stages. All maintained schools must follow the curriculum and other schools can use it as a benchmark. The curriculum has been designed to ensure that pupils acquire the knowledge and skills they need to become active creators of digital technology, not just passive consumers of it.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, the computing curriculum has a strong focus on programming. It includes an understanding of algorithms and how they are implemented as programs. In addition, pupils are taught about designing, writing and debugging simple programs, using logical reasoning, and using a variety of software to design and create a range of programs, systems, and content.

■ Primary Education: Standards

Helen Jones:

[\[69753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect on children from low income backgrounds attending a maintained nursery school on their level of attainment in primary school.

Caroline Dineneage:

Studies show that attending a high quality pre-school improves the academic and social outcomes of children from low income families throughout primary school.

Almost all maintained nursery schools are currently judged either good or outstanding by Ofsted.

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[69945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 2 March 2017 to Question 64215, on primary education: standards, what the title of the research referred to in that Answer is.

Nick Gibb:

The research study referred to was, Tymms, P., Merrell, C., Henderson, B., Albone, S. & Jones, P. (2012). Learning Difficulties in the Primary School Years: Predictability from On-Entry Baseline Assessment. Online Educational Research Journal June 2012.

On Thursday 30 March, the Department launched a consultation on primary assessment and the implications for accountability. This consultation covers key issues, including the best starting point to measure the progress that children make in primary school. We welcome contributions to this consultation.

Angela Rayner:

[\[70141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on making in-year changes to the list of approved qualifications in Key Stage 4 performance tables.

Nick Gibb:

The Department operates an annual process to judge the suitability of qualifications that awarding organisations put forward for inclusion in performance tables.

Awarding organisations submit qualifications on a termly basis to be considered for inclusion in performance tables. We publish and update the lists of approved qualifications four times a year.

We reserve the right to remove a qualification from the approved list if we have evidence to indicate that it no longer meets the requirements for inclusion in the performance tables. In-year changes to the list may be made in exceptional circumstances. In making such a decision, we would consider whether there is sufficient curriculum time remaining for an alternative qualification to be studied.

Angela Rayner:

[70142]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of removing the BCS Level 2 ECDL Certificate in IT Application Skills from the list of qualifications to be included in the technical award category in the 2018 Key Stage 4 performance tables.

Nick Gibb:

The Department carried out a review of the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) qualification. This review concluded that ECDL no longer demonstrated the characteristics of a Technical Award. In such circumstances, we reserve the right to remove a qualification from the list of qualifications that have been approved for inclusion in performance tables.

In making the decision to remove ECDL from the approved list for 2018[1], we considered the effect on schools and pupils. We judged there to be sufficient time remaining for an alternative qualification to be studied, should that be in the best interest of the pupil.

We recognise that late changes to the approved list are not desirable. In this case, however, we acted to remove a perverse incentive for schools to enter pupils into qualifications that may not have been in their best interests.

[1] www.gov.uk/government/publications/2018-performance-tables-technical-and-vocational-qualifications#history

■ Schools: Census

Angela Rayner:

[70122]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answers of 28 March 2017 to Questions 69028 and 69027, when the next set of data in the Schools, pupils and their characteristics series will be published.

Nick Gibb:

Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2017 will be published on 29 June 2017 (provisional date). This was announced at:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2017

A release calendar for official statistics is published at:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements

■ Schools: Finance

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:

[69731]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when she plans to publish the results of the national funding formula consultation.

Nick Gibb:

We expect to announce the final formula in the summer.

■ Schools: Sponsorship

Lucy Powell:

[60529]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 20 December 2016 to Question 51314, what the Ofsted categories of assessment are for each (a) academy school and (b) free school sponsored by a (i) grammar school or (ii) multi-academy trust run by a grammar school.

Nick Gibb:

As at the 1 March there were 14 multi academy trusts established by grammar schools approved to sponsor a total of 31 academies. The vast majority of the schools included in this data were previously underperforming when taken over by multi-academy trusts established by grammar schools. Since then nearly three quarters (71%) of those inspected have improved their Ofsted judgement – with more than half now rated good or outstanding.

There is one free school sponsored by a grammar school.

The Ofsted categories for each school sponsored by a grammar school are as follows:

OFSTED CATEGORY	NO. OF ACADEMIES	NO. OF FREE SCHOOLS	TOTAL
Outstanding	1	0	1
Good	7	0	7
Requires Improvement	7	1	8
Inadequate	2	0	2
Not visited	14	0	14

Source: Ofsted MI – 28 February 2017

In total, 140 grammar schools are voluntary converter academies. Of these, 117 have an Ofsted category as 'Outstanding', 20 are 'Good' and 3 'Require Improvement'.

■ Schools: Vocational Guidance

Daniel Kawczynski:

[69957]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that careers advice in schools promotes vocational learning.

Robert Halfon:

This Department is committed to ensuring that technical education has the same prestige as academic education. We are simplifying the routes into technical education, and raising the standards of these routes, to ensure they are valued both by students and by employers.

Good careers education and guidance is vital in allowing every individual to climb the ladder of opportunity and find a fulfilling education or training route that is right for them, whether this is an academic route, technical route or apprenticeship. Schools have an important role to play and already have a legal duty to secure independent careers guidance for 12- to- 18- year-olds. This must include information on the full range of education and training options, including apprenticeships.

Government has established The Careers & Enterprise Company to play a lead role in transforming the provision of careers, enterprise and employer engagement experiences for young people. The Company has introduced a nationwide network of Enterprise Advisers who are working directly with over 1,500 schools and colleges to help them to develop closer links with business. The Enterprise Advisers have been briefed on technical education opportunities and will take the messages promoting technical education into schools as an essential part of a wide offer of careers information.

We want to go further and ensure that young people hear directly from the providers of technical education to inform their decisions at important transition points. The Government has accepted an amendment to the Technical and Further Education Bill that will require schools to give education and training providers the opportunity to talk to pupils in years 8-13 about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships that they may offer. This will strengthen the Bill by ensuring that young people hear much more consistently about the merits of alternatives to academic and school-based routes and are aware of all the routes to higher skills and into the workplace.

■ Teachers

Tracy Brabin:

[\[69732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of teachers in (a) Kirklees, (b) Yorkshire and (c) the UK are (i) under 35, (ii) between 35 and 60 and (iii) over 60-years old.

Nick Gibb:

The following table provides the percentage of fulltime equivalent teachers who are aged 'under 35', 'between 35 and 60' and '60 and over' employed in state funded schools in Kirklees local authority, Yorkshire and the Humber region and England in November 2015.

Equivalent figures for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are a matter for the relevant Devolved Administration.

	KIRKLEES	YORKSHIRE	ENGLAND
% Under 35	39%	44%	42%
% Between 35-60	59%	55%	56%

	KIRKLEES	YORKSHIRE	ENGLAND
% 60 and over	2%	2%	2%

Source: School Workforce Census

■ Universities: Sheffield

Louise Haigh:

[\[69565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2017 to Question 68884, what nationality the non-UK domiciled higher education enrolments are at (a) Sheffield Hallam and (b) Sheffield University in each year from 2010 to date.

Joseph Johnson:

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects and publishes statistics on students enrolled at UK higher education institutions (HEIs). Annual statistics on higher education students are published at the following link:

<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/statistical-first-releases>

Information on the country of domicile prior to study of enrolments at Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield have been provided in the accompanying table.

Attachments:

1. The University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam U [69565 - The University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University - Academic years 2009-10 - 2015-16.xlsx]

■ Video Games: Primary Education

Tom Watson:

[\[69827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment she has made of the potential use of computer games in primary schooling.

Nick Gibb:

The Department's approach to educational technology in schools is to let schools decide the products and services they want to use.

The Government is committed to ensuring that pupils receive high quality education in computing. That is why we have introduced computing as a National Curriculum subject at all four Key Stages. All maintained schools must follow the curriculum and other schools can use it as a benchmark. The curriculum has been designed to ensure that pupils acquire the knowledge and skills they need to become active creators of digital technology, not just passive consumers of it.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, the computing curriculum has a strong focus on programming. It includes an understanding of algorithms and how they are implemented as programs. In addition, pupils are taught about designing, writing and debugging simple programs, using logical reasoning, and using a variety of software to design and create a range of programs, systems, and content.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Agriculture: Wales****Stephen Crabb:**[\[69911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what representations and correspondence she has received from the Welsh Minister for Agriculture on agricultural policy after the UK has left the EU; and if she will publish that correspondence.

George Eustice:

The Secretary of State has met the Welsh Minister for Agriculture on several occasions as we seek to ensure we get the best possible deal for the whole of the UK. We have committed to carefully considering any proposals that the devolved administrations put forward. Discussions on the issues are ongoing.

■ Air Pollution**Ian Murray:**[\[70134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what mitigating actions local authorities that breach air quality targets are required to take.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Sections 82 to 84 of the Environment Act 1995 require local authorities to review air quality in their areas and to designate an air quality management area (AQMA), where air quality objectives are not being achieved. Where an AQMA is designated, local authorities must produce an air quality action plan describing the pollution reduction measures to be put in place.

Local authorities in England can already implement Clean Air Zones voluntarily. We have recently consulted on a national framework for Clean Air Zones and supporting legislation to enable the Government to mandate local authorities to implement Clean Air Zones. This is a devolved matter.

Ian Murray:[\[70135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department plans to consult on its forthcoming air quality strategy.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government will be publishing a revised draft national plan to address nitrogen dioxide concentrations for consultation by 24 April.

■ Air Pollution: Monitoring**Ian Murray:**[\[70136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to introduce a national air quality monitoring system.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Defra currently supports a network of 270 monitoring sites in the UK, measuring concentrations of 13 pollutants (270 sites active as at 12 December 2016). The Environment Agency manages the UK's national monitoring sites on behalf of Defra and the Devolved Administrations..

Many local authorities also undertake monitoring separately for the purpose of Local Air Quality Management. The majority of local authority monitoring stations are not part of Defra's national monitoring network as they do not meet the criteria set out in European legislation.

Further information and pollutant monitoring data is available on the [UK Air website](#).

■ Angling: Licensing**Grahame Morris:****[70177]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the administration costs for issuing fishing rod licenses were in each of the last three years.

George Eustice:

Over the past three years rod licences have been issued through website sales, telesales, over the counter sales under a contract with the Post Office Limited and a small proportion have been sold through retained agents. It is estimated that the average administration cost for issuing a rod licence is approximately £1.62 per licence.

Since 1 March 2017, the Environment Agency has been providing the website sales and telesales elements in-house, in compliance with the Government Digital Services (GDS) standards. Over the counter services are still being provided by the Post Office but the Environment Agency has now ceased to sell through retained agents.

Grahame Morris:**[70179]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much has accrued to the public purse from the fishing rod license in each of the last five years.

George Eustice:

The table below shows the Environment Agency sales figures of rod licences in each of the past five years:

YEAR	ROD LICENCE SALES (£ MILLION)
2012/13	21.8
2013/14	21.6
2014/15	21.5
2015/16	21.1
2016/17	20.6

The rod licence year runs from 1st April to March 31st.

The fees the Environment Agency collects through rod licence sales are spent on providing a fisheries service to fishing licence holders. The Environment Agency's fisheries functions, for which it has powers to collect licence fees, relate to maintaining, improving and developing salmon, trout, freshwater, and eel fisheries as specified in the Environment Act 1995.

Grahame Morris:

[\[70197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many prosecutions have there been for fishing without a valid rod licence in each of the last five years.

George Eustice:

There have been the following number of prosecutions for fishing without a valid rod licence in each of the last five years:

YEAR	NUMBER OF PROSECUTIONS
2012	2,168
2013	1,880
2014	2,268
2015	1,798
2016	2,088

All of the above figures are from between 1st January and 31st December.

Grahame Morris:

[\[70201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will bring forward proposals to abolish the fishing rod licence and provide an alternative means to raise funds for the Environment Agency.

George Eustice:

The Government has no plans to abolish the fishing rod licence. The income from the rod licence fee allows the Environment Agency to provide its fisheries service to rod licence holders.

■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control

Sue Hayman:

[\[69754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the average amount of compensation paid, per animal, to dairy farmers whose herds have been compulsorily slaughtered for bovine TB has been in each of the last five years.

George Eustice:

The average amount of compensation paid, per animal, to dairy farmers whose cattle have been compulsory slaughtered for bovine TB for the last five years is shown in the table below. These include all reactors and contacts. It is rarely necessary to slaughter an entire herd.

YEAR	AVERAGE VALUE
2012	£1,205.33
2013	£1,181.03
2014	£1,151.47
2015	£1,066.74
2016	£936.54

The values in the table are for England only. Both the Scottish and Welsh Governments pay and record compensation payments separately to farmers who have had their animal's compulsory slaughtered for bovine TB.

■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Vaccination**Paul Flynn:**[\[69714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department has commissioned or published any reports on vaccination as an alternative option to culling in the last 12 months.

George Eustice:

No such reports have been commissioned or published in the last 12 months.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Data Protection**Tim Farron:**[\[69812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many (a) official and (b) official sensitive documents have been recorded as lost by her Department since 8 May 2015.

George Eustice:

Since 8 May 2015 two official documents and 12 official sensitive documents have been recorded as lost by Defra.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Security**Jon Trickett:**[\[70022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many security passes giving access to her Department's premises are currently valid.

Jon Trickett:

[70039]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many security passes giving access to her Department's premises have been issued in each year since 2010.

Jon Trickett:

[70060]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many people holding security passes for other Government Departments are granted access to her Department's premises with that pass, by Department.

George Eustice:

Civil Servants have to ability to work flexibly across government sites where there is a business need to do so. The issuing of all passes is controlled by the local Departmental Security teams who follow strict procedures and protocols. Information on the number of people holding security passes for other government departments who are granted access to Defra premises is not centrally recorded.

Defra has issued 7501 passes since 2011. Data for 2010 is no longer held.

Defra is currently unable to provide data on the number of Defra passes that are active.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Staff**

Jon Trickett:

[70084]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many people are currently employed by her Department.

George Eustice:

This information is available in the ONS Public Sector Employment Statistics last published on 15 March 2017:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/datasets/publicsectoremploymentreferencetable>

■ **Fisheries: Employment**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[69697]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate she has made of the number of jobs in the fishing industry which have been directly funded through the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund in each of the last 10 years; and if she will make a statement.

George Eustice:

The information requested is not collated centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Fisheries: Monitoring

Melanie Onn:

[\[70005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 20 October 2016 to Question 48853, what proportion of the total UK fishing trips have been electronically monitored using electronic monitoring equipment in each of the last three years.

George Eustice:

The proportion of fishing trips undertaken by UK vessels using remote electronic monitoring (REM) equipment was less than one percent of the total fishing trips undertaken by UK vessels in each of the last three years from 2014 to 2016. The type of vessel using REM equipment were large capacity vessels, fishing off shore for fish stocks that were subject to quotas. In 2016 nearly 40 percent of UK landings of North Sea cod were made by vessels fully documenting their catch using REM equipment.

Melanie Onn:

[\[70006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department plans to set a target for the proportion of future UK fishing trips to be monitored either by a fisheries observer or monitored using electronic monitoring equipment.

George Eustice:

Details of planned UK observer trips are set out in United Kingdom's Work Plan for data collection in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. The Work Plan can be found at the Gov.UK website. In England and Wales, 525 staff days per year are allocated to observer sampling with 1032 days for Scotland and 460 days for Northern Ireland.

■ Fisheries: Treaties

Calum Kerr:

[\[69965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions she has had with representatives of the fishing industry on the status of the 1964 London Fisheries Convention.

George Eustice:

Ministers and officials have had meetings with a number of organisations to discuss a range of issues associated with EU exit including the 1964 London Fisheries Convention. As the Prime Minister told Parliament on 29 March, we hope to be able to say something about this soon.

Calum Kerr:

[\[69966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the status of the 1964 London Fisheries Convention after the UK leaves the EU.

George Eustice:

We are looking very carefully at the London Fisheries Convention. As the Prime Minister told the House on 29 March, we hope to be able to say something about this soon.

■ **Fly-tipping****Daniel Kawczynski:****[70108]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what support her Department is giving to local authorities to tackle fly tipping.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

As set out in our manifesto, last May we gave local councils the power to issue fixed penalty notices of up to £400 for small-scale fly-tipping as an alternative to more costly prosecutions. In 2015 local authorities' power to seize and destroy vehicles of those suspected of fly-tipping was enhanced. Local authorities also have a full range of powers available to them under environmental legislation to deal with and investigate fly-tipping incidents and pursue prosecutions which can lead to penalties of up to five years in prison or an unlimited fine.

The Government also works with a wide range of interested parties, including local authorities, through the National Fly-Tipping Prevention Group to promote and disseminate guidance and good practice in the prevention, reporting, investigation and clearance of fly-tipped waste. More information is available at:

www.tacklingflytipping.com.

■ **Food Poverty****Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:****[69890]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent estimate her Department has made of the level of household food insecurity in the UK; and pursuant to the Answer of 12 September 2016 by the Minister of State for Health to Question 44475, when the Government expects the data provided to the Voices of the Hungry project to be published.

George Eustice:

The Government annually publishes Family Food, which draws on data from the Living Cost of Food Survey. This publication includes questions on household spend on food, including that by the lowest 20% income households, which has remained constant at around 16% for a number of years.

The Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), developed by the Voices of the Hungry project of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is used to collect food security data in up to 150 countries under the Gallup World Poll. The Department for International Development supports this work financially and updated results will be published later this year by the FAO. We understand from the FAO that global FIES results will be launched in June, and the individual country level estimates, which are three-year averages, will be published in September.

■ Food Supply

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[69694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of potential trends in the level of food self-sufficiency in each of the next 10 years; and if she will make a statement.

George Eustice:

The most recent UK Production to Supply Ratio is 61% for all food and 76% for indigenous type food.

We do not predict future ratios given the uncertainty over the many dependent factors including global food commodity prices, exchange rates, climate and weather, as well as discrete factors such as plant and animal disease. However, the Government has a policy of supporting our food and farming industry so that we can grow more and sell more British produce.

■ Food: Prices

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[\[69859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what change her Department expects in the level of food prices in the next six months.

George Eustice:

The Department has published research on the main drivers of changes to food prices which have been observed to be food commodity prices, currency exchange rates and oil prices. It will be changes to any, or a combination of these factors, that will bring changes to prices.

ONS statistics on food prices are published each month as part of the Consumer Price Index. In the most recent statistics published on 11 April, food prices had increased by 1.3% in the year to March 2017 following almost three consecutive years where food prices fell. Exchange rates and energy costs have been the key drivers of these changes.

■ Food: Sales

Grant Shapps:

[\[69603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the annual value was of fruit and vegetables prohibited from sale in the UK for failing to comply with rules on size, shape and general appearance in each of the last five years.

George Eustice:

EU Marketing Standards for fresh fruit and vegetables require that, as a minimum, produce on sale is intact, sound (for example, not rotten, severely bruised or severely damaged), clean, fresh in appearance, practically free from pests and or disease, practically free from damage caused by pests affecting the flesh, free of abnormal external moisture, free of foreign smell or taste, sufficiently developed or ripe, but not overdeveloped or overripe. Other issues related to size, shape or general

appearance would not prevent produce being put on sale unless they formed part of industry or retailers' own standards. Defra does not hold data on the value of such produce withheld from sale in the UK.

■ Horses: Databases

Sir Edward Garnier:

[69673]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 27 February 2017 to Question 64423, what steps her Department plans to take to enforce compliance with the requirement that owners of horses and ponies register on the central equine database; and if she will make a statement.

George Eustice:

It is the responsibility of individual horse owners to ensure that their horses are identified and registered on the Central Equine Database. Local Authorities are responsible for enforcing these requirements.

Defra launched a consultation on 5 April 2017 to implement requirements relating to the identification and registration of equines and the new Central Equine Database. It is published at:

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/equine-id/revised-eu-rules-on-equine-id-eu-reg-eu-2015-262>

■ Ivory: Sales

Sir Greg Knight:

[69605]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will establish an inquiry into the extent to which ivory dealers are misrepresenting the age of ivory in order to bypass sanctions on the sale of post-1947 ivory; and if she will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

We intend to consult on our proposals for a ban on trade in worked ivory from the last 70 years. At the same time we will be calling for evidence on what more we can do to tackle this issue, including how we best enforce our measures.

Andrew Rosindell:

[69979]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of the ban on the sale of antique ivory objects made after 1947; and if she will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

We intend to consult on our proposals on ivory. We will evaluate the effectiveness of our policy measures after they have entered into force.

■ Microplastics: Animal Welfare

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[69988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 16 March 2017 to Question 67637, for what reasons her Department does not have plans to assess the effect of microplastics entering the environment on animal welfare.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Defra-funded research has already demonstrated that microplastics can cause harm in the marine environment, including to marine animals. Our priority is therefore to prevent them from entering the marine environment in the first place. Our recent consultation requested evidence on the environmental impact of other sources of microplastics that may enter our seas. We will use this information to decide on what further action we will take to address microplastics entering the marine environment.

■ Tidal Power: Swansea Bay

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[69569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether an Environmental Impact Assessment has been carried out on the effect of sediment movements along the Severn Estuary following the development of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon; and if she will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

This is a devolved matter for the Welsh Government.

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[69570\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether a flooding impact assessment has been made for areas on the southern side of the Severn Estuary following the development of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon; and if she will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

This is a devolved matter for the Welsh Government.

■ UN Convention on the Law of the Sea

Calum Kerr:

[\[69964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will publish a timetable outlining the measures required for the UK to establish itself as an independent coastal state under the UN Convention on the Law of the Seas.

George Eustice:

In accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, following EU exit, the UK will be responsible for managing living resources, including fisheries, within its territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION**■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Management Consultants****Jon Trickett:**[\[69467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, pursuant to the Answer of 27 February 2017 to Question 65684, what the procurement spend of his Department has been since its creation; and what proportion of that spend has been on management consultants.

Mr David Jones:

Information relating to the Department's expenditure in 2016-17 will be published in the Annual Report in Summer 2017.

Data relating to spend over £25,000 and contracts over £10,000 will be published as part of regular transparency releases on GOV.uk.

■ Economic Growth**Mr Gregory Campbell:**[\[69650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, if he will take steps to ensure that job creation and economic development across the whole of the UK is a priority during negotiations on the UK leaving the EU.

Mr David Jones:

As the Prime Minister has highlighted, during negotiations she will represent every person in the whole United Kingdom and we are working with the administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to deliver an outcome that works for the whole of the UK. The Government has also set this out in the 'Plan for Britain', which identifies the desire to ensure that big decisions benefit the whole country, creating jobs and supporting cities towns and communities right across the United Kingdom.

■ European Court of Justice**Tim Farron:**[\[70148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many times the UK has made a legal challenge through the EU Court of Justice in each of the last 10 years; and if he will provide details of each such case.

Mr David Jones:

Since 2007, the UK has made six legal challenges through the Court of Justice of the European Union, detailed below.

1. T-27/16 UK v Commission - This is a direct application by the UK to challenge aspects of the legislation (Implementing Decision (EU) 2015/2098) in relation to funding for Producer Organisations (POs). The UK incurred a disallowance for alleged deficiencies in the manner in which the UK calculates the Value of Marketed Production for POs. The UK believes that its procedures for including the VMP of new joiners to the PO is correct and in compliance with the legislation. Case ongoing.

2. T-245/13 UK v Commission - An application by the UK for the annulment of Commission Decision 2013/123/EU of 26 February 2013 excluding from EU financing certain expenditure incurred by the Member States, to the extent of an entry in the Annex relating to a 5.19% extrapolated correction of expenditure incurred in Northern Ireland in Financial Year 2010 (amounting to €16,513,582.57). Judgment was handed down 4 September 2015; the Court dismissed the action.
3. T-437/14 UK v Commission - An application by the UK for the partial annulment of the Annex to Commission Implementing Decision of 4 April 2014 on excluding from European Union financing certain expenditure incurred by the Member States under the Guarantee Section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). Judgment handed down 28 September 2016; the Court dismissed the action.
4. T-115/10 - An application by the UK to annul Commission Decision 2010/45/EU of 22 December 2009 adopting, pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive), a third updated list of sites of Community importance for the Mediterranean bio-geographical region, to the extent that it lists the Estrecho Oriental site of Community importance. Judgment handed down 24 May 2011; the Court dismissed the action as inadmissible.
5. T-503/12 - An application by the UK to annul Commission Decision 2012/500/EU of 6 September 2012 excluding from EU financing certain expenditure incurred by the Member States, to the extent of four entries in the Annex relating to a 5% flat rate correction of expenditure incurred in Northern Ireland in Financial Year 2008 (amounting to EUR 277 231,60 and EUR 13 671 558,90) and in Financial Year 2009 (amounting to EUR 270 398,26 and EUR 15 844 193,29). Judgment handed down 4 September 2015; the Court dismissed the action.
6. T-107/09 - An application by the UK to annul Commission decision 2008/960/EC (on certain expenditure incurred by the Member States under the Guarantee Section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund and under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund) insofar as it has the effect of applying a correction to the Fruit and Vegetable aid scheme against the UK for alleged weaknesses in its control system concerning the recognition of Producer Organisations created before 2002. Case discontinued 1 September 2009.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Abdul Jawad

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[70118]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to his US counterpart on facilitating access to medical treatment in that country for two-year old Syrian refugee Abdul Jawad.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Any decision to admit Abdul Jawad is a matter for the US.

■ **British Embassy Kabul: Pashto and Persian Language**

Gareth Thomas:

[\[69646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answers of 20 March 2017 to Questions 67806 and 67810, how many diplomats and members of staff based at the UK Embassy in Kabul are UK nationals and are fluent in (a) Dari and (b) Pashto.

Alok Sharma:

Further to my answers of 20 March 2017 (PQ 67806 and PQ 67810), the British Embassy in Kabul has approximately 160 local staff, many of whom speak Dari or Pashto as their native language. We also have a small number of UK-based roles in Kabul where we have trained job holders to speak Dari or Pashto. We are not able to disclose exact figures for operational reasons.

■ **Cameroon: Human Rights**

Jeff Smith:

[\[69468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 22 February 2017 to Question 64298, what recent progress he has made in discussions with his counterparts in the Government of Cameroon on the arrest, detention and violent treatment of activists in that country.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK Government continues to closely monitor the human rights situation in Cameroon. Our High Commissioner has raised our concerns directly with the President Biya on a number of recent occasions. We call on Cameroon to uphold its human rights obligations and to take a lead in resolving the current tensions through a broad-based dialogue.

■ **Hong Kong: Politics and Government**

Catherine West:

[\[69470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with (a) his Chinese counterpart and (b) members of the Hong Kong Government on the charging of nine activists over the 2014 Umbrella Revolution protests.

Alok Sharma:

Legal issues in Hong Kong are a matter for the relevant authorities in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. We have therefore not raised the issue with the Chinese Government. We are aware of concerns about the timing of the charging of nine activists involved in the 2014 protests. The British Consulate General in Hong Kong has raised the issue with the Department for Justice. Hong Kong's success and stability depend on its high degree of autonomy, independent judiciary and respect

for the fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Basic Law.

■ **Hugh Lanning**

Andy Slaughter:

[\[70119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his oral contribution of 28 March 2017, Official Report, column 107, what the nature of the consular assistance was that was offered to Mr Hugh Lanning both during and after his deportation from Israel on 12 March 2017; and how that offer of assistance was communicated to Mr Lanning.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Foreign Secretary's answer to his question in this house on 28 March, where it was confirmed that we did not provide assistance to Mr Lanning, as he did not request assistance from us. We were ready to provide consular assistance in the event that it was requested. All British nationals outside the UK are eligible to ask for consular assistance. The nature of the support will vary depending on individual circumstances.

■ **Israel: Entry Clearances**

Drew Hendry:

[\[69464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the Israeli Government on the effect of recent law changes on the ability of UK citizens to support the rights of the Palestinian people.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 30 March 2017 (PQ 68841).

■ **Jamaica: Foreign Relations**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[70165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he last met his counterpart in Jamaica; and what issues were discussed at that meeting.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Minister for the Caribbean, the Rt Hon Baroness Anelay of St Johns met the Jamaican Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade at the CARIFORUM meeting on 8 March 2017. Discussions focused on the United Kingdom's future trading relationship with CARIFORUM countries after leaving the European Union.

■ Sub-Saharan Africa: Droughts**Mr Gregory Campbell:****[69651]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to UN officials on drought and population movement in sub-Saharan Africa.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK is playing a leading role in the response to the current drought affecting several countries across Sub-Saharan Africa. We will continue – bilaterally, and through the UN and the EU – to press partners to urgently step up their support. On 23 March the Foreign Secretary chaired UN Security Council briefings on Somalia and South Sudan, urging partners to support the relief efforts, and to unify their support behind the UN, African Union, and regional governments in addressing the roots of humanitarian crises and displacement, as well as promoting peace and prosperity in the region.

■ Ukraine: Electronic Warfare**Dan Jarvis:****[69474]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to learn from the cyber and information warfare experienced in Ukraine over the last 10 years.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Government is acutely aware of the need to learn lessons from other countries' experiences of hostile cyber activity and information operations. This is factored into our National Cyber Security Strategy, the latest version of which was published in November 2016 and can be found on gov.uk.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-cyber-security-strategy-2016-to-2021>

■ Yemen: Military Intervention**Martyn Day:****[69489]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts from the countries in the Saudi Arabia-led coalition participating in the conflict in Yemen on becoming parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I discuss a range of issues with my counterparts including members of the Saudi-led Coalition conducting operations in Yemen. In line with the UK's obligations under the Convention on Cluster Munitions, we urge Coalition members, as non-State Parties to the Convention, to accede to it without delay.

HEALTH**■ Barts Health NHS Trust: Private Finance Initiative****Stephen Timms:**[\[69941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to relieve the premium costs to Barts NHS Trust of the Barts PFI projects.

Mr Philip Dunne:

One of the first things the Coalition Government did in 2010 was to launch a review of the previous Government's Private Finance Initiatives (PFIs) and begin an initiative to extract savings and better value for money at all the PFI contracts they had signed and are now open. In 2014 it was reported that trusts had negotiated validated savings worth over £250 million on their contracts. This savings work is ongoing, with Departmental officials helping local trusts as required.

Barts Health NHS Trust's recovery plan is focused on day-to-day operational improvements that can be made to improve grip and efficiency of the Trust. This includes elements of the PFI contract that could lead to efficiency savings, including the recent re-tendering of the Trust's soft Facilities Management contract.

■ Care Quality Commission: Finance**Mr Christopher Chope:**[\[69963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the value is of efficiency savings the Care Quality Commission is required to make by 2019; and what proportion of those savings will be delivered in 2017-18.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) will move from a budget of £249 million in 2015-16 to a budget of £217 million in 2019-20, requiring total savings of £32 million.

The CQC's revenue budget for 2016-17 was £236 million and next year (2017-18) it will be £226 million. The proportion of the savings that will be delivered in financial year 2017-18 is 31%. The proportion of the total required savings that will have been achieved by the end of financial year 2017-18 is 71%.

■ Carers**Mrs Flick Drummond:**[\[70145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what measures he plans to include in the Carers Strategy on the availability of breaks for carers.

David Mowat:

In developing the new Carers Strategy we have been consulting widely and working closely with carers to understand the many issues that may impact on them, including the role of breaks for carers. The Strategy will look at the support we provide to carers themselves; to their families and will reach beyond the health and care system

to help support carers in employment, education and in the development of 'carer friendly communities'.

■ **Clinical Commissioning Groups: Contracts**

Helen Jones: [69757]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure the best quality of care for patients in circumstances where a clinical commissioning group commissions a service from only one provider and that provider has been assessed by the Care Quality Commission as requiring improvement.

Helen Jones: [69758]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that Warrington Clinical Commissioning Group offers patients a choice of provider in cases where the Care Quality Commission has assessed a service provider as ineffective or inadequate.

Helen Jones: [69760]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that patient choice continues to apply when health services are moved out of hospital and into the community.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department of Health NHS Choice Framework identifies the choices patients have. In some circumstances they have legal rights to choice and must be given these choices by law. In other circumstances there is no guaranteed right to choice however, depending on what is available locally, patients should be offered choice where possible.

If a person needs to be referred as an outpatient to see a consultant or specialist they may choose the organisation that provides their National Health Service care and treatment. They may choose whenever they are referred for the first time for an appointment for a physical or mental health condition, as appropriate. They may choose any organisation that provides clinically appropriate care for their condition that has been appointed by the NHS to provide that service. There are circumstances in which they may not choose, these are also set out in the document.

Individuals can talk to their general practitioner, dentist, optometrist or other person who is referring them for more information. They can also find out more information on the NHS Choices website about the organisations they can choose from, a link to which can be found here:

<http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx>

This is a national website for patients.

Additionally, commissioners have obligations to procure health care services from providers best placed to meet the needs of patients. If commissioners have concerns about the quality of health care services provided by any of its current providers then

they may decide to procure services from alternative providers. More information about these obligations can be found at the following address:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-patient-choice-and-competition-regulations-guidance>

■ Clinical Commissioning Groups: Standards

Rosie Cooper:

[69475]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what performance and regulatory framework NHS England operates to ensure that clinical commissioning groups meet standards of good governance; and what powers NHS England has to take action where there are instances of governance failures falling below the standard set in those frameworks.

David Mowat:

NHS England currently assesses clinical commissioning groups' (CCGs) governance arrangements through two indicators in the leadership domain of the 2016/17 CCG Improvement and Assessment Framework.

This features a quality of leadership indicator, which reviews the CCG's governance framework to ensure that responsibilities are clear, regular review is built in, and that quality, performance, and finance risks are understood and managed. Characteristics of strong financial leadership are particularly highlighted.

A probity and corporate governance indicator focuses on conflicts of interest and assesses compliance with a number of requirements of the managing conflicts of interest revised statutory guidance for CCGs, published on 28 June 2016, based on sections 14O and 14Z8 of the NHS Act 2006 (as amended). A requirement of the strengthened guidance is for CCGs to include an annual audit of conflicts of interest within their internal audit plan and to include the findings of this audit within their annual end of year governance statement.

NHS England is supported by legislation in exercising formal powers of direction, as laid out in section 14Z21 of the NHS Act 2006 (as amended), if it is satisfied that a CCG is failing or is at risk of failing to discharge its functions. This may be applicable in cases of serious or systemic governance failure.

■ Community Health Services: Liverpool

Rosie Cooper:

[69574]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will review the decision to break-up the services previously provided by a single block contract by Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust into 13 separate contracts during the recent procurement process; and what the role was of (a) Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group and (b) NHS Improvement in making that original decision.

Mr Philip Dunne:

No review is due to take place. Following the procurement process local commissioners, comprised of Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group, the local

councils and NHS England, took the decision to separate services in the interests of local patients.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[70009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the announcement of 30 March 2017 on the new arrangement to manage community services in Liverpool, whether NHS Improvement plans to reimburse the total costs incurred by all bidders in submitting a bid for the Liverpool community health services contract, in particular Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust.

Mr Philip Dunne:

It was a condition of participating in the competition for Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust's services that NHS Improvement would not reimburse bid costs. The Trusts involved in this process understood that costs resulting from the bid were at undertaken at their own risk.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[70185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the total expenditure incurred by (a) Bridgewater Community Healthcare and (b) Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trusts was in bidding for the Liverpool community health services contract.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust report that their costs have not been fully calculated yet.

■ Dementia: Older People

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[69652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department plans to take to work towards the elimination of dementia among senior citizens in the next 20 years.

David Mowat:

At the G8 summit in December 2013, the G8 countries agreed a new international approach to dementia research to realise the ambition to identify a cure or disease modifying therapy by 2025 and to increase collectively and significantly their funding for dementia research.

The Government has doubled research spending on dementia, with a commitment to maintain this level of spending at £60 million a year to 2020, with an ambition for overall spending on research from all sectors to double by 2025. Much of this investment is in research to better understand the nature of dementia, to inform development of future treatments and ways to prevent the onset of the condition.

A key aspiration in the Government's Challenge on Dementia 2020 is to improve public awareness and understanding of the factors which can increase the risk of developing dementia and of how people can reduce their risk by living more healthily.

Public Health England (PHE) has published improved guidance on reducing dementia risk, including 'Health Matters: A resource for health professionals and local

authorities' that makes the case for action in midlife to promote healthy lifestyles that can reduce the risk of dementia.

PHE also increases awareness of dementia risk reduction through programmes for the public, such as the NHS Health Check.

■ Dental Services: Coventry

Colleen Fletcher:

[70191]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many children aged four and under in (a) Coventry North East constituency and (b) Coventry local authority area were admitted to hospital for a tooth extraction due to decay in each of the last five years.

David Mowat:

Data is not available in the format requested. Such data as is available is shown in the table below.

Count of Finished Admission Episodes with a primary diagnosis of Dental caries and a main procedure of tooth extraction for ages between 0 and 4, within Coventry North East Constituency and Coventry local authority area for the financial years between 2011-12 and 2015-16.

Activity in English National Health Service Hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Coventry North East Constituency	*	*	*	0	5
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Coventry Local Authority Area	*	*	8	*	9

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Digital

Notes:

1. Finished admission episodes

A finished admission episode (FAE) is the first period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. FAEs are counted against the year or month in which the admission episode finishes. Admissions do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the period.

2. The data held in HES is a count of hospital attendances, not individual patients as the same person may have been admitted into a NHS Hospital on more than one occasion.

1. Data is not shown when numbers are five or less:

* represents one-five counts of hospital attendances

■ Dental Services: Patient Choice Schemes

Tracy Brabin: [69639]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it a requirement that dentistry practices update their information on the NHS Choices website.

David Mowat:

NHS Digital has been working with NHS England, the Department, the Advertising Standards Authority and Healthwatch, to improve the information available to the public on dentistry on NHS Choices. The first tranche of improvements went live 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. Consideration continues to what further action could be taken to ensure information is updated regularly.

■ Department of Health: EU Exit and Trade Committee

Tracy Brabin: [69662]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what reason he is not a member of the Government's European Union Exit and Trade Committee.

David Mowat:

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health is not a member of the Government's European Union Exit and Trade Committee as under article 168, section 7, of the Lisbon Treaty, health is a member state competence, so he does not need to attend every session. He is invited every time a matter directly affecting health comes up.

The list of Cabinet Committees and Implementation Taskforces, and their membership, is published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-cabinet-committees-system-and-list-of-cabinet-committees>

Other Ministers attend the European Union Exit and Trade Committee where the agenda item concerns their portfolio.

■ Health Professions: Labour Turnover

Tim Farron: [69764]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many (a) nurses, (b) doctors and (c) other NHS staff have left employment in (i) 2014, (ii) 2015 and (iii) 2016; and how many people in each such category were non-UK EU or EEA nationals.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Digital publishes quarterly data on turnover by nationality of staff working in the National Health Service in England. In addition, NHS Digital publishes staff in post figures bi annually.

Nationality is self-reported within the NHS human resources and payroll system, the electronic staff record.

The information is shown in the attached tables. The December data is the most recent data available.

Attachments:

1. PQ69764 attached tables [PQ69764 attached document.xlsx]

Health: Children**Dan Jarvis:**[\[69394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make child health a responsibility of a specific Minister to ensure accountability.

Nicola Blackwood:

I am the Minister responsible for child health.

Hepatitis**Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[70166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of treatment provision for people diagnosed with (a) hepatitis B and (b) hepatitis C.

Nicola Blackwood:

The responsibility for the provision of care services for people with diagnosed hepatitis B and C is shared between commissioners. NHS England is the responsible commissioner for drug treatments excluded from national tariff for these conditions. NHS England commissions hepatitis B and C treatments in accordance with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) technology appraisal guidance.

In the case of hepatitis C, the National Health Service is on track to treat 10,000 individuals with diagnosed hepatitis C which is in line with estimates of uptake published in a costing template published alongside NICE guidance.

Treatments which are not subject to such guidance are considered through NHS England's policy development process which assesses the evidence of clinical and cost effectiveness and undertakes a relative prioritisation of investment decisions.

■ Hodgkin Lymphoma

Nic Dakin:

[\[69562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the availability of treatment options for patients with classical Hodgkin lymphoma whose disease has progressed or not responded to standard of care treatments.

Nicola Blackwood:

NHS England has advised that there are two main drugs that are currently licensed for the treatment of patients who have failed standard therapies for their Hodgkin lymphoma; brentuximab and nivolumab.

Brentuximab is currently available through the Cancer Drugs Fund for the treatment of patients with relapsed or refractory CD30 positive Hodgkin's lymphoma. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is currently appraising brentuximab and expects to publish final guidance in May 2017.

Nivolumab is licensed for patients with Hodgkin lymphoma who have progressed despite an autologous stem cell transplant and who have also received treatment with brentuximab. NICE is currently appraising nivolumab for use in this indication and expects to publish final guidance in July 2017. Nivolumab is not currently funded routinely in this indication.

■ Homeopathy

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[69634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if the Government will add homeopathic products and other herbal remedies that have no basis in science to the list of items under review by the NHS.

Nicola Blackwood:

NHS England is leading a review of low value prescription items which are clinically ineffective, unnecessary, unsafe or inappropriate for prescription on the National Health Service, for example, because they can be purchased relatively inexpensively over the counter, often at a lower price than they cost the NHS.

Initially this work will focus on the top 10 areas of low clinical value as identified by NHS Clinical Commissioners through a survey of their member. Areas it will consider will be determined according to where there is evidence of low clinical value and/or where there is significant NHS expenditure.

Although complementary and alternative medicines (CAMs) are still available for individual practitioners to prescribe, many clinical commissioning groups have already issued guidance relating to their availability on the NHS. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence provides guidance to the NHS on effective treatments that are value for money, and has recommended the use of CAMs in only a limited number of circumstances.

■ Junior Doctors: Training

Ian Lavery:

[69736]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that adequate numbers of junior doctors are being trained.

Mr Philip Dunne:

On 4 October 2016 my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health announced that the number of medical training places available to students each year will be expanded by 1,500 (25%) to ensure the National Health Service in England has the future supply of doctors it needs to continue to provide safe, compassionate care. In September 2018, the Government will fund 500 additional student places through medical schools in England each year. The Government is currently consulting on how to make available the further 1,000 places from 2019/20 to medical schools in England.

Health Education England is responsible for ensuring that there is sufficient future supply of staff to meet the workforce requirements of the English health system. Information on future supply and specialty fill rates can be found in Health Education England's Workforce Plan for England, available at:

https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/HEE%20commissioning%20and%20investment%20plan%202016-17_0.pdf

■ Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group: Pay

Rosie Cooper:

[69572]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Prime Minister's Answer to the Question from the hon. Member for West Lancashire of 22 March 2017, Official Report, column 864, if he will ensure that the review of the remuneration of non-executive directors at Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) includes (a) all members of and (b) an assessment of the governance arrangement for Liverpool CCG; and if he will publish the review.

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 Honourable Lady once their enquiries are completed.

Rosie Cooper:

[69749]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the assurance process used by NHS England was to ensure governance, probity and value for money in the award of salary increases to the Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group governing body members in 2014-15.

Mr Philip Dunne:

In accordance with NHS England guidance and accounting rules, details of the salaries of Executive, general practitioner and lay members of the Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body are published annually and follow the

nationally prescribed format in the Remuneration Report. This forms part of the Annual Report of the clinical commissioning group which is publically available from the clinical commissioning group website and by request.

Remuneration is set by the Remuneration Committee of the Clinical Commissioning Group in accordance with the Clinical Commissioning Group Constitution and NHS England guidance.

The Department has asked NHS England to look into the remuneration of governing body members at the Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group.

■ **Microplastics: Health Hazards**

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[70013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 15 March 2017 to Question 67657, for what reasons his Department is not planning to conduct an assessment of the implications of microplastics entering the marine environment on human health.

Nicola Blackwood:

The United Kingdom Government, from an environmental perspective, is conducting research on the capacity for microplastics to cause harm in the marine environment and implications for the food chain. No specific research in respect of the impact of microplastics on human health is currently being undertaken by Public Health England.

■ **Newham Clinical Commissioning Group: Finance**

Stephen Timms:

[\[69942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to use the one per cent surplus required to be generated by Newham Clinical Commissioning Group for the benefit of Newham residents.

Mr Philip Dunne:

During the pre-planning stage for 2016/17, NHS England, NHS Improvement and the Department identified significant financial risk in the likely combined plans for the National Health Service for 2016/17, especially in the provider sector. Therefore commissioners, including Newham Clinical Commissioning Group, were asked to set aside the 1% share of their allocations that would normally be spent non-recurrently to act as a system risk reserve.

Each commissioning organisation has now been required to release the full amount of the 1% non-recurrent reserve to its bottom line. The aggregate effect of this will be to increase the surplus across the whole of the commissioning sector by around £800 million, which will help to offset the provider deficit position and help to secure a balanced position for the NHS overall.

■ NHS Pay Review Body

Justin Madders:

[\[69550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the annual budget is of the NHS Pay Review Body.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The NHS Pay Review Body does not have a budget. NHS Pay Review Body member expenses and the costs of member recruitment are covered by the Department of Health budget, (£27,400 so far in 2016-17). The secretariat is provided by the Office of Manpower Economics (OME, part of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy).

■ NHS: Public Appointments

Rosie Cooper:

[\[70156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of whether the role of sustainability and transformation leaders will in future be standalone posts; and on what salary scale those leaders will be paid.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[70157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish (a) the current selection process for sustainability and transformation leaders, (b) any planned changes to that process and (c) details of the appointment panels now and in the future.

David Mowat:

Recruitment of staff and remuneration, including in leadership roles, is a decision for individual Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) areas and will vary based on local need. The selection criteria and composition of interview panels is also a matter for STP areas.

All appointments must use a fair process, and leadership appointments are subject to ratification by NHS England and NHS Improvement in line with the national role specification. NHS England will provide funding to cover the costs of the STP leader for at least two days a week pro rata.

■ Nivolumab

Nic Dakin:

[\[69563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions his Department has had with NICE on that body's decision not to recommend nivolumab for treating relapsed or refractory classical Hodgkin lymphoma and the suitability of methods of appraisal used to assess blood cancer medicines which treat small patient populations.

Nicola Blackwood:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is an independent body and is responsible for the methods and processes it uses in the development of its guidance, which are developed through extensive engagement with stakeholders and

periodically reviewed to ensure they remain appropriate. NICE has been able to recommend a number of drugs for the treatment of blood cancers for small patient populations through its technology appraisal programme.

NICE has not yet published final guidance on the use of nivolumab for the treatment of relapsed or refractory classical Hodgkin lymphoma and stakeholders had until 3 April to comment on NICE's draft recommendations.

■ **Nivolumab: Hodgkin Lymphoma**

Nic Dakin:

[69561]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the clinical benefits of nivolumab for patients with relapsed or refractory classical Hodgkin lymphoma.

Nicola Blackwood:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is the independent body responsible for providing robust, evidence based guidance for the National Health Service on the clinical and cost effectiveness of drugs and other treatments. NICE is currently appraising nivolumab for use in the treatment of relapsed or refractory classical Hodgkin lymphoma. NICE published its draft guidance for consultation on 14 March and stakeholders had until 3 April to comment. NICE currently expects to publish final guidance in July 2017.

■ **Obesity: Children**

Colleen Fletcher:

[70193]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he has made an assessment of the role played by youth clubs and extra-curricular clubs in tackling childhood obesity.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government published a Childhood Obesity Plan for Action in August 2016, which can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action>

This plan states that for all primary school children, at least 30 minutes of physical activity should be delivered in school every day through active break times, Physical Education (PE), extra-curricular clubs, active lessons or other sport and physical activity events.

The Plan also announced the development of a new healthy rating scheme for primary schools which will be launched in September 2017. This scheme will demonstrate to parents the steps that schools are taking to offer a healthy environment to pupils. It is expected that this will include the contribution made by extra-curricular clubs.

Public Health England is developing a toolkit to support local authorities to reduce childhood obesity. This will include advocacy materials to demonstrate how action

can be taken across many different local authority responsibilities including youth clubs and other children's services provision.

Through the primary PE and sport premium, the Government has invested over £600 million of ring-fenced funding to primary schools to improve PE and sport since 2013.

In addition, revenue from the soft drinks industry levy will be used to double the primary PE and sport premium to £320 million a year from September 2017.

■ Pharmacy

Grant Shapps:

[69395]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many jobs he estimates will be lost in (a) Welwyn Hatfield constituency and (b) England in the 12 months after the discussion to reduce spending on community pharmacies.

Grant Shapps:

[69645]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many pharmacies he estimates will close in (a) Welwyn Hatfield constituency and (b) England in the next 12 months.

David Mowat:

Our reforms are about improving services for patients and the public and securing efficiencies and savings. A consequence may be the closure of some pharmacies but that is not our aim.

In the Spending Review the Government re-affirmed the need for the National Health Service to deliver £22 billion in efficiency savings by 2020/21 as set out in the NHS's own plan, the Five Year Forward View. Community pharmacy is a vital part of the NHS and can play an even greater role. Community pharmacy is a core part of NHS primary care and has an important contribution to make as the NHS rises to these challenges. The Government believes efficiencies can be made without compromising the quality of community pharmacy services including public access to medicines.

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

■ Social Services: Labour Turnover

Tim Farron:

[69902]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many social care workers left employment with the NHS in (a) 2014, (b) 2015 and (c) 2016; and how many such workers were non-UK EU or EEA nationals.

David Mowat:

NHS Digital publishes quarterly data on turnover by nationality of staff working in the National Health Service in England. In addition, NHS Digital publishes staff in post figures bi annually.

Nationality is self-reported within the NHS human resources and payroll system, the electronic staff record.

Social Care Workers have been defined as all staff within the Social Services care setting of the NHS occupation codes.

The information is shown in the attached tables. The December data is the most recent data available.

Attachments:

1. PQ69902 attached tables [PQ69902 tables.xlsx]

■ Tobacco**Norman Lamb:**[\[69400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will announce a date for the publication of the tobacco control plan; and if he will take steps to ensure that that plan guarantees adequate and sustainable funding for local smoking cessation services.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government is developing a new tobacco control plan, which will be published shortly. We will continue our comprehensive tobacco control strategy, one element of which is the provision of evidence-based stop smoking services. Councils will receive £16 billion of public health funding between 2016 and 2021 to provide vital services for their local population including smoking cessation services. As there is such a wide variety in smoking across the country, local councils must have the flexibility to consider how best to respond to the needs of their populations.

■ Visual Impairment: Children and Young People**Colleen Fletcher:**[\[70192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans to expand access to habilitation services for children and young people with sight loss.

David Mowat:

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities and clinical commissioning groups to work together to secure education, health and social care services to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disability (SEND), including those with sight loss. This includes working with children and young people with SEND and their families, to decide the Local Offer of services in their area, which can include habilitation services.

HOME OFFICE**■ Compass Contracts****Louise Haigh:****[69554]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 23 March 2017 to Question 68479, on Compass: contacts, if she will make an estimate of the number of service providers that cover the cost of landlord insurance.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Department does not hold that information. Responsibility for landlord insurance is a matter for the Service Providers to address via their individual arrangements with their Sub-Contractors and/or Landlords.

Louise Haigh:**[69759]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the number of occasions and reasons why Compass has breached its (a) key performance indicators and (b) performance standards in each year since the start of that company's contract.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The performance the three COMPASS service providers is monitored via the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) regime, details of which are set out in their contracts and cover the provision of the whole service. The Home Office has a rigorous contract compliance regime in place to ensure that the required performance standards expected are met.

This includes monthly contract management and quarterly strategic review meetings, as well as regular daily discussions with COMPASS providers' operational delivery managers about day to day issues. Performance against each key performance indicator (KPI) is measured and may, dependent upon the level of non-conformance, lead to the application of a KPI score. The overall/total score across all KPIs is then used to determine the value of Service Credit (rebate) which should be deducted from the monthly invoice. Over the lifetime of the contracts, the performance of all of the providers against KPI regime has improved.

■ Construction: Undocumented Workers**Paul Blomfield:****[70194]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's news story of 14 October 2015, entitled Campaign to tackle illegal working in construction begins, whether any cases of labour exploitation were identified during Operation Magnify.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I am sorry but the data requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Paul Blomfield:

[\[70195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's news story of 14 October 2015, entitled Campaign to tackle illegal working in construction begins, how many employers served with immigration enforcement referral notices under Operation Magnify were sentenced to imprisonment for immigration offences.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I am sorry but the data requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Paul Blomfield:

[\[70196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's news story of 14 October 2015, entitled Campaign to tackle illegal working in construction begins, how many businesses were served with immigration enforcement referral notices under Operation Magnify; and how much each of those businesses paid in penalties.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

In the Autumn of 2015, 11 Civil Penalty notices were served under Operation Magnify, focusing on the Construction industry.

■ Cryptography

Louise Haigh:

[\[69676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effect on consumer security of prohibiting end-to-end encryption.

Louise Haigh:

[\[69677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the contribution to national security of prohibiting end-to-end encryption in digital messaging.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Government supports the use of encryption. Encryption plays an important role in promoting cyber security, the prevention of cyber-crime, and protecting information online. Strong encryption - as practiced by many of the biggest names online - is central to the working of the internet.

But we must be clear that there is a balance to be struck. As those charged with keeping us all safe, the police and the security and intelligence agencies must have the tools they need to do their jobs. One of those tools is the ability to read, where it is both necessary and proportionate, the encrypted messages of those who plan and commit terrorist attacks and serious crimes.

We have well-established, constructive working relationships with a wide-range of groups with an interest in this area – including the major Communications Service Providers and business representatives – and we will continue to engage with them,

along with other partners, to together find a solution that both permits law enforcement and the security and intelligence agencies to get the information they need, whilst also protecting privacy.

■ **Detainees: Pregnancy**

Nusrat Ghani:

[\[69792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many women recorded as pregnant have been held in immigration detention since the Immigration Act 2016 came into force; and how many of those women left detention to be removed from the UK.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Through section 60 of the Immigration Act 2016, which came into force on 12 July 2016, we have placed a 72 hour limit on the detention of pregnant women for the purposes of removal, extendable to up to a week in total with Ministerial authorisation.

It may not always be appropriate for healthcare professionals to disclose confidential medical information that the patient has asked not to be disclosed. Subject to these limitations, Home Office management information indicates that 27 pregnant women were detained in the immigration detention estate between 12 July 2016 and 31 December 2016. This resulted in 5 pregnant women being removed from the UK.

The section 60 limitations, along with a new policy on adults at risk in detention, and other improvements to caseworking processes, represent a comprehensive package of safeguards for pregnant women in the immigration system.

■ **Director of Labour Market Enforcement**

Paul Blomfield:

[\[69883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what operating budget has been set for the Office of the Director of Labour Market Enforcement in 2017-18 and each of the subsequent two years.

Sarah Newton:

The Office of the Director of Labour Market Enforcement is jointly funded by the Home Office and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The forecast for 2017-18 is still in development so we have made notional provision to ensure that Director LME has the necessary funding to fulfil his role. We will set Director LME's budget each year in line with a forecast submitted by the Director's Office.

■ **Divorce: Islam**

Alison Thewliss:

[\[69666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance she has issued to staff of her Department on the recognition of Talaq divorces.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Guidance for staff includes instructions and policy documents covering the requirements in the Family Law Act 1986, relevant case law and example divorce documents.

Domestic Violence**Ms Harriet Harman:**[\[69679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of regional variations in levels of funding for services for domestic and sexual violence survivors; and if she will place a copy of that assessment in the Library.

Sarah Newton:

The Government's Violence against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG), published in March 2016, found that while some areas provision of services for VAWG survivors is excellent, too many still fall short of the best. Our ambition is to reform services to support earlier models of intervention with victims, perpetrators and their families, at the same time as maintaining crisis provision.

The strategy commits us to providing funding of £80 million for VAWG services to continue to provide a bedrock of critical services for VAWG, delivering a secure future for rape support centres, refuges and Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage Units. We have set out a clear blueprint for local action through our new National Statement of Expectations (NSE) and Commissioning Toolkit, which is available to local commissioning bodies and groups.

Our move to support local services through our £15 million VAWG Service Transformation Fund will encourage better collaboration and new, joined-up approaches between local commissioners, and with specialist VAWG service providers. This will help promote better collaboration and joint leadership, encourage new approaches incorporating early intervention, and establish and embed the best ways to help victims, survivors and their families so that early intervention and prevention, not crisis response, is the norm. We will ensure that victims get the help they need when they need it.

We consulted widely with the voluntary and community sector and statutory stakeholders in the development of the strategy, the NSE and the Transformation Fund and we will continue to work with the women's sector and local areas to monitor the level of support provided to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. We will shortly be announcing successful bids to the Service Transformation Fund.

The Prime Minister has announced a new programme of work to transform the way we think about and tackle domestic abuse and to support this programme further funding of £20 million was announced in the Budget, bringing our total support for victims of VAWG to £100 million over the course of this Parliament.

■ Emergency Services

Sir Roger Gale:

[69976]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to improve the emergency services' efficiency for encouraging cooperation with air ambulances, civil air patrols and other charity organisations.

Brandon Lewis:

Collaboration presents a real opportunity for emergency services to increase efficiency and effectiveness and improve the service delivered to the public.

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduces a new statutory duty on police, fire and rescue and emergency ambulance services to keep collaborative opportunities under review, and to enter these where it is in the interests of their efficiency or effectiveness. This sets a clear expectation that collaboration opportunities should be fully exploited.

This duty does not prevent emergency services working closely with other law enforcement partners, local public sector or charitable organisations. The decision of whether to enter into such arrangements, such as with air support, will be an operational decision for the emergency services and their partners.

■ Firearms: Licensing

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[69557]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the process is for estimating costs to (a) the police and (b) her Department for the grant and renewal of authorities under section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968.

Brandon Lewis:

The Government set out the process for estimating costs to the police and the Home Office for the grant, renewal and variation of section 5 licences in the impact assessment accompanying the consultation on firearms fees, which was published on 12 January. The impact assessment explains that the Home Office costs were calculated by assessing the full cost of the licensing firearms service, and then estimating the cost of each application type through a costing exercise that assessed the time taken for each application. Police costs were estimated based on the unit costs used to set new fees for police administered firearms licences in April 2015.

The impact assessment is available on www.gov.uk

■ Fraud

Stephen Kinnock:

[69910]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the recent case of fraud committed at the Reading branch of HBOS, what plans she has to establish a (a) National Fraud Investigation Service and (b) central fund to reimburse local police forces for the costs of investigating such cases.

Mr Ben Wallace:

In response to part (a) of the question, City of London Police (CoLP) is the National Lead Force for Fraud, who also oversee the Action Fraud and National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) Services. Action Fraud is the national reporting centre for all frauds and cyber crimes, whilst the NFIB performs analysis to link crimes, to then create crime packages, which are then sent to the most appropriate local police force to consider for investigation, where viable lines of inquiry exist. As part of CoLP's role as national lead force, they also take on, or assist forces, in investigating the most serious and complex frauds. The National Crime Agency and Serious Fraud Office also play a vital role in investigating the most high-end, cross border economic crimes.

One of the priorities of the Joint Fraud Taskforce (a collaborative response to fraud which brings together Government, law enforcement and the financial sector) is to improve the law enforcement response at the local, regional and national levels. This work is focused on improving the end-to-end policing system for fraud.

In response to part (b) of the question, Special Grant Funding is available if a Police Force faces a significant and unexpected event which could threaten the financial stability of the Force. Police and Crime Commissioners can apply for Special Grant funding when the additional costs incurred are greater than one per cent of the PCC's budget.

The Thames Valley PCC has made an application for Special Grant for the costs of Operation Hornet (the investigation into large scale fraud perpetrated from within Halifax and Bank of Scotland). This has been referred to HMIC for their views, after which Ministers will take a decision on whether to provide Special Grant funding.

■ Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority: Standards**Paul Blomfield:**[\[69877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to page 25 of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority Annual Report and Accounts 2015-16, when a formal review of Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority licensing standards will take place.

Sarah Newton:

The Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority is responsible for undertaking any review of their licensing standards. The reforms introduced by the Immigration Act 2016 now require the licensing standards to be approved by the Secretary of State. The Authority is working with the Home Office to consider proposals and next steps.

■ Home Office: Security**Jon Trickett:**[\[70025\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many security passes giving access to her Department's premises are currently valid.

Sarah Newton:

I am sorry but this information is not available centrally.

Jon Trickett:

[\[70042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many security passes giving access to her Department's premises have been issued in each year since 2010.

Sarah Newton:

I am sorry but this information is not available centrally.

Jon Trickett:

[\[70065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people holding security passes for other Government Departments are granted access to her Department's premises with that pass, by Department.

Sarah Newton:

All individuals in possession of a valid Common Civil Service Pass may gain access to the Department, subject to them holding the correct level of national security vetting. The Home Office does not hold data on how many passes other departments issue.

■ **Home Office: Staff**

Jon Trickett:

[\[70088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people are currently employed by her Department.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Office for National Statistics release annual figures on breakdown of Civil Servants across all Government Departments.

www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/datasets/civilservicestatisticsdatasummarytool

For 2016, there were 26,540 FTE under the Home Office.

■ **Immigrants: Employment**

Kate Osamor:

[\[69725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average time taken to process checks by the Employer Checking Service is.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The published service standard for the Employer Checking Service is 5 working days but the average processing time between 01/11/2011 and 28/02/2017 was 4.5 working days.

■ **Immigration**

Mr Graham Allen:

[\[65359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her speech in Tallinn of 21 February 2017, what estimate she has made of the number of immigrants

that will be needed in order to maintain the economic performance of the UK after leaving the EU.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Secretary did not make a speech in Tallinn on 21 February 2017.

■ Immigration: Advisory Services

Rosie Cooper:

[69900]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many registered immigration advisors have had their registration revoked or rejected for renewal as a result of the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner substantiating a complaint against that advisor.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The power for the OISC to revoke an immigration advisor's registration was enforced by the Immigration Act 2014.

Since then, the Commissioner has cancelled or refused the continued registration of 21 organisations where complaints findings formed part of the reason for refusal, or the organisation requested withdrawal from the scheme.

Rosie Cooper:

[69901]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what enforcement action the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner is able to take against registered immigration advisors in cases where complaints against that advisor are substantiated.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The enforcement action that the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) is able to take against registered advisors is set out in the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and the Commissioners Complaints Scheme (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/complain-about-an-oisc-regulated-immigration-adviser>) which states:

34. If a complaint is substantiated, in whole or in part, it will be included in the organisation's and adviser's regulatory history.

35. The Commissioner may:

- leave the determination on file for consideration at the next relevant application for registration. Practice points may be issued;
- consider and conclude that the organisation and/or an adviser should have their authorisation immediately cancelled; or
- lay a Disciplinary Charge before the First-tier Tribunal (Immigration Services).

Rosie Cooper:

[69904]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many complaints have been substantiated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner; and how many such complaints have been made by each individual complainant.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioners' (OISC) annual report and accounts sets out the number of complaints received by the OISC. Between March 2010 and April 2016, 569 complaints against regulated advisors were substantiated by the OISC.

In the last 3 years (2014 - 2017) the Commissioner has received 403 separate complaints against regulated organisations which were subsequently substantiated. Of these:

- Four people made two separate complaints each.
- One person made three separate complaints.
- The remaining complaints were submitted by an individual person or organisation.

■ Immigration: EEA Nationals**Maria Eagle:****[69850]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answers of 29 November 2016 to Questions 54030, 54028 and 54029, what steps were taken by her Department to ensure that all EU and EEA citizens living in the UK were informed of the need for comprehensive sickness insurance as a prerequisite to permanent residence when Free Movement Directive 2004/38/EC was introduced through the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations in 2006.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006 provided at regulations 4(1)(c)(ii) and (d)(ii) that comprehensive sickness insurance is a requirement for those exercising Treaty rights as a student or self sufficient person. Published guidance on 'qualified persons' currently sets this out at pages 30 to 36 and is available on the GOV.UK website via the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-economic-area-nationals-qualified-persons>

Maria Eagle:**[69851]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make provision for EU and EEA citizens living in the UK for a period exceeding five years and who have not yet exercised their treaty rights to obtain permanent residence before the UK leaves the EU.

Maria Eagle:**[69852]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make provision for EU and EEA citizens living in the UK who are married to UK nationals and who have not yet exercised their treaty rights to obtain permanent residence before the UK leaves the EU.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Prime Minister was clear in her statement to Parliament on 29 March that we would seek to guarantee the rights of EU citizens already living in Britain, and the

rights of British nationals in other member states, as early as we can. This is set out very clearly in the UK's Article 50 letter as an early priority for the talks ahead.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals

Tulip Siddiq: [69674]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she has taken to ensure that UK Visas and Immigration can manage the increased level of EU casework since January 2015.

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.

Maria Eagle: [69848]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for permanent residency her Department has received from EU nationals living in Garston and Halewood constituency since June 2016.

Maria Eagle: [69849]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for permanent residency from EU nationals living in Garston and Halewood constituency are currently outstanding.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The most recent figures for applications to European Casework can be found in the attached report.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/temporary-and-permanent-migration-data-february-2017>

The next release of Transparency Data is due on 25 May 2017.

■ Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner

Paul Blomfield: [69878]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 20 February 2017 to Question 63858, what process will be used to decide whether the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner will be appointed for a second term.

Sarah Newton:

The first Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner was appointed by Government on a three-year fixed term contract which ends later this year. The appointment process

for this post will comply with the New Public Appointments Governance Code published on 16 December 2016.

Paul Blomfield:

[\[69879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what operating budget was set for the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Sarah Newton:

The Government allocation to the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner was £500,000 in 2015/16 and £575,000 in 2016/17. The figures for 2017/18 figures are currently unavailable.

■ Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and Director of Labour Market Enforcement

Paul Blomfield:

[\[69884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the formal relationship is between the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and the Director of Labour Market Enforcement.

Sarah Newton:

The Director of Labour Market Enforcement has a statutory duty to co-operate with the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, by virtue of section 43 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and Schedule 3 to that Act, as amended by the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (Duty to Co-operate with Commissioner) Regulations 2016.

■ Members: Correspondence

Mr David Winnick:

[\[69742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the letter of 7 March 2017 from the hon. Member for Walsall North on behalf of a constituent, on police dogs.

Brandon Lewis:

The Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service responded on 30 March 2017.

■ Modern Slavery Innovation Fund

Paul Blomfield:

[\[69882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which organisations will receive funding under the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund round that concluded on 8 March 2017.

Sarah Newton:

The following organisations will receive funding under the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund round that concluded in March 2017: The Salvation Army, The Freedom Fund, Retrak, Pacific Links Foundation, NSPCC, Alliance HR, GoodWeave International, St Mary's University, University of Bedfordshire and United Nations University.

■ Offences against Children: Internet**Mr Laurence Robertson:**[\[69559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps the Government has taken to eliminate the circulation of indecent images of children online; and if she will make a statement.

Sarah Newton:

Online Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is an appalling crime that this Government is committed to stamping out. The Government's response includes law enforcement agencies taking action against online offenders and working with the internet industry to remove illegal images.

We have significantly increased resources to the National Crime Agency leading to a near doubling of the CEOP Command's investigative capability and have committed an additional £20 million over the spending review period to maintain this capability. Furthermore, the launch in 2015 of the Joint Operations Cell, a collaborative venture between the NCA and GCHQ, is targeting the most sophisticated online offenders.

All UK police forces and the National Crime Agency (NCA) are connected to the Child Abuse Image Database (CAID) that was launched in 2014. CAID provides law enforcement agencies with effective tools to search seized devices for indecent images of children (IIOC), reduce the time taken to identify such images and increase the ability to identify victims.

Since 2015, nearly 36,000 known child sexual abuse images from CAID were assessed by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and shared with 6 major global technology companies, to enable their removal, and prevent the sharing, of images from their platforms and services.

■ Police: Finance**Lyn Brown:**[\[69553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 65925, on police: finance, if she will publish the real term change in aggregate central grant funding, excluding precept, for each police force in England and Wales from 2010-11 to 2017-18.

Brandon Lewis:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 8 March 2017, UIN 65925.

■ Psychiatry: Migrant Workers**Paul Blomfield:**[\[69686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of psychiatrists currently on a Tier 2 visa who will attract the immigration skills charge.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

No psychiatrists currently on a Tier 2 visa will attract the immigration skills charge.

The immigration skills charge will not apply where an individual has already been assigned a Tier 2 Certificate of Sponsorship at the time the regulations come into force.

There is also an exemption to the immigration skills charge for PhD level occupations.

Refugees: Health Services**Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[69667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the Government's policy is on facilitating access to the UK for refugees who are in urgent need of healthcare for life-threatening conditions.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We operate several resettlement schemes, working closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to provide a safe and legal route to the UK for the most vulnerable refugees. Medical needs is one of the vulnerability criteria used to identify refugees for resettlement to the UK.

UK Visas and Immigration: Staff**Tulip Siddiq:**[\[69675\]](#)

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 EU casework 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.

Visas**Chi Onwurah:**[\[69390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 20 March 2017 to Question 67822, on visas, whether her Department plans to develop a version of the visa data which is suitable for publication.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office has no plans to publish data on the reasons for the refusal of visa applications.

Jeff Smith:

[69609]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many 30-day entry visas were issued by her Department where the applicant did not travel to the UK within that 30-day time period.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I am sorry but the information you have requested is not included in statistics published by the Home Office.

Jeff Smith:

[69640]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the (a) longest, (b) shortest and (c) average time taken to process a 30-day entry visa was in each of the last five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office publishes information on visa processing times online at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-operations-transparency-data-february-2017>

Jeff Smith:

[69659]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many 30-day entry visas have been granted by nationality of applicant in each of the last five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Quarterly data on the number of visas issued by category and nationality is published online at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2016/list-of-tables#visas>

■ Visas: Overseas Students

Paul Blomfield:

[69838]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what evidence the data from the exit checks introduced in 2015 gives on the proportion of international students who break the terms of their visa.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office is continuing to assess and analyse elements of the exit check data collected in relation to specific cohorts to understand the extent to which estimates provided are statistically robust. This level of detail is not yet available.

Over time the data obtained through exit checks will contribute to the statistical picture.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Department for International Development: Security****Jon Trickett:**[\[70026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many security passes giving access to her Department's premises are currently valid.

Rory Stewart:

My department has issued 3,273 active passes. Information on the number of people holding active security passes for other government departments who are granted access to DFID premises is not centrally recorded.

Jon Trickett:[\[70044\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many security passes giving access to her Department's premises have been issued in each year since 2010.

Rory Stewart:

We do not keep records of departmental passes issued which are no longer active and information on the number of people holding passes for other government departments who are granted access to DFID premises is not centrally recorded.

Jon Trickett:[\[70067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many people holding security passes for other Government Departments are granted access to her Department's premises with that pass, by Department.

Rory Stewart:

Civil Servants have to have the ability to work flexibly across government sites where there is a business need to do so. The issuing of all passes is controlled by local Departmental Security teams who follow strict procedures and protocols. Information on the number of people holding security passes for other government departments who are granted access to DFID premises is not centrally recorded.

■ Department for International Development: Staff**Jon Trickett:**[\[70089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many people are currently employed by her Department.

Rory Stewart:

As at 31 March 2017 DFID employed 2158 Home Civil Servants. In addition DFID offices locally employed 757 Staff Appointed in Country.

■ Somalia: Famine

Tom Brake: [\[69959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what lessons her Department learnt from the famine in Somalia in 2011 to minimise the risk of a recurrence of such a famine.

James Wharton:

The UK was the first donor to call attention to the crisis, stepping up early with £110 million for the 2017 Drought Response. Our support will provide up to one million people with emergency food assistance; over 600,000 malnourished children and mothers with life-saving nutrition; 1.1 million people with emergency health services; and one million people with safe drinking water and hygiene.

Other donors have followed our lead, and we are pushing partner agencies to speed up delivery, improve coordination, prioritisation and accountability.

■ Sub-saharan Africa: Water

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[69648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will meet charities and faith groups to ensure that the provision of natural clean water in sub-Saharan Africa is an international priority.

James Wharton:

The Secretary of State, and her Ministers have met with a wide range of charities and faith groups since taking up their respective roles, including recent meetings with WaterAid, and Ministers will continue to meet these groups as opportunities arise.

■ Yemen: Health Services

Mr Gavin Shuker: [\[69794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the effect on the level of provision of medical treatment to Yemeni civilians of the withdrawal of Médecins Sans Frontières from Ibb Al-Thawra Hospital in Yemen.

Rory Stewart:

According to their statement of 23 March, Médecins Sans Frontières is planning to withdraw gradually over a period of three months, during which access to healthcare will be maintained. It is unclear what arrangements will be in place to supply aid following their withdrawal. DFID is monitoring the situation closely.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Adam Werritty

Jon Trickett:

[\[69899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many times he has met Mr Adam Werritty since his Department was established.

Greg Hands:

None.

■ Trade: South East Asia

Jim Shannon:

[\[69855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what discussions his Department has had with the governments of Singapore and Malaysia on future investment and trade deals; and what assessment he has made of the opportunities available to UK businesses in those countries.

Greg Hands:

Over the last six months Department for International Trade, Ministers and senior officials have visited Singapore and Malaysia to discuss and reaffirm our strong bilateral economic and trade relationships, including a refresh of our Economic and Business Partnership with Singapore and promoting trade and investment opportunities with both countries. Singapore, Malaysia and the wider SE Asia region offer substantial opportunities to UK companies. The Department has identified high value opportunities in aerospace, defence and security, transport infrastructure (particularly rail), education and technology sectors, with strong demand for financial and business services. Officials will continue to evaluate opportunities in healthcare, renewables and other sectors as they emerge.

■ UK Trade with EU

Drew Hendry:

[\[69465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what plans his Department has to ensure that the UK's trade arrangements with the EU after the UK has left the EU do not adversely affect the world's poorest people.

Greg Hands:

The Department for International Trade is working closely with the Department for International Development to ensure that development and global prosperity are at the heart of UK trade and investment policy. We recognise the need for a smooth transition which minimises disruption to our trading relationships.

JUSTICE**■ Administration of Justice: Pregnancy****Chris Elmore:**[\[69682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent steps she has taken to reduce barriers experienced by pregnant women in accessing justice; and if she will make a statement.

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.

■ Burial**David Mackintosh:**[\[69885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps her Department advises families to take who have had relatives buried in the wrong plot.

David Mackintosh:[\[69886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps her Department takes to ensure that all human burials are conducted appropriately; and what oversight her Department has of people conducting burials.

David Mackintosh:[\[69887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many exhumations due to wrongful or incorrect burial there were in the Northampton Borough Council area in each year since 2010.

Dr Phillip Lee:

A family concerned that a relative has been buried in the wrong plot should immediately alert the relevant burial authority. A licence from the Ministry of Justice would be required to move the body to the correct grave.

The operation of local authority cemeteries is regulated by the Local Authorities Cemetery Order 1977. The then Department for Constitutional Affairs issued guidance to burial ground managers in 2005.

The Ministry of Justice is only aware of one instance since 2010 of a body being buried in the wrong plot in a Northampton Borough Council cemetery.

■ Courts: Sunderland

Bridget Phillipson:

[\[70210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when she plans to update the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South on plans for the Sunderland courts complex.

Dr Phillip Lee:

HM Courts & Tribunals Service is considering options to improve its court and tribunal estate in Sunderland. The Courts and Justice Minister Sir Oliver Heald QC wrote to the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South on 31 March to provide further details.

■ Cremation: Babies

Diana Johnson:

[\[69461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what her policy is on Hull City Council conducting an inquiry into the baby ashes scandal with terms of reference similar to the Emstrey Inquiry.

Dr Phillip Lee:

I refer to my previous answers on this subject, in particular the one I gave on 1 December 2016 to questions 54429 to 54440.

The Government's priority is to press ahead with the work already underway to improve infant cremation practices for families across the country.

The decision whether or not to conduct an inquiry is for the Council.

■ Crime: Victims

Jess Phillips:

[\[69839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what representations she has received on the operation of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.

Dr Phillip Lee:

Concerns have been raised about the operation of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and we are actively considering how compliance might be improved and monitored. We have committed to set out our strategy for victims by 2018. Representations on the Code of Practice will inform this work.

The Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses, Baroness Newlove, regularly reviews the operation of the Code of Practice. She has published a number of reviews including about Victim Personal Statements on 18 January, and on 22 February published a review of children's entitlements in the Code of Practice. The Department received representations on 23 January from Voice4Victims containing case studies of victims' experiences including apparent failures to receive their entitlements under the Code of Practice.

The Department's Ministers and officials regularly engage with victims' organisations in relation to victims' policy matters, to understand issues and concerns as well as to

make sure that they can contribute to policy work. On 14 March I attended the cross-party Victims' Forum, convened by Voice4Victims and chaired by Baroness Brinton of Kenardington, to listen to the concerns of victims and victims' groups about the operation of the Code of Practice. We anticipate receiving further written representations from members of the Forum, and other information on victims' experience of the criminal justice system.

Ministers and officials are engaging and working with agencies with responsibilities under the Code of Practice about the operation of it and concerns that have been raised.

Liz Saville Roberts:

[70008]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many reports her Department has received from the Victims Commissioner which dealt with all or in part with the operation of the Victims Code of Practice in the last four years.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses, Baroness Newlove, publishes details of reports on her website. These to varying degrees have touched on the operation of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and date back to 2015. They are available here: <http://victimscommissioner.org.uk/review/past-reviews/>.

Details of reviews carried out by the Commissioner in 2013-14 are available here: <https://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/about/victims-commissioner/victims-commissioner-annual-report-2013-14.pdf>

■ Criminal Injuries Compensation

Liz Saville Roberts:

[69997]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many payments were made to victims of crime by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority during 2015; and what the average payment made was by each type of crime.

Dr Phillip Lee:

From 1 February 2015 it became mandatory to indicate the nature of the assault when applying for compensation. Previously, applicants did not have to declare this information. The data we hold includes a significant number of applications paid out in 2015 but registered before then, and where no incident type was recorded. For this reason, we are unable to supply meaningful data about crime types recorded in 2015.

CICA made 30,634 awards from 1 January to 31 December 2015, paying £166,126,356 in compensation. The average award was £5,423.

To ensure the application of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme is as robust as possible there are safeguards built in. If any applicant disagrees with a decision they can apply for a review. If they remain unhappy they can appeal to an independent tribunal. The figures include cases in which the award was paid after review and appeal.

■ Criminal Proceedings: Wolverhampton

Emma Reynolds:

[\[69936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many cases were heard at (a) Wolverhampton Crown Court and (b) Wolverhampton Magistrates' Court in each of the last six years; and of those cases how many related to (i) murder, (ii) rape, (iii) assault by penetration, (iv) sexual assault, (v) sexual offences against children, (vi) child rape, (vii) grievous bodily harm with intent, (viii) grievous bodily harm, (ix) assault and battery, (x) assault occasioning actual bodily harm, (xi) female genital mutilation, (xii) child abduction, (xiii) robbery, (xiv) theft, (xv) offences under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1991, (xvi) offences relating to the possession of a gun or knife, (xvii) terrorism, (xviii) fraud, (xix) illegal entry and deception and other immigration offences, (xx) offences under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and (xxi) burglary; and of those cases in each of those categories how many resulted in (A) a conviction, (B) an acquittal, (C) a caution and (D) a mistrial.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The information available centrally is in the attached table. Information about receipts by offence at magistrates' courts could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. It is not possible to show from centrally held information how many of these Crown Court cases resulted in conviction, acquittal, or mistrial and this information could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. A caution is an out of court disposal.

Attachments:

1. Trial Case Receipts by Offence type [Table69936.xlsx]

■ Employment Tribunals Service: Fees and Charges

Richard Burgon:

[\[70144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when she plans to publish her Department's response to the consultation on the review of the introduction of fees in the employment tribunals which closed on 14 March 2017.

Sir Oliver Heald:

We are carefully considering the responses to the consultation and we will publish our response in due course.

■ First-tier Tribunal

Meg Hillier:

[\[69685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average time period is between the submission of an appeal to the First-tier Tribunal and the hearing date.

Sir Oliver Heald:

HM Courts & Tribunals Service does not hold this information centrally for First-tier Tribunals as a whole and this information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Judiciary: Political Impartiality

Catherine West: [\[64017\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether she has discussed the importance of an independent judiciary with her US counterpart.

Catherine West: [\[64611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 20 February 2017 to Question 63942, if she will raise the issue of the importance of an independent judiciary with Jeff Sessions, Attorney General of the US.

Sir Oliver Heald:

An independent judiciary is the cornerstone of the rule of law and is a subject on which my department engages with international partners regularly.

Legal Aid Scheme

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[69889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 27 February 2017 to Question 64306, how the post-implementation review of the legal aid changes made by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 will be conducted; and by what means members of the public will be able to submit evidence to that review.

Sir Oliver Heald:

To begin the process of reviewing the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO), the Government plans to submit a Post Legislative Memorandum to the Justice Select Committee shortly. We will outline our plans for the post-implementation review (PIR) of LASPO in more detail when we submit the memorandum to Parliament. It is our intention to work closely with key parties across the sector to inform the review's conclusions.

Richard Burgon: [\[70143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when she plans to publish her Department's response to the consultation on (a) reforming the advocates' graduated fee scheme which closed on 2 March 2017 and (b) litigators' graduated fees scheme and court appointees which closed on 24 March 2017.

Sir Oliver Heald:

We are carefully considering all responses to the consultations, and will publish our responses in due course.

Legal Aid Scheme: Domestic Violence

Tom Watson: [\[66948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 6 March 2017 to Question 65872, on domestic violence and legal aid, by what means the Government announced its intention to completely remove the time limit on all forms of evidence and

to broaden evidence types; when those proposals will come into effect; and if she will make a statement.

Sir Oliver Heald:

We announced the intention to amend the domestic violence evidence requirements in applications for legal aid in private family proceedings via a press notice. This included confirmation that we plan to remove the time limit on evidence of domestic violence and to broaden the types of evidence that can be accepted.

We are in the process of reviewing legal aid for domestic violence victims in private family law cases, and will announce the full extent of our proposals to Parliament in due course.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

Rosie Cooper:

[\[69807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when she plans to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for West Lancashire of 28 November 2016, on the UK prisons system.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The letter from the right hon. Member for West Lancashire to Minister Gyimah has now been answered. I apologise for the unacceptable delay in responding.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Data Protection**

Tim Farron:

[\[69823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) official and (b) official sensitive documents have been recorded as lost by her Department since 8 May 2015.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The information requested is not held centrally.

The Ministry of Justice requires its staff to report any actual or suspected breaches of physical, personnel or procedural security to the security incident officer in a clear and timely manner. In circumstances where an incident involving the loss of information has occurred, staff are required to complete a security incident form which identifies the highest classification of information affected. The volume of documents, however, is not recorded.

The Ministry of Justice takes any loss of information very seriously and all reported breaches are subjected to an initial security risk assessment with further action taken on a proportionate basis.

■ **Ministry of Justice: EU Exit and Trade Committee**

Tracy Brabin:

[\[69663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for what reason she is not a member of the Government's European Union Exit and Trade Committee.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The list of Cabinet Committees and Implementation Taskforces, and their membership, is published on [GOV.UK](http://gov.uk). Other Ministers attend the European Union Exit and Trade Committee where the agenda item concerns their portfolio.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Security**

Jon Trickett: [70027]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many security passes giving access to her Department's premises are currently valid.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Jon Trickett: [70045]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many security passes giving access to her Department's premises have been issued in each year since 2010.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Jon Trickett: [70069]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people holding security passes for other Government Departments are granted access to her Department's premises with that pass, by Department.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Staff**

Jon Trickett: [70091]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people are currently employed by her Department.

Dr Phillip Lee:

As at 31 December 2016, 66,533 people were employed by the department.

■ **National Offender Management Service**

Richard Burgon: [56476]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much (a) the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and (b) her Department spent on external consultancy fees relating to NOMS in each of the last five years.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 15 December 2016 to Question 41046 <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-06-20/41046/>.

■ Personal Injury: Compensation

Justin Madders:

[58491]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will extend the duration of her Department's consultation on Reforming the Soft Tissue Injury (Whiplash) Claims Process to take account of the Christmas period.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The deadline for responses was 6 January 2017. The government is satisfied that this gave those with an interest in the proposed reforms sufficient time to respond.

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[67138]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for what reasons she is proposing a negative discount rate for personal injury claims calculations; and if she will make a statement.

Sir Oliver Heald:

I refer my Honourable Friend to the Written Ministerial Statement (*Justice update: Written statement - HCWS503*) made by my Right Honourable Friend the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice on 27 February 2017 and the statement of reasons referred to in it. The statement was laid in the libraries of both Houses and published on the internet at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/discount-rate-summary-of-reasons>.

■ Prisons: Construction

Richard Burgon:

[69999]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the announcement of 22 March 2017 on plans to create additional prison places, for how long HMP (a) Hindley and (b) Rochester will be closed during their rebuild; and to which prisons prisoners and prison staff will be relocated to in the first instance.

Richard Burgon:

[70003]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the announcement of 22 March 2017 on plans for four new prisons, what discussions she has had with the (a) local authority, (b) NHS trusts and (c) police force in each relevant location.

Richard Burgon:

[70004]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the announcement of 22 March 2017 on plans for four new prisons, what the (a) certified normal accommodation and (b) operating capacity at each establishment will be; and what the benchmarked numbers for (i) prison officers and (ii) operational support grade staff will be at each such establishment.

Richard Burgon:

[70007]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the announcement of 22 March 2017 on plans for four new prisons, whether those prisons will be operated by HM Prisons and Probation Service.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

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 modern 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.

We expect that the redevelopment work at HMP Hindley and HMP Rochester will take around two and a half years.

We will work with HMP Rochester's and HMP Hindley's management teams to make sure the prison's staffing is sufficient to run the establishment safely and effectively until it closes. Retaining highly skilled, committed staff is hugely important to the success of the Prison Service, so we will seek to permanently redeploy staff into posts in other locations, but they are free to apply for jobs that are advertised through normal vacancy filling arrangements. We expect to be able to transfer all staff to other establishments.

Once we have a planned date for closure we will then identify those prisoners that will require a move to another prison.

The Ministry of Justice has had a number of discussions with the relevant MPs and Councils in developing its plans for the new and redeveloped prison sites. The Government welcomes feedback on the development of its plans for the prison estate and will undertake public engagement events within the local areas relevant to the locations made in the announcement of 22 March 2017. Opportunities for local residents, businesses and stakeholders to provide additional feedback is also available through the formal local planning application process. We will work with Parliamentary colleagues in the development of these plans.

We will work closely with Local Authorities; NHS trusts; and police forces to ensure services such as Health, Education, Social Services and Accommodation are involved in planning for the new prison right from the start.

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. We are currently developing the operating specifications for new prisons.

No decision has been taken on the future operation of these sites but we will be considering this issue and make a decision in good time for their opening.

■ Prisons: Private Sector**Caroline Flint:****[51946]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether any of the 2,500 extra prison staff announced in the Prison Safety and Reform white paper, published by her Department on 3 November 2016, will be allocated to privately-run prisons.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The planned recruitment of an extra 2,500 new prison officers relates to public sector prison staff, which will allow these prisons to implement the new staffing model outlined in the Prison Safety and Reform White Paper.

Private providers are required to maintain a sufficient number of staff, with the requisite level of skill and experience to ensure that the Prison is safe, secure and decent environment. We are engaging with private providers on how the new staffing model outlined in the Prison Safety and Reform White Paper will be implemented in private prisons.

■ Probate: Fees and Charges**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[68494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what her Department's rationale was for introducing a sliding scale of probate fees based on the worth of an estate.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The Government set out its rationale for reforming the fees for grants of probate in its response to consultation on the fees published on Friday 24 February.

The Government is committed to providing a modern, world-leading justice system which is proportionate and accessible. The best way to protect access to justice is with a properly funded courts and tribunals service.

Fees are necessary to support an effective courts and tribunals system that supports victims and vulnerable people, and is easy for ordinary people to use. In 2015/16, the Government spent around £1.9 billion on our courts and tribunals and recovered only around £700m through fees and other income. We do not believe that the taxpayer should continue to meet all of this cost.

We are getting rid of flat fees and replacing them with a fair, banded, structure related to the value of the estate. This includes raising the fee threshold from £5,000 to £50,000 and lifting an extra 25,000 estates out of fees altogether.

More than half of estates in England and Wales will pay no probate fee and over 90 per cent of estates will pay £1,000 or less. The fees will be implemented on a banded structure, increasing in line with estate values, meaning higher fees are paid by those who can afford to do so. No one will pay more than 1 per cent of the total estate value.

Using the authoritative ONS projections, we have recently improved our estimates of the number of estates in England and Wales.

With this more accurate data, we have produced a refreshed distribution of the estate values table. We have also updated our estimates to take account of HMRC's most recent data on the distribution of estate values. These minor adjustments to Table 1 (page 11) of the consultation response do not alter the substance of, or rationale for, the proposals on which we consulted, or the Government's decision to proceed with

the changes. I have placed amended versions of the Government response to consultation in the libraries of the Houses.

VALUE OF ESTATE (BEFORE INHERITANCE TAX)	PROPORTION OF ALL ESTATES IN ENGLAND AND WALES	PROPOSED FEE
Up to £50,000 or exempt from requiring a grant of probate	53%	£0
Exceeds £50,000 but does not exceed £300,000	25%	£300
Exceeds £300,000 but does not exceed £500,000	12%	£1,000
Exceeds £500,000 but does not exceed £1m	7%	£4,000
Exceeds £1m but does not exceed £1.6m	1%	£8,000
Exceeds £1.6m but does not exceed £2m	0.3%	£12,000
Above £2m	0.6%	£20,000

■ Probation: Staff

Liz Saville Roberts:

[59744]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average caseload for probation staff was during each of the last three years for the (a) National Probation Service and (b) Community Rehabilitation Companies in (i) England and (ii) Wales.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Ministry of Justice publishes statistics showing the total caseload of the probation service (the National Probation Service (NPS) and the 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies) and also staff in post in the NPS. Figures for total probation caseload are published quarterly in the Offender Management Statistics Bulletin, England and Wales:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>

Figures for NPS staff in post are also published quarterly, in the National Offender Management Service Workforce Statistics Bulletin:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-offender-management-service-workforce-statistics>

Figures on the average caseload of probation officers are not collected centrally. Individual probation officer caseloads across the NPS are, however, carefully

monitored by experienced managers. We have also developed a Workload Management Tool to assist National Probation Service Divisions with the process of allocating cases appropriately between staff.

■ Rape: Trials

Jess Phillips:

[69840]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether her Department plans to collect data on victims of rape who are cross-examined about their sexual history by lawyers during the course of Crown Court trials.

Dr Phillip Lee:

We are committed to making sure that victims of crime get the support they need and have the confidence in the Criminal Justice System to come forward. I am reviewing how this law is working in practice with the Attorney General.

■ Sentencing

Jess Phillips:

[69805]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will review the definition of vulnerability in relation to when that term is considered as an aggravating factor during sentencing.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Aggravating factors, including those relating to vulnerability, are set out in sentencing guidelines which are issued by the independent Sentencing Council.

The Council consults widely on its guidelines as they are developed, including consulting on aggravating and mitigating factors. The Council is currently consulting on draft guidelines for domestic abuse and intimidatory offences. More information can be found on the Council's website: www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk

■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals

Colleen Fletcher:

[69967]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of appeals to the Tribunals Service in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England related to (i) personal independence payments, (ii) employment and support allowance, (iii) income support, (iv) jobseeker's allowance and (v) tax credits were successful in the latest period for which figures are available.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The table below contains the requested information.

PROPORTION OF APPEALS DECIDED IN FAVOUR OF THE APPELLANT BETWEEN OCTOBER AND DECEMBER 2016 ⁶

	PIP ¹	ESA ²	IS	JSA	Tax Credits ³
Coventry	74%	66%	~ ⁷	~	~
West Midlands ⁴	63%	53%	54%	24%	35%
England ⁵	66%	68%	42%	38%	40%

1. Personal Independence Payment (New Claim Appeals) which replaces Disability Living Allowance was introduced on 8 April 2013, also includes Personal Independence Clams (Reassessments)

2. Includes Employment and Support Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Reassessments)

3. Includes Working Family Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit.

4. West Midlands includes the venues: Birmingham, Coventry, Nuneaton, Hereford, Stoke, Wolverhampton, Worcester, Shrewsbury, Worcester (Fownes), Kidderminster, Coventry (CMCB), Worcester (Magistrates Court), Hereford (Magistrates Court), Walsall.

5. Excludes Social Security and Child Support Wales and Scotland

6. % Decisions in favour represents the number of cases found in favour of the appellant as a percentage of those cleared at hearing. Cleared at tribunal hearing excludes those cases disposed of without the need of a hearing (i.e. decisions retrospectively superseded by the 1st Tier Agencies and those stuck out or withdrawn prior to hearing)

7. Denotes appeal types where fewer than 30 cases were involved and therefore data are statistically unreliable.

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the details are subject to inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale case management system and are the best data that is available.

The data may differ slightly to that of the published stats as these data were run on a different date.

PRIME MINISTER**■ Business Appointments Advisory Committee****Paul Flynn:**[\[70186\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what assessment she has made of the work of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments.

Mrs Theresa May:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, my right hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr Gummer) on 17 October 2016, UIN 47620.

■ Prime Minister: Uber**Wes Streeting:**[\[69744\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, how many meetings have taken place between civil servants, advisers or Ministers of her Office and Uber since July 2016.

Mrs Theresa May:

Details of Ministerial meetings with external organisations and individuals are published quarterly and made available on the gov.uk website.

SCOTLAND**■ Exports: Scotland****Calum Kerr:**[\[69703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what plans his Department has to promote Scottish exports to countries outside of the UK in April 2017.

David Mundell:

As we prepare to leave the European Union, we want to send a message to the world that the UK and Scotland remain open for business, and free to shape our own ambitious trade and investment opportunities across the globe.

Earlier this month, I took that message to Burma and Singapore, promoting Scotland's business interests and exports, including with the energy, financial services and whisky sectors. The Scotland Office will continue to work with the Department of International Trade and other UK Government departments to promote the UK and Scotland to the world.

■ Scotland Office: Social Media**Calum Kerr:**[\[69704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what funds his Department has allocated for social media campaigns on platforms such as Twitter and Facebook.

David Mundell:

Digital activity, including social media campaigns, are funded through the Scotland Office programme budget. This is published in the annual report and accounts, a link to which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/annual-report-and-accounts-2015-16--2>

Owen Thompson:**[70204]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will publish the subjects of all social media posts from his Department in the last 12 months.

David Mundell:

All Scotland Office social media posts for the last twelve months are available online at:

<https://www.facebook.com/scotlandoffice/> and <https://twitter.com/ukgovscotland>

■ Trade: Scotland**Calum Kerr:****[70015]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what the reasons are for his Department providing information to the public which describes trade within the UK domestic market as an export.

David Mundell:

Scottish Government statistics have revealed that trade with the rest of the UK is worth over four times more to Scotland than its trade with the rest of the EU. The UK Government has sought to inform people about the important trading relationship that Scotland and the rest of the UK enjoy, and the relative scale of Scotland's trade with the rest of the UK as compared to its trade with the rest of the EU. The term 'exports' to describe this intra-UK trade is used in the Scottish Government's own publication, *"Export Statistics Scotland 2015"*, which is based on the results of the Global Connections Survey.

■ Trade: Social Media**Calum Kerr:****[69699]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what the strategic priorities are for his Department's social media campaigns on Scotland's trade with the rest of the UK.

David Mundell:

Recent data released by the Scottish Government shows that Scotland's trade with the rest of the UK is worth 4 times that of trade with the rest of the EU.

This is a fact-based, information-led campaign, to inform people about the important trading relationship that Scotland and the rest of the UK enjoy, and the relative scale of Scotland's trade with the rest of the UK as compared to its trade with the rest of the EU.

TRANSPORT**■ Airports: National Policy Statements****Dr Tania Mathias:**[\[69755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what measures he has put in place for members of the public to raise concerns about the (a) process and (b) content of the nationwide consultation events his Department is running on the Airport National Policy Statement.

Mr John Hayes:

There are a number of ways for members of the public to raise concerns about both the process and content of the consultation events the Department is running on the draft Airports National Policy Statement:

- a) Through discussion with officials at the local consultation events;
- b) Calling the Department's consultation enquiry helpline where queries can be logged and directed to the relevant area (0800 689 4968)
- c) Emailing RunwayConsultation.admin@dft.gsi.gov.uk
- d) By contacting Sir Jeremy Sullivan, the Independent Consultation Adviser at independentadviser@runwayconsultation.gsi.gov.uk

Dr Tania Mathias:[\[69756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many attendees there have been at each of the public consultation events his Department has held on the draft Airports National Policy Statement.

Mr John Hayes:

The Department held 20 public consultation events around Heathrow Airport between 13 February and 15 March in support of the consultation on the draft Airports National Policy Statement. The table below holds the figures for how many members of the public were recorded as attending each event:

EVENT	NUMBER OF ATTENDEES
Southall	76
Uxbridge	137
Kingston	206
Bracknell	223
Wimbledon	176
Ealing	224

EVENT	NUMBER OF ATTENDEES
Staines-upon-Thames	297
Twickenham	354
Putney	257
Hounslow	198
Stanwell Moor	123
Kensington	131
Windsor	167
West Drayton	281
Hammersmith	303
Maidenhead	206
Richmond	429
Gerrard's Cross	156
Slough	167
Isleworth	229

Although these are the recorded attendance figures, there may be a small margin of error resulting from a manual count.

■ Aviation: Compensation

Tim Farron: [\[70153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on the amount of compensation that has been paid out to consumers in compensation for delayed and cancelled flights under EU regulations in each of the last five years.

Mr John Hayes:

The Department does not hold this information. Under Regulation (EC) 261/2004 regarding compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation and long delay of flights, passengers should make a claim to their airline if their flight has been disrupted.

■ Diesel Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[70206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with the West Midlands Combined Authority on additional toxicity charges for diesel vehicles.

Mr John Hayes:

In order to improve national air quality, the 2015 national air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide introduced the concept of a Clean Air Zone, which defines an area where targeted action is taken to improve air quality, and where resources are prioritised and coordinated in order to deliver improved health benefits and support economic growth in the urban environment.

The 2015 plan named five cities, one of which is Birmingham, that are required to introduce a Clean Air Zone and the Government is currently engaging with the local authority on the scheme's detailed design.

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 nitrogen dioxide shortly. The consultation will address the measures needed to reduce nitrogen dioxide concentrations.

■ Govia Thameslink Railway**Crispin Blunt:****[70120]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department has received from Govia Thameslink Railway for Network Rail Schedule (a) 4 and (b) 8 payments for service disruption on the Southern Rail network in (i) 2015-16 and (ii) 2016-17.

Paul Maynard:

Information regarding these payments are published on Network Rail's website - <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/transparency/datasets/> - covering the years up to 2015/16. 2016/17 is not yet available and will be published in due course.

■ Great Western Railway Line: WiFi**Johnny Mercer:****[70151]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will provide details of the improved WiFi capabilities on the new Hitachi trains due to be rolled out on the Great Western Rail route.

Paul Maynard:

To support the roll out of free Wi-Fi on trains on the Great Western Rail Route, the new rolling stock in the InterCity Express Programme (IEP) will be fitted with on-board servers that will be capable of using both 3G mobile signals and Wi-Fi services available along the rail route. The design also supports use of 4G and WiMAX (World Wide Interoperability for Microwave Access) communications as an option.

Johnny Mercer:**[70152]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether improvements to WiFi connectivity on-board trains will be discussed during the Great Western Rail franchising talks.

Paul Maynard:

Yes. Improved Wi-Fi connectivity has been a strong theme already, in particular among stakeholders in the South West of England.

The Department recognises the importance of providing Wi-Fi to passengers on trains and at stations, allowing them to use their journey time productively for work and leisure and to stay in touch and up to date with the latest information. We are committed to ensuring that at least 90% of services provide free Wi-Fi by the end of 2018 and expect that virtually all trains will be fitted by 2020.

■ **High Speed 2 Railway Line: Chilterns**

Mrs Cheryl Gillan: [\[70154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what level of risk HS2 Ltd has identified to the Chilterns aquifer based on the current route design for High Speed 2.

Andrew Jones:

HS2 Ltd is taking every possible measure both at the detailed design stage and at construction stage to mitigate identified risks to the Chilterns Aquifer.

■ **Motor Vehicles: Noise**

Kevin Foster: [\[69950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the legislative basis is for enforcement agencies to measure the noise level being emitted from a motor vehicle.

Mr John Hayes:

Anyone who uses a vehicle in such a manner as to cause excessive noise, but which is avoidable through reasonable driver care, is guilty of an offence under Regulation 97 of the Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986, as amended. Enforcement Authorities also have powers to address noise nuisance under the Police Reform Act 2002 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

■ **Parking: Private Sector**

Jo Stevens: [\[70189\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many cases of non-compliance with DVLA codes of practice by private car parking companies have been the result of audit visits carried out by the Government Internal Audit Agency in the last (a) five and (b) 10 years.

Jo Stevens: [\[70190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many private car parking companies have had their access to the DVLA vehicle keeper database suspended for non-compliance with DVLA regulations in the last (a) five and (b) 10 years.

Jo Stevens: [\[70212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what procedures the DVLA has in place to monitor or regulate the passing of information gained by private parking companies from the DVLA vehicle keepers database to third parties; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Jones:

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) takes the protection of the data it holds very seriously and has robust measures in place to protect it. Private parking companies must be a member of an accredited trade association before they are able to request DVLA data and must abide by the relevant trade association's code of practice.

In addition, the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) inspects data users on the DVLA's behalf to ensure that data requested is only used in accordance with strict contractual terms. The DVLA is alerted to any compliance related issues identified. These can range in severity from minor infringements (which companies are given an opportunity to address) to more serious cases of non-compliance resulting in the parking company being suspended from being able to request vehicle keeper data.

Data on the volume of non-compliance issues identified as a result of GIAA audits carried out in each of the last ten years is not readily available. The number of private parking companies which have had their ability to request DVLA data suspended in the last ten years is shown in the table below:

FINANCIAL YEAR	NUMBER OF PRIVATE PARKING COMPANIES SUSPENDED FROM ACCESSING DVLA DATA
2006/07	0
2007/08	6
2008/09	9
2010/11	8
2011/12	6
2012/13	14
2013/14	10
2014/15	10
2015/16	9
2016/17	4
Total	76

Companies can be suspended for various reasons, including not complying with the relevant parking industry accredited trade association's code of practice. It is for the parking company to demonstrate that it is compliant with that code and for the trade association itself to monitor its members' compliance with the code. Parking companies can also be suspended from requesting DVLA data for breaching the

contract the company has with the DVLA for release of data or as a result of issues identified at a GIAA audit.

Where parking companies use third parties to pursue unpaid private parking charges, the parking company should have a formal contract in place to provide assurance over the use and security of DVLA data. The parking company retains overall responsibility for the use of the data by its sub-contractors.

Following its most recent audit of the DVLA's procedures for releasing data to private parking companies, the Information Commissioner's Office found that there was a high level of assurance that processes were in place to mitigate the risks of non-compliance with data protection requirements. The audit was published on 1 June 2016 and can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/action-weve-taken/audits-advisory-visits-and-overview-reports/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency-dvla/>.

■ Public Transport: West Midlands

Emma Reynolds: [69802]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much has been spent from the public purse on (a) bus services and (b) the West Midlands Metro in (i) Wolverhampton and (ii) the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority, formerly Centro, during the period 2009-10 to the most recent financial year for which figures are available.

Andrew Jones:

Total revenue spend on bus services is not available at Local Authority level.

The Department does not provide any revenue funding for the West Midlands Metro.

■ Public Transport: Wolverhampton

Emma Reynolds: [69803]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment the Government has made of the effect of the (a) redevelopment of Wolverhampton Railway Station and (b) extension of the West Midlands Metro on passenger numbers using the new Wolverhampton interchange.

Paul Maynard:

Centro developed the business case for the redevelopment of Wolverhampton railway station. The Department for Transport evaluated this business case and accepted it. In determining to grant statutory powers for the Metro extension to the railway station, a component of the Interchange project, the Secretary of State placed substantial weight on the promoters' evidence of the important public benefits which the extension would realise. The evidence forecast an increase in annual patronage on Midland Metro of 5.4% in 2026 through improvement of interchange between the three modes of transport in the city: bus, rail and metro, and as a result of the increased connectivity that is currently lacking.

■ Railways: Strikes

Tim Farron:

[\[69949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many strike days have been undertaken by workers on the railways in each of the last 10 years.

Paul Maynard:

The information requested is not held by, or reported to, the Department.

■ Railways: WiFi

Johnny Mercer:

[\[70150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, who is responsible for the mobile signal that train operating companies use for on-board WiFi.

Paul Maynard:

The on-train Wi-Fi services being rolled out across passenger franchises uses the mobile signal provided by mobile network operators.

■ Railways: Wolverhampton

Emma Reynolds:

[\[69720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent estimate the Government has made of the number of direct inter-city rail services which will run between London and Wolverhampton after the completion of High Speed 2.

Andrew Jones:

It is too early to set the timetable which will operate when HS2 opens, as this should take into account up to date information on demand. The winning bidder for the West Coast Partnership will develop options for train services on the West Coast Main Line corridor, working with bodies including central and local Government, and industry to consider both HS2 and existing routes. This process will be open and consultative.

The Government's aim is that all places with a direct London service retain a broadly comparable or better service after Phase One opens.

■ Roads: Wolverhampton

Emma Reynolds:

[\[69718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding from the public purse has been invested in (a) new road infrastructure in Wolverhampton and (b) improving existing road infrastructure in each of the last five years.

Mr John Hayes:

This government has made considerable investments on both local roads and the strategic road network (SRN) in the Wolverhampton area.

Highways England has carried out maintenance and improvements on the M54, including Junction 2 near Wolverhampton, totalling £8.9M in 2014/15, £13.9M in 2015/16 and £3.5M in 2016/17. In addition the M6 smart motorway scheme (2013 to

2016) between Junctions 10A and 13 has cost around £95M. Highways England is otherwise unable to attribute costs just to the Wolverhampton area.

The attached document shows that Wolverhampton City Council has received direct funding of £6.375M (see first table below) for road infrastructure and their share of funding from the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority (£284.133M – second table plus third point), and is benefitting from various investments by the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (see point 4).

Attachments:

1. Table [Table attachment 69718.docx]

■ **Taxis**

Wes Streeting: [\[69747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to review the statutory framework for the hackney carriage and private-hire vehicle industry; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Jones:

At the request of the Department for Transport, the Law Commission has undertaken a comprehensive review of taxi and private hire regulation in England and Wales.

The Government is currently considering all the recommendations in the Law Commission's report against the backdrop of a rapidly changing sector and will formally respond to the Law Commission and announce its intentions once this scrutiny is completed.

■ **Taxis: Assistance Dogs**

Dan Jarvis: [\[69664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that disabled people who rely on assistance dogs are not refused access to a taxi or minicab due to being accompanied by that dog.

Andrew Jones:

Drivers of taxis and PHVs must by law carry assistance dogs and cannot charge extra for doing so. It is therefore unacceptable that a minority of drivers continue to discriminate against owners of assistance dogs.

The Department plans to consult shortly on revised Best Practice Guidance for local licensing authorities, which will include strengthened recommendations relating to authorities' response to alleged instances of assistance dog refusal.

■ **Transport: West Midlands**

Emma Reynolds: [\[69719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what support his Department is giving to the West Midlands Combined Authority to improve rail and road links across the West Midlands.

Paul Maynard:

The Department currently supports the West Midlands Combined Authority, and other industry partners in the West Midlands, to improve rail services in the area. For example, the current Franchise Agreement with London Midland requires the franchisee to work with industry partners, including Combined Authorities, in relation to the provision, maintenance and operation of smart ticketing. This gives passengers access to a wider range of products and tickets.

The Department is providing funding contribution to the West Midlands Combined Authority in respect of the construction of the new Bromsgrove station. This was completed in summer 2016 as part of a wider programme to extend electrification from Birmingham to Barnt Green to Bromsgrove.

More widely, the Department is working very closely with local stakeholders in the West Midlands in terms of how West Midlands Rail has been working with the Department to specify local rail services within the West Midlands region from October 2017, in line with the refranchising programme for the franchise. West Midlands Rail will be responsible for the management of local services when the new franchise commences.

The forthcoming franchise contains other initiatives such as the introduction of a West Midlands Railway brand and the creation of a separate Business Unit for the local and regional services in the West Midlands, whose management will be locally based.

The devolution agreement with the West Midlands Combined Authority at the end of 2015 devolved £36.5m per annum for 30 years which the West Midlands Combined Authority will control and invest to deliver projects to drive growth, in line with their strategic economic plan, giving the West Midlands Combined Authority powers and the freedom to prioritise transport schemes.

Highways England is also committed through the first Road Investment Strategy (2015/16 – 2019/20) to making improvements to the strategic roads across the Midlands area.

The Department has committed over £370m to major local authority schemes in the West Midlands Combined Authority area, subject to Business Cases, including tram and road schemes. Also, the 3 Local Enterprise Partnerships in the West Midlands Combined Authority area have been allocated over £780m in Local Growth Funding to support local projects that benefit the local area and economy, including a range of local road and rail projects. The Department has also just confirmed over £40m to the West Midlands Combined Authority for capital Highway works in 2017-18.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES**■ Electoral Register: Young People****Jim Shannon:****[69857]**

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps her Department is taking to use the centenary of women's right to vote as a means of encouraging electoral registration and democratic participation among young people.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government has set up a £5m fund to help celebrate the centenary of women's suffrage and support projects to build a legacy for the future. It is important that we educate young people about the significance of the hard-won right to vote for women. The Barnett formula has been applied to this funding in the usual way and it is for the devolved administrations to decide whether, and how, they choose to mark the centenary.

More widely, we value the important role that schools and colleges can play in encouraging democratic participation amongst young people. The Cabinet Office has developed a collection of learning resources, such as Rock Enroll!, that can be used in schools, colleges and youth groups to encourage students to register to vote and learn about the importance of democratic engagement. The Government has also funded the British Youth Council's Discovering Democracy Awards to recognise exemplar schools which prepare their students to be full and active participants in democratic life from a young age, including the importance of registering to vote.

■ Gender Recognition: Health Services**Thangam Debbonaire:****[69761]**

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, pursuant to the Answer of 20 March 2017 to Question 68173, whether the review into the de-medicalising and streamlining of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 will include the effect of self-definition on (a) women's refuges, (b) women's health services, (c) women-only sports groups, (d) commissioning for specialist clinical services and emotional support for transgender people and (e) commissioning for clinical responses to and health-related research on illnesses which predominantly or solely affect men or women.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government is dedicated to promoting the equal rights of women and of transgender individuals.

In our work to review the Gender Recognition Act we are monitoring the implementation of alternative gender recognition processes in other jurisdictions and we are analysing the evidence placed before the Women and Equalities Committee. We are considering single-sex and other public services as part of the review.

All public authorities have to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty in the development of policy, commissioning and provision of services. This includes paying due regard not only to the needs of men

and women but also transgender individuals. We will comply with these requirements in all our work.

■ **Government Equalities Office: Security**

Jon Trickett:

[\[70063\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, how many people holding security passes for other Government Departments are granted access to the Government Equalities Office premises with that pass, by Department.

Caroline Dinéage:

The information requested is not held centrally.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ **Access to Work Programme: Autism**

Steve McCabe:

[\[69690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the Access to Work Hidden Impairments Specialist Team is able to refer people to specialist autism-specific support.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Access to Work Hidden Impairments Speciality team is already able to award funding for specialist support for people on the autistic spectrum.

Access to Work is a discretionary grant award which provides a contribution towards disability related extra costs in the workplace above the level of reasonable adjustments. The scheme funds a wide variety of solutions appropriate to each person's individual circumstances, on a case by case basis, including:

- Specialist assessments
- Specialist support workers
- Travel to work support
- Autism awareness training for colleagues to combat stigma and workplace bullying
- Innovative technological solutions, such as smartphone apps.

■ **Bereavement Support Payment**

Stella Creasy:

[\[69635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish the full equality impact assessment on the replacement of existing bereavement benefits by the bereavement support payment.

Caroline Nokes:

The Department published an impact assessment in 2014 of the Bereavement Support Payment which was introduced by the Pensions Act 2014.

■ Carers: Pensions

Alex Cunningham: [\[70110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what information his Department holds on the trends in the number of carers withdrawing their private pensions before reaching state pension age.

Alex Cunningham: [\[70182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the implications for the financial security of people who are unable to work who withdraw their pensions before they reach the state pension age.

Richard Harrington:

The government does not hold data on the number of carers withdrawing their private pensions to access the pension freedoms. The introduction of the pension freedoms offered individuals more choice on how to manage their financial affairs. The Government believes that in general people should be trusted to make their own choices about how to use their pension savings in later life - that includes access due to caring or ill health.

Many people with caring responsibilities can and do balance work and care, and this helps them plan for and boost their retirement income, and maintain wellbeing in later life. In recognition Government is working to ensure that adult carers can be supported to remain in and return to work. For example Government is working with stakeholders on a Carers Strategy to strengthen the support that is available to carers and has ensured that carers are central to its reforms to care and support with stronger rights in the Care Act 2014.

Through its recent Fuller Working Lives Strategy and its Work, Health and Disability Green Paper, the government has set out to ensure that wherever possible people with health conditions can be supported to remain in and return to work. This is good for both their finances, health and wellbeing. People who are unable to work and who are in receipt of certain welfare benefits will receive National Insurance credits to ensure they continue to build up Qualifying Years for their State Pension.

We are working with industry bodies, consumer representatives, the Treasury, the Financial Conduct Authority and the Pensions Regulator to interpret emerging research and data findings, and actively monitoring the market to understand the choices that consumers are making and identify emerging concerns.

■ Children: Poverty

Dan Jarvis: [\[69473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of supporting city mayors in establishing localised child poverty targets.

Damian Hinds:

Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families, published on 4 April, forms part of the Government's ambitious agenda for social reform and sets out a framework for continued action to drive improved outcomes for disadvantaged families and children. As part of this, we are making available the latest analysis and an evidence base to enable local authorities, local partners and others to understand, and act on, the complex factors of disadvantage in their local area. This will include local-level data on the factors of disadvantage that will be available through a local government data tool.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Legal Costs**Debbie Abrahams:**[\[70010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the cost to his Department was of R v SSWP UK SC 0029/2016.

Caroline Nokes:

The appeal of R (on the application of Rutherford and others) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions was heard with six other appeals in the Supreme Court, therefore separate figures for individual appeals are not available. The legal costs incurred by the Department in respect of the Supreme Court proceedings for Rutherford and the other joined appeals are approximately £219,500.

This figure includes VAT where payable (for example on Counsel's fees) and disbursements but does not include costs attributable to time spent by Government advisory lawyers, as time spent by such advisory lawyers is not recorded in a manner that allows it to be attributable to individual appeals.

The Department has also paid £50,000 to the Rutherfords in respect of their legal costs in the proceedings up to and including the Supreme Court and a further payment will be made in due course.

■ Employment and Support Allowance**Stephen Timms:**[\[69598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work of 27 March 2017, Official Report, columns 23-24, what progress his Department is making on the use of social tariffs to support claimants of employment and support allowance in the work-related activity group; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

My response on 27 March noted that the work on social tariffs was about enabling people to have the right tools and information to reduce their household outgoings and give budgeting support.

Work Coaches will have information available to support claimants to manage and reduce their household outgoings.

Stephen Timms:

[69599]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work of 27 March 2017, Official Report, column 9, what elements of the support offer are already in place for claimants of employment and support allowance in the work-related activity group.

Penny Mordaunt:

As set out in the Improving Lives The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper, we will be introducing a new Personal Support Package (PSP) for people with health conditions from April 2017. This is in line with our ambition to provide a support system which can be tailored to individuals' needs.

As part of the PSP, we will begin to roll-out a £330m package of employment support for new ESA Work Related Activity Group and UC Limited Capability for Work claimants, from April 2017, which will deliver a broad range of employment and health support.

The Personal Support Package will be in place to offer support to those affected by the Work Related Activity Component removal and newly placed in the Work Related Activity Group and its Universal Credit equivalent.

In relation to this, we have already

- Recruited 300 new Disability Employment Advisers who have the expertise to compliment work coaches and better support claimants' needs,
- Begun the Health and Work Conversation test and learn phase with 20 Job centres so far
- Have guaranteed additional places on Work Choice and Work and Health Programme as well as additional places on Specialist Employability Support Programme and Access to Work
- To date, we have received over 2,500 Community Partner applications from individuals who have either a lived experience or expert knowledge of disability
- Allocated £15m to the Flexible Support Fund
- Made changes to the permitted work rules

Stephen Timms:

[69600]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work of 27 March 2017, Official Report, column 9, what financial channels are open for claimants of employment and support allowance in the work-related activity group to apply to.

Penny Mordaunt:

New claimants placed in the Work Related Activity Group will still receive financial support through ESA.

Personal Independence Payment supports those with a long-term health condition or disability, who face difficulties with daily living or moving around, and complement the financial support offered through ESA for WRAG claimants.

Where eligible, claimants can apply for other forms of Government support ranging from local welfare provision and support from the NHS, through to national schemes. These include, but are not limited to: the Access to Work scheme; local authority provided social care support and aids and adaptations; NHS provided aids (e.g. wheelchairs); free prescriptions; free/discounted travel to hospital appointments; with assessment, Blue Badge; Disabled Students Allowance; up to £2,000 from Motability if the claimant is losing a vehicle and they were previously in receipt of Disability Living Allowance; the Disabled Facilities Grant; Budgeting Loans and Cold Weather Payments through the Social Fund; and Housing Benefit.

Stephen Timms:

[69601]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work of 27 March 2017, Official Report, column 9, what plans he has to use the Flexible Support Fund to support claimants of employment and support allowance in the work-related activity group.

Damian Hinds:

Additional funding is being added to the Flexible Support Fund over the next two years, which will be available to support new claimants in the Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Group.

The Flexible Support Fund may be used for a wide range of activities at the discretion of Jobcentre Plus District Managers and Work Coaches. Whilst not exhaustive, some of the activities that may be undertaken include:

- support for Partnership activity, which is determined locally;
- purchasing support to meet one-off claimant needs, for example funding travel to interview costs, equipment or clothing to start employment;
- paying for replacement adult or child care to enable a claimant to undertake training, attend interviews or start work;
- procure activities to enable claimants to either enter sustained employment or move closer to the labour market;
- paying for adaptations to help a disabled claimant to access work placements;
- training allowances for claimants undertaking some types of full time training, such as those attending a sector based work academy.

Stephen Timms:

[69602]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work of 27 March 2017, Official Report, column 9, what hardship funds are available to support claimants of employment support allowance in the work-related activity group.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Social Fund is a mechanism which helps claimants of income-related support with certain one-off or occasional expenses

Through this Fund, eligible claimants can access Budgeting Loans to cover unexpected hardships. These are interest-free loans which are repayable from benefit awards. They are designed to help people, who have been in receipt of a qualifying benefit for at least six months, with intermittent expenses that are considered difficult to budget for such as furniture, clothes and shoes, rent advances, and travel expenses. Also part of the Social Fund is the Cold Weather Payments scheme. This provides help to people in meeting their additional heating costs during periods of extreme cold who are in receipt of certain income related benefits and satisfy other conditions.

■ Employment: Liverpool**Mrs Louise Ellman:**[\[69692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect on levels of employment in Liverpool of the announced closure of jobcentres and other offices of his Department's estate; and if he will make a statement.

Damian Hinds:

As a large employer we understand the potential impact that any closure or relocation of an office may have. This is why we carefully considered the wider impacts on local communities in reviewing our estate and the sites we intend to keep were identified as part of our longer-term strategy.

The increased use of digital services means that several jobcentres in Liverpool are underutilised; meaning that we are spending money on rent for space that is unused rather than on services and support. Our proposals seek to redress that. However, DWP is retaining a substantial presence in Liverpool and staff will be offered the opportunity to relocate to other parts of DWP wherever possible.

We are recruiting and expect to have more Work Coaches in March 2018 compared to today.

■ Family Premium: Liverpool City Region**Maria Eagle:**[\[69847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of the removal of family premium for new claimants on families with one or more disabled members in (a) Garston and Halewood constituency and (b) Liverpool City Region.

Caroline Nokes:

This policy change had no impact on Housing Benefit claimants receiving another income-related benefit, such as income-related Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support or the guarantee element of Pension Credit, which "passports" claimants onto full eligible Housing Benefit.

■ Housing Benefit

Maria Eagle:

[69786]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will carry out an impact assessment on the restrictions to backdating housing benefit introduced in April 2016 for working-age claimants.

Caroline Nokes:

Qualitative research into the limiting of backdating with Local Authority Housing Benefit Managers has been undertaken. This was published in January 2017.

The full report is available here

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/584664/local-authority-insight-research-wave-32.pdf

A quantitative survey is planned and the findings will be published in due course.

■ Housing Benefit: Social Rented Housing

Debbie Abrahams:

[69693]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the savings to his Department arising from the application of the under-occupancy penalty in each of the last four financial years.

Debbie Abrahams:

[69695]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the savings to his Department arising from the application of the under-occupancy penalty in the current financial year and each of the next three financial years.

Caroline Nokes:

Estimated savings for Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy were published at Budget 2013 as follows:

2013/14 - £465 million

2014/15 - £465 million

2015/16 - £465 million

2016/17 - £470 million

2017/18 - £470 million

■ Housing Benefit: Young People

Maria Eagle:

[69788]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he plans to remove the entitlement to housing benefit for people aged 21-years old.

Caroline Nokes:

There are no plans to remove entitlement to housing benefit for people aged 21 years old.

■ Jobcentre Plus: Disability**Steve McCabe:****[69636]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he plans to take to monitor the outcomes of support provided through Jobcentre Plus for (a) disabled and (b) autistic people.

Penny Mordaunt:

The “Improving Lives: The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper” was published on 31 October 2016 and provides further details of the overarching Personal Support Package for people with health conditions and disabilities, with a range of new interventions and initiatives designed to provide support that is tailored to the individual needs of claimants. Plans are currently being developed for how we monitor this. We already monitor and publish Work Choice and Work Programme outcomes, the latest published Work Programme statistics are available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/602238/work-programme-statistics-to-december-2016.pdf

■ Jobcentres: Pyle**Mrs Madeleine Moon:****[69567]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants are registered at the jobcentre in Pyle; how many of those claimants are required to attend for daily signing; what cost impact analysis was undertaken for claimants travelling to Porthcawl from Pyle as a result of the decision to close the Pyle Jobcentre; and if he will make a statement.

Damian Hinds:

There are currently (February 2017) 170 people claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance or Universal Credit at Pyle Jobcentre. There is no comparable Employment and Support Allowance or Income Support claimant count available at individual jobcentre level. However, the total numbers of new claims to Employment and Support Allowance made in the last 12 months in Pyle (March 16 to February 17) is 379. The total numbers of new claims to Income Support made in Pyle in the last 12 months (March 16 to February 17) is 10. Those who use our services do so to varying degrees, depending upon the type of claim they have. For example, those in the work-related activity group of Employment and Support visit the jobcentre for more regular interviews with an adviser, whilst those in the support group do not have to attend interviews unless they wish to speak to a personal adviser and for this reason there is no statistical information available for those required for daily signing.

The purpose of our equality analysis and public consultation was to help establish how many people are likely to be affected by these proposals, including any additional costs. Before announcing our proposals for the Pyle Jobcentre relocation, we considered travel costs between Pyle and Porthcawl and concluded that it would cost £5 for an adult day return ticket and £2.90 for those aged between 16-18 years old.

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[69568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department made of the travel distance between Pyle Jobcentre and Porthcawl prior to its decision on whether a consultation should take place in regard to the closure of that jobcentre; and if he will make a statement.

Damian Hinds:

We committed to a public consultation for Jobcentres over three miles and 20 minutes away from existing offices by public transport. The new site at Porthcawl is 4.9 miles and 35 minutes by public transport from Pyle Jobcentre.

Throughout our planning we calculated distances and journey times to Porthcawl 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.

■ **Local Housing Allowance: Garston and Halewood**

Maria Eagle:

[\[69766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in Garston and Halewood constituency have been in receipt of local housing allowance for properties with (a) one, (b) two, (c) three or (d) four bedrooms in each year since April 2010.

Maria Eagle:

[\[69767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of people in (a) Garston and Halewood constituency and (b) Liverpool City Region received local housing allowance for properties with more than four bedrooms in each year since April 2010.

Caroline Nokes:

The information requested is in the tables below.

Table A – Housing Benefit LHA Caseload by property size, Garston and Halewood, May 2010 - May 2016

	1-BED	2-BED	3-BED	4-BED
May 2010	240	445	685	75
May 2011	275	515	785	85
May 2012	300	555	855	105
May 2013	345	550	900	100
May 2014	400	615	935	100
May 2015	300	530	860	95
May 2016	250	505	765	90

Notes:

1. Source: Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE) administrative data.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 and may not sum due to rounding.

Table B – Housing Benefit LHA Caseload and >4 bed properties as a proportion of total LHA caseload, Liverpool City Region, May 2010

	GARSTON AND HALEWOOD			LIVERPOOL CITY REGION		
	All LHA Cases	>4 bed	% cases greater than 4 bed	All LHA Cases	>4 bed	% cases greater than 4 bed
May 2010	1,470	5	0.4%	36,890	270	0.7%
May 2011	1,715	10	0.6%	42,665	325	0.8%
May 2012	1,895	15	0.7%	48,450	295	0.6%
May 2013	1,950	10	0.6%	50,180	325	0.6%
May 2014	2,130	15	0.7%	51,070	290	0.6%
May 2015	1,830	10	0.4%	48,040	280	0.6%
May 2016	1,655	5	0.4%	44,215	260	0.6%

Notes:

1. Source: Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE) administrative data.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 and may not sum due to rounding.
3. Total LHA caseload includes a small number of cases where the number of bedrooms is unknown.

■ Motability

Tracy Brabin:

[69687]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what information his Department holds on the number of people in (a) Batley and Spen constituency, (b) West Yorkshire and (c) England who have had a Government-funded leased Motability car removed from their possession in each of the last seven years.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Department does not routinely collect information on the numbers of people who have had to return a Motability vehicle. Also, the Department does not have data available on the numbers who have leased a vehicle under the Motability scheme by

year and parliamentary constituency. As the information requested is not readily available, it could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Motability is an independent charitable organisation that is wholly responsible for the administration of the Motability scheme, including collating its own management information. Questions relating to this aspect of the scheme's operation should be directed to Motability itself.

■ Occupational Pensions

Alex Cunningham:

[\[70109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect of planned increases in minimum contributions on the level of automatic enrolment opt-outs.

Richard Harrington:

Automatic enrolment is a programme that is working: 7.5 million individuals have already been automatically enrolled into a workplace pension by over 464,000 employers. Due to lower than expected opt-outs the opt-out assumption over the duration of the programme has been revised from 28% to 15%. We continue to monitor the position as roll-out continues.

■ Personal Independence Payment

Mr David Burrowes:

[\[69469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to his oral contribution of 27 March 2017, Official Report, column 9, what the financial budget allocated to support claimants who would otherwise have received work-related activity payment is.

Penny Mordaunt:

The "Improving Lives: The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper" was published on 31 October 2016 and announces the Department's new Personal Support Package.

In his 2015 Summer Budget, the Chancellor announced the removal of the Work Related Activity Component (WRAC) and the Limited Capability for Work (LCW) element from April 2017.

Announced alongside this was a support package of £330m over four years to support this group from April 17. In addition, an extra £15m will be made available through the Flexible Support Fund in both 2017/18 and 2018/19 to offer more targeted support at a local level.

'Improving Lives, The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper' provides further details of the overarching Personal Support Package for people with health conditions and disabilities, with a range of new interventions and initiatives designed to provide support that is tailored to the individual needs of claimants.

Stephen Timms:**[69955]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether a person unable to plan and follow journeys as a result of psychological distress, but not otherwise impaired, will qualify for the enhanced rate of personal independence payment after the coming into force of the Social Security (Personal Independence Payment) (Amendment) Regulations 2017.

Penny Mordaunt:

Psychological distress is not itself a “mental condition” or “impairment”, but rather a symptom which may come and go at different times and with varying frequency or causes depending on the individual. There are circumstances in which someone with a mental condition may get the enhanced rate mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP). However, PIP claimants who cannot undertake any journey because of overwhelming psychological distress alone, that is without any other symptom associated with their condition or conditions which may affect their ability to plan and follow a journey or move around, will continue to be entitled to the standard rate of the mobility component.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Children

Paul Flynn:**[69715]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many 16-year olds who were previously in receipt of disability living allowance have had their application for personal independence payments rejected in the last year.

Penny Mordaunt:

Data on the number of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claims cleared, by a range of breakdowns including age, the clearance type and whether the claim was a new claim or a Disability Living Allowance to PIP reassessment claim, is available using Stat-Xplore: <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>. Guidance on how to use Stat-Xplore can be found here: <https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/index.html>.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Torbay

Kevin Foster:**[69948]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his Department's most recent conversion rates are for cases moving from disability living allowance to personal independence payments in Torbay constituency.

Penny Mordaunt:

Statistics on Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Award Rates split by Parliamentary Constituency and Re-assessment indicator can be found in published statistics in data table 4Ci of: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-independence-payment-statistics>

■ Retirement

Alex Cunningham:

[70184]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect of poor health on an individual's ability to make financial preparations for retirement.

Richard Harrington:

In addition to increasing employment prospects for women above the age of 60, this Government has introduced the New State Pension. The system in place for people who reached their State Pension age before 6 April 2016 was extremely complex and the new State Pension brings greater clarity by helping people to understand their State Pension more easily. It is also much more generous for many women who have been historically worse off under the old system. On average, women reaching State Pension age last year get a higher state pension over their lifetimes than women who reached State Pension age at any point before them, even when the acceleration of State Pension age is taken into account. And, by 2030, over 3 million women stand to gain an average of £550 extra per year as a result of these changes.

The New State Pension works hand in hand with Automatic Enrolment, enabling many more people to save in a workplace pension. And, combined with reviews of the State Pension age, these measures are designed to form the main elements of a sustainable basis of retirement income in the decades to come.

The new State Pension is based on an individual's National Insurance record. There is a comprehensive crediting system in place for those who need it. People who are unable to work and who are in receipt of certain welfare benefits will receive National Insurance credits to ensure they continue to build up Qualifying Years for their State Pension.

To provide a secure and dignified retirement for those pensioners who would otherwise find themselves without an adequate income, Pension Credit is available. This is an income-related benefit paid out of general taxation which targets help at the poorest pensioners.

Pension Credit tops up a person's other income to a standard minimum amount – currently £159.35 a week for a single person and £243.25 for a couple. Higher amounts may be available for those with a severe disability, caring responsibilities or certain housing costs.

For private pension saving, the Government is committed to providing free, impartial guidance through Pension Wise, to help people make informed and confident decisions about how they use any defined contribution pension savings they may have for their retirement.

Through its recent Fuller Working Lives Strategy and the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper, the Government is working with employers to target the support needed for individuals aged 50 years and over to remain in the labour market for longer as this brings benefits for an individual's finances, health and wellbeing.

■ Social Security Benefits

Dan Jarvis:

[69691]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to his Department's impact assessment of 25 August 2016 on the lower benefit cap, if he will publish the referred estimates of the operational costs of implementing that cap and of providing support to capped claimants.

Caroline Nokes:

The benefit cap was lowered on the 7th November from £26,000 to £20,000, except in London where it was lowered to £23,000 (a lower cap applies to single adult households).

To help ensure Local Authorities are able to protect the most vulnerable Housing Benefit claimants and to support households adjusting to our welfare reforms, the Government will provide over £800m funding for Discretionary Housing Payments over the next 5 years from 2016/17. Information about this and other measures to ease the transition for families affected by this policy change is included in the latest impact assessment at the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/welfare-reform-and-work-act-impact-assessment-for-the-benefit-cap>

■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals

Meg Hillier:

[69684]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many mandatory reconsideration request decisions made by his Department have been overturned by HM Courts and Tribunals Service since the introduction of that process.

Penny Mordaunt:

The information is not held.

■ Social Security Benefits: Autism

Catherine West:

[69982]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department records whether benefit claimants are on the autism spectrum.

Penny Mordaunt:

With regard to Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and Employment Support Allowance (ESA), if a claimant declares that they are on the Autistic spectrum, and it is a main disabling condition this will be recorded on the DLA, PIP or ESA computer systems.

For JSA customers, there is no specific marker on the system to indicate claimants are on the Autism Spectrum. However, if conversations have taken place regarding this with Work Coaches or benefit processors, this detail may be included within notes or detailed on the claimant commitment.

Income Support do not capture or record information about claimants on the Autistic Spectrum.

■ **State Retirement Pensions: Age**

Alex Cunningham:

[70183]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the implications of regional variations in life expectancy for the forthcoming changes to 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 Government's 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: Females**

Tim Loughton:

[69604]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Pensions of 27 March 2017, Official Report, column 16, what estimate his Department has made of the cost of that alternative proposed by the Work and Pensions Committee to permit a defined group of women who have been affected by state pension age changes to take early retirement, from a specified age, on an actuarially neutral basis; what the costs in that estimate of (a) means-tested benefits, (b) national insurance contributions, (c) changes to working patterns and taxation, (d) unfunded public sector pensions schemes, (e) bus passes, (f) winter fuel payments, (g) other non-means-tested benefits and (h) setting up, operating and communicating that alternative were; and what estimate his Department has made of the likely take-up of that alternative and the effect of that take-up on its estimated costs.

Richard Harrington:

The Department has made no estimate of the cost of permitting a defined group of women to take early retirement on an actuarially neutral basis, nor has it estimated possible take-up levels of any such scheme.

The Government Actuary submitted evidence to the Work and Pensions Select Committee on early access to State Pension in April last year, including indicative estimates of potential costs should such a scheme be in operation. The evidence

submitted by the Government Actuary can be found at the Work and Pensions Select Committee website at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/work-and-pensions-committee/inquiries/parliament-2015/early-drawing-pension-15-16/>

■ Universal Credit

Stephen Timms: [69954]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he has taken to inform parents receiving universal credit who have two or more children that if another child is conceived that child will not qualify for the child element of universal credit from 6 April 2017.

Damian Hinds:

Changes to Universal Credit policy were announced on gov.uk, in 2015. Further details were published as part of the consultation in October 2016 and in response to the consultation in January 2017.

To further support claimants we have published detailed UC claimant guidance. We have also advised stakeholders who will then advise their customers about the changes.

Support is also being offered to claimants through our Jobcentres, by trained staff, as needed. The changes have been communicated to operational staff through implementation updates, learning and development products, and updates to operational guidance in advance of the implementation date.

Margaret Greenwood: [70208]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the savings to the public purse from the introduction of the minimum income floor for universal credit.

Damian Hinds:

The Office for Budget Responsibility have published our estimated savings due to the minimum income floor for Universal Credit, in table 2.22 of their economic and fiscal outlook supplementary tables. This can be found here:

<http://budgetresponsibility.org.uk/efo/economic-fiscal-outlook-march-2017/> and the specific line of the table is as follows:

	£ BILLION				
	Forecast				
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Gross saving from the minimum income floor	-0.1	-0.4	-0.8	-1.2	-1.5

■ Universal Credit: Broadband

Margaret Greenwood:

[\[70207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the findings of the Ofcom report, entitled Connected Nations, published in December 2016, that five per cent of homes and small businesses and 25 per cent of premises in rural areas were unable to receive broadband speeds of more than 10Mbps for the feasibility of the universal credit full service.

Damian Hinds:

Universal Credit Full Service is a Digital service that has been specifically designed to keep bandwidth requirements as low as possible in order to ensure users get the best possible service. The user interface has been built using cross-government standards and is consistent with designs used by other Government departments. Because it utilises lower bandwidths, people with limited or intermittent internet access will still be able to use it affectively.

Because internet access is an issue for some claimants, including those in rural areas, all jobcentres across the country have Wi-Fi and computers available, including 6000 additional computers installed to support the introduction of Universal Credit. This provides access to digital channels in every Jobcentre for claimants to use when they do not have access at home.

■ Universal Credit: Farmers

Margaret Greenwood:

[\[70168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on farmers of the introduction of the minimum income floor for universal credit.

Damian Hinds:

The Minimum Income Floor is expected to encourage those reporting very low self-employed income to increase their earnings. Some people will respond to this by increasing their earnings from self-employment, others will look for other employment to increase their income.

In addition, the Government recognises the need for claimants who are setting up a business to be given time to establish themselves and develop their business and

customer base. That is why claimants who are gainfully self-employed and within one year of starting out in self-employment will be eligible for a 'start-up period', during which the Minimum Income Floor will not be applied for up to 12 months.

And we have widened eligibility for the New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) to include Universal Credit claimants who are already self-employed, but whose income from their business is below their Minimum Income Floor. Eligible claimants will receive mentoring support designed to help them to increase their earnings from their business, making it more sustainable in the longer term and reducing their benefit dependency.

We are aware that self-employed earnings often fluctuate from month to month. From April 2018 in Full Service the Universal Credit (Surpluses and Self-employed Losses) (Digital Service) Amendment Regulations 2015 will apply, meaning that any surplus earnings, or losses from self-employment, will be carried forward into subsequent assessment periods. However, where the Minimum Income Floor applies, that level of earnings will be taken into account.

■ Universal Credit: Liverpool City Region

Maria Eagle: [\[69784\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of people in (a) Garston and Halewood constituency and (b) Liverpool City Region in receipt of income-based jobseeker's allowance have claimed under the universal credit programme since that programme's introduction.

Damian Hinds:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Maria Eagle: [\[69785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in (a) Garston and Halewood constituency and (b) Liverpool City Region have been in receipt of universal credit since April 2016.

Damian Hinds:

People in Garston and Halewood Constituency and Liverpool Local Authority in receipt of a Universal Credit payment since April 2016:

	NUMBER OF UC RECIPIENTS
Garston and Halewood Constituency	2,000*
Liverpool Local Authority	11,000**

Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred or thousand** and based on December 2016 statistics.*

■ Work and Health Programme

Steve McCabe:

[\[69637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans he has to measure the long-term employment outcomes of individuals being supported through his Department's Work and Health programme.

Steve McCabe:

[\[69638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he plans to review the support that will be provided by his Department's Work and Health programme.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Department for Work and Pensions is planning to conduct an evaluation of the Work and Health Programme, which will include assessing the impact of the programme on employment outcomes. The evaluation will also include a programme of research to understand in more detail how the programme is operating. Detailed evaluation plans are still being developed, and will include information on longer-term employment outcomes to be measured

■ Work and Health Programme: Autism

Derek Twigg:

[\[69947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he plans to take to ensure that the Government's Work and Health Programme will ensure that autistic people have access to specialist support.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Work and Health Programme will provide targeted support to disabled people, including individuals with long term health conditions. We expect providers will take a holistic approach when supporting this claimant group into work. By ensuring that wider barriers to employment are tackled, individuals have a better chance of finding, securing and retaining employment.

These barriers will include linking up with health, social care and other local and specialist services to meet health needs, including services supporting people with autism if this is one of the barriers to work, but the focus will be on overcoming the key barriers to employment not just health support.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ PUBLICATION OF CALL FOR EVIDENCE ON A REGISTER OF BENEFICIAL OWNERS OF OVERSEAS COMPANIES AND OTHER LEGAL ENTITIES

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Margot James):

[\[HCWS588\]](#)

My noble Friend Lord Prior of Brampton has made the following statement:

On 5 April, we published a call for evidence seeking views on a new register that will show who owns and controls overseas companies and other legal entities that own UK property or participate in UK Government procurement.

The intention to create this register was announced at the International Anti-Corruption Summit held in the UK last May. In providing greater transparency, the register will play a vital role in helping to combat corruption and money laundering. Greater transparency will also enhance the UK's reputation as an open and stable place to invest.

Last year the UK became the first country in the G20 to introduce a register of UK company beneficial ownership. The new register will impose similar requirements on overseas entities that choose to invest in property in the UK or bid to provide central Government contracts here. The creation of this register will ensure that the UK continues to be at the forefront of the corporate transparency and anti-corruption agenda.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Conduct guidance for elections on 4 May

Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General (Ben Gummer):

[\[HCWS591\]](#)

On 4 May 2017, elections will take place to local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland, including for directly elected Mayors to seven Combined Authorities, and two local district councils in England.

As is normal ahead of elections, guidance has now been issued for civil servants in UK Government departments and those working in arm's length bodies on the principles that they should observe in relation to the conduct of Government business in the run up to the forthcoming elections.

The guidance sets out the need to maintain the political impartiality of the Civil Service, and the need to ensure that public resources are not used for party political purposes during this period. The period of sensitivity preceding these elections began on 13 April.

The guidance was published on 10 April, and copies have been placed in the Libraries of the House and on GOV.UK at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/607546/pre_election_guidance_for_local_and_mayoral_elections_may_2017.pdf

TREASURY

■ Statutory Report on the UK Bilateral Loan to Ireland

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): [\[HCWS596\]](#)

HM Treasury has today provided a further report to Parliament in relation to the bilateral loan to Ireland as required under the Loans to Ireland Act 2010. The report relates to the period from 1 October 2016 to 31 March 2017.

A written ministerial statement on the previous statutory report regarding the loan to Ireland was issued to Parliament on 13 October 2016, Official Report, column 15WS.

■ Contingent Liability Notification

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Simon Kirby): [\[HCWS595\]](#)

I can today confirm that I have laid a Treasury Minute informing the House of the contingent liability that HM Treasury has taken on in authorising the sale of a portfolio of Bradford & Bingley loans acquired during the financial crisis under the last Labour Government.

This includes certain remote fundamental market-standard warranties which are capped at 100% of the final sale price. The maximum contingent liability arising from these remote warranties is capped at the total consideration received, giving a maximum contingent liability of £11.9 billion. These fundamental warranties are considered to be so remote that they do not meet the definition of a contingent liability requiring disclosure under International Financial Reporting Standards. However, they are disclosed as remote contingent liabilities under principles of Parliamentary accountability.

Further market-standard time and valued capped warranties and indemnities confirming regulatory, legislative, and contractual compliance have been provided to the purchasers. The maximum contingent liability arising is approximately £0.79 billion.

I will update the House of any further changes to Bradford & Bingley as necessary.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Troubled Families Annual Report**

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Sajid Javid):
[\[HCWS594\]](#)

As required by the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, section 3(1) and (11) , my Department published the first annual report on Tuesday 4 April, setting out how the current Troubled Families Programme (2015 – 2020) has been supporting the most disadvantaged families. We will lay this report on 24 April 2017 when both Houses have returned from recess.

This notice details what the report will cover, for the period up to end of March 2017, as well as for the next financial year, including setting out which families are eligible for the programme and how the progress of families supported will be measured.

Families classed as ‘Relevant households’ on the programme, as defined by section 3 of the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, have at least two of the following problems:

- Parents or children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
- Children who are not attending school regularly
- Children who need help; that is children of all ages, who need help, are identified as in need or are subject to a child protection plan
- Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness
- Families affected by domestic violence or abuse
- Parents or children with a range of physical and mental health problems

The rationale for these eligibility criteria and how local authorities should identify families using a range of indicators, suggested referral routes and information sources was set out in the [Financial framework for the expanded Troubled Families programme: April 2015 onwards](#) published on 5 March 2015. The Financial Framework also sets out how the progress of families supported will be measured.

‘ *Supporting disadvantaged families, Troubled Families Programme 2015 –2020: progress so far*’ sets out how the programme is changing the way councils work to be more effective in supporting those in need, including through a whole family approach and co-ordinated practical support. It also includes considerations for the next phase of the programme including which families are eligible for support, and how their progress will be measured.

The programme will continue support for disadvantaged families with complex problems and will work with up to 400,000 families by 2020.

The next phase of the Troubled Families Programme supports the Government’s paper, Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families. This sets out new evidence on the multiple

and overlapping disadvantages experienced by workless families – including parental conflict and problem debt.

As part of the next phase of the programme, the Government will be conducting a review of the current payment-by-results funding model. This is to make sure that this model continues to help the programme meet its objectives, and to strengthen the programme's funding requirements.

DEFENCE

■ Service Complaints Ombudsman's 2016 Annual Report

Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Mark Lancaster): [\[HCWS592\]](#)

My right hon. Friend the Minister of State for Defence in the House of Lords (Earl Howe) made the following Written Ministerial Statement on 3 April 2017.

I am pleased to lay before Parliament today the Service Complaints Ombudsman's annual report for 2016 on the fairness, effectiveness and efficiency of the service complaints system.

This report is published by Nicola Williams, her first as Service Complaints Ombudsman, and covers the first year of operation of the new service complaints system and the work of her office in 2016.

The new service complaints system was introduced on 1 January 2016. The system is shorter, seeks to promote greater confidence in the system and strengthens the oversight and accountability through the powers of the Ombudsman. I am pleased that the report acknowledges the good work undertaken by each of the Services in 2016 as they have implemented the new system. The Ombudsman also reports on those areas where further work is required to improve the way in which complaints are handled, and makes twelve new recommendations.

The findings of the report and the recommendations made will now be considered in detail, and a formal response to the Ombudsman will follow once that work is complete.

EDUCATION

■ Schools Capital Allocations

The Secretary of State for Education (Justine Greening): [\[HCWS590\]](#)

My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System (Lord Nash) made the following Written Ministerial Statement on 3 April 2017.

Today, I am announcing £2.4 billion of capital funding to create new school places needed by September 2020 and to maintain and improve the condition of school buildings. This forms part of our wider plan to invest more than £24 billion in the school estate by 2021.

We want to build a country that works for everyone – and that means providing a good school place for every child, one that offers them the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Investing in our school buildings and creating a sufficient amount of school places are key parts of the Government's plan to ensure that every child has the opportunity of a place at a good school, whatever their background.

We are committed to investing £7 billion in this Parliament to create new school places. Together with our further investment in free schools we expect this to deliver 600,000 new school places over the course of the Parliament. We have already announced £4.8 billion of funding to local authorities for 2015-19, and today we are announcing a further £980 million for 2019-20, taking total investment so far through this Parliament to £5.8 billion. In doing so, we continue to recognise that good investment decisions require certainty. Announcing allocations for 2019-20 today means local authorities can plan years ahead with confidence, and make good strategic investment decisions to ensure they deliver good school places for every child who needs one.

Alongside this new funding we are publishing data from the 2016 School Capacity Survey, which highlights the progress made by local authorities to date in providing new school places using our previous investment. By May 2016, our investment had already helped to create nearly 735,000 additional school places since 2010, with 136,000 delivered in 2015/16 alone.

Alongside this investment in new school places, we are committing more than £10 billion over 2016-2021 to maintain and improve the condition of the school estate. As part of this, I am today confirming allocations of £1.2 billion for local authorities, voluntary aided partnerships, multi-academy trusts and academy sponsors to invest in their own condition priorities, and a further £0.2 billion of Devolved Formula Capital directly to schools in the financial year 2017-18. This allocation includes the Condition Improvement Fund which is providing funding of £466 million for 1,435 projects across 1,184 academies and sixth-form colleges. These projects will help to ensure that children across the country have access to a good school place, further supporting them to reach their full potential.

This funding will help improve the quality of school buildings across the country – targeting schools with the highest need. It can also help schools reduce their running costs, by replacing outdated facilities with buildings that are more efficient to run. So I want schools, local authorities and academy trusts to look carefully at how they can achieve the best value from this investment.

Details of today's announcement will be published on the GOV.UK website, and copies will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Northern Ireland Political Update

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (James Brokenshire):

[[HCWS593](#)]

Since the Northern Ireland Assembly election on 2 March I have been engaged in talks with the political parties and the Irish Government, in accordance with the well-established three-stranded approach. These talks have had one clear purpose: to re-establish an inclusive, devolved administration in line with the 1998 Belfast Agreement and its successors. Throughout this process the UK Government has played an active role in working with the parties and putting forward proposals to build consensus.

The first phase of talks, led by the parties, concluded without an agreement on 27 March. Following consultation with the parties and the Irish Government, I then invited the parties to a further phase of intensive roundtable talks to help resolve the key outstanding issues. The second phase of talks were paused shortly before Easter. All the parties were actively engaged and some further progress was made, including on the formation of an Executive and on legacy. There are, however, a defined number of outstanding issues where there is a lack of agreement between the parties particularly those surrounding culture and identity. Work also remains to be done to address issues of trust and confidence in Executive working. The Prime Minister has spoken to the leaders of the two main parties and I have been keeping her updated throughout.

While recent discussions have not resolved these matters, they have helped to distil them and identify possible areas for consensus. The parties will now have a final opportunity to reach agreement, building on the discussions which have taken place over the past six weeks. On 2 March, the people of Northern Ireland voted clearly for devolved government. The parties mandated by that election still have a duty to provide the government for which they campaigned. Discussions between the parties, and the UK and Irish Governments, will continue, in accordance with the three-stranded approach. The prospect of a forthcoming UK General Election does not change this approach.

It remains my intention to introduce legislation into Parliament to address immediate requirements. I have already indicated that I will legislate to set this year's regional rate to address the urgent need for rates bills to be issued by Councils. In addition, I believe it is also right to introduce provisions that would enable an Executive to be formed in early May should agreement be reached. To have this legislation in force in time, I will be requesting that its progress through Parliament be fast-tracked.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Helping Workless Families

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Damian Green): [\[HCWS589\]](#)

On 4 April we published “Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families”, setting out this Government’s vision to improve outcomes for children who grow up in workless families and face multiple, associated disadvantages.

This Government is committed to creating a country that works for everyone. We want to create a fairer Britain where success is based on merit, not privilege, and where everyone has the chance to go as far as their talents and hard work will take them.

We have already made great steps in rebalancing society in favour of ordinary working people: the employment rate runs at a record high and unemployment is at the lowest rate for over a decade. There are now 590,000 fewer children in workless households compared to 2010.

However, despite this progress, for some families, worklessness, not employment, is the norm. In 2014-2015 there were 1.8 million children in workless families across the United Kingdom, and in over eight out of ten cases the child was in a long-term workless family. These families often face multiple disadvantages – for example, relationship distress is almost three times as prevalent in workless couple-parent families compared to when both parents are working.

New analysis shows what a profound impact worklessness and its associated multiple disadvantages can have on children’s emotional, behavioural and educational outcomes. Our ground-breaking research shows children in workless families are almost twice as likely to fail to reach the expected standard at all stages of their education. Evidence also shows how exposure to parental conflict can have long-term negative impacts on children’s early development. We must act now to break this cycle of disadvantage.

We are introducing four major new policies which will transform local services so that they can better support workless families:

- The next phase of the Troubled Families programme, to place a greater emphasis on supporting parents with complex problems back into work;
- A major programme to reduce stress and conflict in workless families;
- Enhancing the role of Jobcentre Plus in working with local partners to tackle collectively the multiple disadvantages facing unemployed individuals in a better, more joined-up way; and
- Greater support to help those with drug and alcohol dependencies into work, in response to recommendations from Dame Carol Black’s review of employment support for those with drug/alcohol dependencies.

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government published the Troubled Families Annual Report on 4 April, which sets out more detail on the next phase of the

programme and should be read in conjunction with “Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families”.

To track our collective progress in improving outcomes for disadvantaged families, we are introducing nine national indicators, as set out in our Analysis and Research Pack. These will build on our two statutory indicators of parental worklessness and children’s educational attainment – for which the first annual report was published alongside “Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families”. I will lay this report formally in Parliament on 24 April.

We will break down our evidence to a local level, to enable local partners to understand and identify the needs of their community. We will continue to work with local agencies and partners on a range of tools, including our Family Evidence Resource, to help them use our new evidence to commission and deliver effective interventions for workless families.

The analysis and evidence we have developed – in conjunction with leading academics and experts, as well as other Government departments – takes us further than ever before in understanding the root causes of disadvantage.

The indicators and evidence base we are introducing form a framework for action – and in doing so, help to drive improvements in children and families’ lives, now and over time. By targeting services on the issues that prevent parents moving into work and cause instability in family life, Government, working with local authorities and other partners, can help workless families and their children overcome their problems and improve their lives.