



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 8 September 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:26 P.M., 08 September 2016). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ ARM: SoftBank

Dr Julian Lewis:

[\[43942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the implications for the technological competitiveness of the UK of the proposed takeover of ARM Holdings by the Japanese company Softbank; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The UK remains open for business and we welcome firms that want to invest in growth here. The UK's technological innovations, skilled workforce and competitive business environment make it one of the world's best destinations for investment.

ARM Holdings is a highly respected company who have achieved great things: working with the UK's Takeover Panel, Softbank have published a set of clear and binding undertakings, including that ARM's global headquarters would remain in Cambridge and that the UK workforce would at least double if the acquisition is finalised. This provides reassurance that ARM would continue to develop leading-edge technology in the UK as part of the UK technology industry.

#### ■ ARM: Softbank

Dr Julian Lewis:

[\[43943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the implications for the security of the UK of the proposed takeover of ARM Holdings by the Japanese company Softbank; and if he will make a statement.

**Margot James:**

I can confirm that the takeover of ARM as currently proposed does not undermine the UK's national security.

#### ■ Children: Obesity

Liz McInnes:

[\[44973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the role of his Department was in drafting the Government's childhood obesity plan.

**Margot James:**

The Department of Health led on drawing up the action plan to tackle childhood obesity with input from across Government, including this Department.

## ■ Climate Change Convention

**Lisa Nandy:** [\[44648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the Government plans to set out its own nationally-determined contribution to the Paris Agreement on climate change.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

For now the UK remains a Member State and part of the EU's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC). It is not appropriate at this point to speculate about arrangements for after the UK ceases to be a Member State. The UK's commitment to tackling global climate change remains firm.

**Lisa Nandy:** [\[44741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the UK plans to ratify the Paris Agreement on climate change.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* The UK's commitment to the Paris Agreement and to climate action is firm. We remain committed to ratifying the Paris Agreement, and initiating domestic procedures for this, as soon as possible.

## ■ Directors: Disclosure of Information

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[45005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many of the annual returns or confirmation statements submitted to Companies House since 1 July 2016 did not contain information on the relevant company's persons of significant control.

**Margot James:**

There should be no confirmation statements on the public register that do not contain any information on the relevant company's persons of significant control (PSC). Any confirmation statement submitted to Companies House without any information about PSCs will be rejected.

## ■ Electric Cables: Lake District National Park

**Mr Jamie Reed:** [\[44517\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will meet with Millom Without Parish Council to discuss options to ensure that the North West Coast Connection Project does not affect the landscape of the west of the Lake District National Park.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* As my rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State will be responsible for determining the application for consent for the proposed North West Coast Connection Project, it would not be appropriate for him to meet with Millom Without Parish Council to discuss the merits of the project.



The application for this project is expected to be submitted by National Grid to the Planning Inspectorate in 2017. During the pre-application stage, the Parish Council and other interested parties can get involved in the consultation process. When the application is lodged, the Parish Council will be able to make representations on it. The Planning Inspectorate can provide advice about the planning process for the project and advice about the process in general is available on its website:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/>

**Mr Jamie Reed:**

[44518]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of the cost of the North West Coast Connections Project if cables through the Lake District National Park are (a) routed underground and (b) not routed underground.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* Under the current energy market framework, the development of the transmission network in England and Wales is a matter for National Grid, and this includes assessment of the costs of any particular route or approach on specific projects, such as for the proposed North West Coast Connections. National Grid's costs are regulated by Ofgem to ensure they are justified and efficient.

The grant of planning consent for any energy project, including new transmission assets, would be considered by my rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy under the Planning Act 2008, but the proposed project has not reached that stage.

**Mr Jamie Reed:**

[44587]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will provide assurances that the North West Coast Connections Project will include underground cables through the Lake District National Park.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* It will be for the developer to bring forward an application for consent for their proposal for examination by the Planning Inspectorate. My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State will take the decision on the application and it would not be appropriate for him to comment on the merits of the project in advance of his decision.

The application for the Project will be considered as part of the appropriate consent process which will take account of any Government policies and guidance, including that set out in National Policy Statements and other material considerations. Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) sets out policy for energy developments proposed within nationally designated landscapes.

## ■ Energy: Cybercrime

**Lisa Nandy:** [\[44904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many cyber-attacks there have been on the UK's national energy infrastructure in the past five years.

**Jesse Norman:**

In the interest of National Security we cannot comment on specific details of cyber security attacks. However, cyber security is one of the Government's top national security priorities and BEIS is continuing to work with government departments and the National Cyber Security Centre, as well as with industry partners, to ensure that the risks to the energy sector are understood and that appropriate mitigations are established.

## ■ Energy: Prices

**Ian C. Lucas:** [\[44524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an estimate of the average annual energy charges paid by (a) existing and (b) new customers in each of the last five years.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* Average annual domestic bills for gas and electricity and industrial energy prices are published as part of the BEIS's quarterly energy prices publication. The latest available figures are for the average annual domestic bills in 2015 which are £714 for gas (GB) and £584 (UK) for standard electricity.

The information required to distinguish between existing and new customers is not held by BEIS.

## ■ Industry: Yorkshire and the Humber

**Craig Whittaker:** [\[44436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with Ministerial colleagues on producing a long-term industrial strategy for the Yorkshire and Humber region.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

On 2 August, my right Hon. Friend the Prime Minister chaired the first meeting of the Ministerial Committee on Economy and Industrial Strategy, which brings together Secretaries of State of Departments across Whitehall to help to drive forward an Industrial Strategy that will aim to deliver the Prime Minister's vision of 'an economy that works for all' and put the United Kingdom in a strong position for the future, promoting a diversity of industrial sectors and ensuring the benefits of growth are shared across cities and regions up and down the country, including Yorkshire and Humber.

Overall responsibility for developing and implementing an industrial strategy sits within the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. We will be working closely across Government and with a range of organisations – including regional

representatives, businesses, trade bodies, universities, and trade unions - to deliver this, to help ensure that the economy grows strongly in all parts of the country, and to support the UK's global competitiveness.

## ■ Minimum Wage

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[39267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answers of 1 June 2016 to Questions 38139 and 38140, how much of the £10.3 million of minimum wage arrears recovered in 2015-16 was recovered from the 85 employers who did not respond to the National Minimum Wage campaign announced by HM Revenue and Customs on 29 July 2015 but were not issued with a Notice of Underpayment and did not have to pay a penalty; and how many workers were identified as having been underpaid by those 85 employers.

**Margot James:**

In 2015/16 a total of 145 employers found to be non-compliant with National Minimum Wage (NMW) legislation were not issued with a Notice of Underpayment (NoU) or a financial penalty for any of the arrears they owed.

56 of these employers voluntarily disclosed arrears of £742,587 owed to 4875 workers through the campaign announced by HM Revenue & Customs on 29 July 2015.

83 of these employers, owing a combined total of £841,282 to 8768 workers, were not issued with an NoU or penalty for other reasons. For instance, HMRC will not issue a notice of underpayment where complainant workers have entered into a compromise agreement with the employer, or in cases where pay liabilities have been transferred to a new employer under the terms of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (1981).

In addition, HMRC were also notified in 2015/16 of a further 6 employers who owed £482,005 of arrears to 412 workers. These were additional arrears related to cases originally closed in 2014/15.

## ■ New Businesses: Loans

**Chris Elmore:**

[\[44747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department provide any alternative support for people who have been refused a Start-up loan due to their credit score.

**Margot James:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* The Start Up Loans Company assess applications based on a range of factors including business viability and affordability. If an application does not meet the lending criteria an applicant will be signposted to a number of credit reference agencies to obtain a copy of their credit report. Additionally, they will be signposted to other lending organisations and charities that may be able to help them.

There are also other Government supported schemes to help people who want to set up and grow a business. The 39 Growth Hubs across England provide support to help businesses start-up and grow with the Business Support Helpline also providing information and guidance. In addition, individuals and small businesses can access the British Business Bank's Business Finance Guide, which aims to ensure individuals understand the finance options available to them.

#### ■ Nuclear Power Stations: China

**Lisa Nandy:** [\[44804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to support a role for Chinese companies in the construction or ownership of new nuclear power stations in the UK.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* It is for the private sector to fund build and operate new nuclear power stations. We welcome proposals by qualified companies for new nuclear power.

#### ■ Renewable Energy

**Deidre Brock:** [\[44854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to make it his policy that energy from renewable sources will be produced at (a) similar or (b) higher levels to those established by the EU Renewable Energy Directive following UK withdrawal from the EU.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

We are currently progressing in line with the trajectory set out in the Renewable Energy Directive, having met the Directive's interim targets. There will be no immediate changes to our relationship with the EU. Until we have left the EU, the UK will remain a member of the EU with all of the rights and obligations that membership entails.

#### ■ Renewable Energy: EU Law

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[44163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the response of the then Minister of State in the Department for Energy and Climate Change to the Oral Question of 14 July 2016, Official Report, column 411, what assessment he has made of the effect of the publication of the National Grid's four plausible and credible pathways for the UK's energy sector between now and 2020 on the likelihood of the UK meeting the EU-mandated target to increase renewables to 15 per cent of energy consumption by 2020.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

We have considered the National Grid's report but this is one assessment from one organisation. In 2015 25% of electricity generated came from wind farms, solar panels and other renewable power sources.

On the UK's progress towards meeting the 2020 target we are currently progressing in line with the trajectory set out in the Renewable Energy Directive, having met the Directive's interim targets.

**Lisa Nandy:**

[\[44798\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it is his Department's policy to comply with the EU 2020 target on renewable energy.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

There will be no immediate changes to our relationship with the EU. Until we have left the EU, the UK will remain a member of the EU with all of the rights and obligations that membership entails.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[44539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 7 July 2016 to Question 41740, when he expects to answer Question 39267, tabled by the hon. Member for Brighton, Pavilion on 3 June 2016.

**Margot James:**

I have done so.

## BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

### ■ Written Questions: Government Responses

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[41740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, when he expects to answer Question 39267, tabled by the hon. Member for Brighton, Pavilion on 3 June 2016.

**Margot James:**

*[Holding answer 7 July 2016]:* I have done so.

## CABINET OFFICE

### ■ Cabinet Office: Consultants

**Margaret Hodge:**

[\[44324\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish a list of all secondees to his Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

**Margaret Hodge:**

[\[44337\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish a list of all secondees to his Office from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

**Margaret Hodge:** [44344]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many times his Department has used the services of (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what (i) work was undertaken and (ii) the cost to the public purse was on each such occasion.

**Margaret Hodge:** [44357]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many times his Office has used the services of (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what (i) work was undertaken and (ii) the cost to the public purse was on each such occasion.

**Ben Gummer:**

Information relating to specific pieces of work undertaken by all consulting firms including details of secondments from consulting firms is not held centrally and is therefore only available at disproportionate cost. In May 2010 the Cabinet Office introduced a control on the use of consultants within central government to reduce spending and to challenge organisations to only use consultants when absolutely necessary. Details of expenditure approvals for consultancy controls are published on: [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk) and on [data.gov.uk](http://data.gov.uk): [www.data.gov.uk](http://www.data.gov.uk) Additionally, all new contracts over the value of £10,000 and payments of over £25,000 are published on Contracts Finder: <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder> Under the Government controls introduced in May 2010, any contract for consultancy the estimated value of which exceeds £20,000 and exceeds 9 months in duration must be approved by the MCO and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury. Any consultancy contracts that fall outside of this scope must be approved by Cabinet Office Finance as part of the standard departmental financial controls. The full Cabinet Office Controls guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-controls/cabinet-office-controls-guidance-version-40>

## ■ Civil Servants

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [44983]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans he has to change the staff headcount across the Civil Service in each of the next four years; and what the projected expenditure on staff is in that time period.

**Ben Gummer:**

Workforce planning is primarily the responsibility of each department to determine based on their individual operational and policy requirements. Each department has their own spending agreements with HM Treasury for this Parliament and are responsible for ensuring they have the right workforce and capability in place to deliver their commitments.

Earlier this year, departments published their Single Departmental Plans, setting out the key programmes of work required to deliver the Government's Manifesto commitments.

Departments have been developing plans to ensure they have the workforce capacity and capability required to deliver their Single Departmental Plans.

## ■ Living Wage

**Greg Mulholland:**

[\[44109\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 26 July 2016 to Question 43378, (a) how many and (b) what proportion of people by (i) region, (ii) county and (iii) parliamentary constituency are paid less than the Living Wage Foundation's living wage.

**Chris Skidmore:**

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

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Letter to Member - Living Wage [PQ 44109.pdf]

## ■ Self-employed: Westmorland and Lonsdale

**Tim Farron:**

[\[45013\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people are currently registered as self-employed in Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency; and what the average salary is earned by those people.

**Chris Skidmore:**

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

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Letter for Member - Self-Employed [PQ45013 (002).pdf]

## ■ Senior Civil Servants: Ethnic Groups

**Dawn Butler:**

[\[44005\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his Department plans to have targets for BAME representation in the Senior Civil Service.

**Ben Gummer:**

The use of stretching goals for BAME representation as well as other protected characteristics are being considered as a way to support and facilitate the increase of senior representation of underrepresented groups within the Civil Service.

**TREASURY**■ **Alcoholic Drinks and Tobacco: Excise Duties**

**Philip Davies:** [\[43851\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what (a) internal and (b) externally commissioned research his Department has conducted on potential links between the levels of tax and illicit trade in the alcohol and tobacco sectors.

**Jane Ellison:**

The government considers a number of different factors when deciding duty rates for alcohol and tobacco, including the impact on the illicit trade.

HMRC have published econometric analysis of cigarette and alcohol consumption, which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hm-revenue-and-customs-research-working-papers>.

■ **Bank Services: Standards**

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[45073\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 4.3.2 of the Open Banking Standard report published in February 2016, what assessment the Government has made of the (a) cyber security, (b) data protection and (c) fraud risks an open banking environment introduces.

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[45074\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Open Banking Standard report published in February 2016, how the Government plans to ensure that customers provide informed consent when using open banking services.

**Simon Kirby:**

The Open Banking Working Group was created at the request of the government to explore options for allowing customers to use their bank data in a safe, secure and efficient manner. The Group published its report in February 2016. The conclusions reached represent the views of the Working Group and are not government policy.

Subsequently, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) issued the final report of its investigation into retail banking on 9 August 2016. As part of this, the CMA requires nine leading UK banks to create an open API (Application Programming Interface) to allow access to customer account information as set out in the revised Payment Services Directive (PSDII), which will come into force in January 2018. Informed consent, data protection and cyber security are key considerations in the PSDII, and the government will be consulting on the transposition of this directive shortly.



## ■ Countryside Stewardship Scheme and LEADER Programme

**Sue Hayman:** [44984]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans his Department has to ensure that the LEADER and Countryside Stewardship schemes continue to be funded when the UK leaves the EU.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The funds mentioned are covered under the Chancellor's recent announcement on EU funding, available at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-philip-hammond-guarantees-eu-funding-beyond-date-uk-leaves-the-eu>

**Sue Hayman:** [45072]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will continue to make funding available for new and existing LEADER and Countryside Stewardship schemes when the UK ceases to be a participant of the Common Agricultural Policy on leaving the EU.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The funds mentioned are covered under the Chancellor's recent announcement on EU funding, available at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-philip-hammond-guarantees-eu-funding-beyond-date-uk-leaves-the-eu>

## ■ Economic Situation

**Diana Johnson:** [43544]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the consequences of the referendum result on (a) the British economy and (b) investment spending in the UK in 2016-17.

**Mr David Gauke:**

While it is clear that we do now face a significant economic challenge as a result of the referendum decision, the UK economy is well placed to respond. HM Government is monitoring ongoing developments in the economy and the independent Office for Budget Responsibility will produce an updated economic forecast alongside the Autumn Statement 2016.

## ■ Health Services: Cambridgeshire

**Daniel Zeichner:** [43601]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 3.14 of the National Audit Office's investigation into the collapse of the UnitingCare Partnership contract, for what reasons HMRC did not approve UnitingCare's request to remove VAT liability.

**Jane Ellison:**

I am unable to comment on the tax affairs of individual companies.

HM Revenue and Customs applies the VAT rules for private companies consistently and fairly to ensure a level playing field. As reported in the National Audit Office's report, the UnitingCare Partnership is a limited liability partnership.

## ■ Married Couple's Allowance

**Mr David Burrowes:** [\[44905\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many couples claimed the married couples allowance in each financial year since 2001.

**Mr David Burrowes:** [\[44906\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the cost to the public purse was of providing the married couples allowance in each financial year since 2001.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Married Couple's Allowance (MCA) is an additional allowance for married couples worth between £322 and £835.50 per couple in 2016-17. Prior to 2000-01, MCA was available to all married couples irrespective of age, but on the introduction of the tax credit system it remained available to married couples where at least one of them was born before 6 April 1935.

The estimated cost and the estimated number of claimants of MCA for the financial years 2002-03 to 2015-16 are given in the table below.

### MARRIED COUPLE'S ALLOWANCE

	Cost (£millions)	Number of Claimants (000s)
2002-03	450	1160
2003-04	610	1510
2004-05	590	1450
2005-06	530	1320
2006-07	520	1230
2007-08	450	1050
2008-09	*	*
2009-10	440	890
2010-11	340	670
2011-12	400	760
2012-13	360	650
2013-14	320	570
2014-15	285	490
2015-16	245	420

\*Data not currently available

Up to 2012-13 these estimates are based on the Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) for the years concerned. Later years are projected from the 2012-13 SPI using the Office for Budget Responsibility's Autumn Statement 2015 economic and fiscal outlook. Data for 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2008-09 are not currently available.

## ■ Money Laundering

**Deidre Brock:** [\[43588\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government plans to take to ensure continued cooperation with EU member states to prevent money laundering after the UK leaves the EU.

**Simon Kirby:**

Money laundering is a global problem that can undermine the integrity and stability of our financial markets and institutions. The UK was a founding member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) which sets the global standards to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, and the EU Commission and a majority of EU Member States are also FATF members. The UK will continue to play a leading role in tackling illicit financial flows through working with the FATF to ensure that standards are implemented effectively and through engaging bilaterally with countries on operational issues.

## ■ Occupational Pensions

**Rebecca Long Bailey:** [\[43813\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many requests for taking a trivial commutation of an occupational pension have been (a) granted and (b) refused due to the pension value exceeding £30,000.

**Jane Ellison:**

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given to her by my Hon. Friend the then Economic Secretary on the 13<sup>th</sup> June (Written Question 39027)

## ■ PAYE: Dual Jobholding

**Judith Cummins:** [\[43889\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people pay tax through PAYE with two or more employers concurrently; and of those people, how many have a combined gross income of less than £17,160 per year.

**Jane Ellison:**

The information requested could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

**■ Planning: Compensation**

**Jeremy Lefroy:** [\[44376\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he plans to lay secondary legislation on changes to the rate of interest on late payment of compensation under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 before Parliament.

**Mr David Gauke:**

Government is committed to making the process of compulsory purchase orders clearer, fairer and faster. The Housing and Planning Act and the Neighbourhood Planning Bill, introduced last week (7<sup>th</sup> September) will enable us to lay legislation to set interest rates on payments of compensation that are paid late. The Regulations to set this level of interest will be laid at least 21 days before the substantive commencement of sections 192 to 198 of the Housing and Planning Act. This is likely to be in spring 2017.

**■ Soft Drinks: Taxation**

**Dr Sarah Wollaston:** [\[43494\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the Government's plans are for the implementation of the soft drinks industry levy; and if he will publish a timetable for the implementation of that levy.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Soft Drinks Industry Levy consultation was launched on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2016. At the Budget in March, the Government announced that it would consult on the Levy during the summer and legislate in Finance Bill 2017, for implementation from April 2018. This timetable remains in place.

**■ Sugar: Taxation**

**Alex Cunningham:** [\[43779\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has undertaken an impact assessment on the cumulative effect of introducing a general sugar tax in addition to the soft drinks industry levy.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Soft Drinks Industry Levy is a bold step towards tackling childhood obesity. It is a signal to the food and drink industry that the Government is willing to take action to help cut sugar intakes.

Public health experts have widely identified sugar-sweetened soft drinks as a specific, major factor in childhood obesity. There are no current plans to extend the levy to other foods or drinks, or introduce a general sugar tax.

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

**Margaret Hodge:** [\[44325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will publish a list of all secondees to his Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

My department has not had any secondees in the last three financial years from any of the named companies requested.

However, my department has had a total of seven secondees from other consulting firms. Five of the seven roles were to help advise on specific housing and property issues, including three roles on the Private Rented Sector Taskforce. One other secondee is working in my Implementation Unit implementing reviews on housing and planning, and one secondee was working as a Crown Premises Fire Inspector. Only three of the seven secondees are still working in DCLG.

**■ Communities and Local Government: UK Withdrawal from EU**

**Karl McCartney:** [\[44243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department has taken to prepare for the UK to leave the EU since 23 June 2016; and what further such steps his Department plans to take in the remainder of 2016.

**Sajid Javid:**

The Department for Exiting the European Union has responsibility for overseeing preparations for the withdrawal of the UK from the EU and conducting these withdrawal negotiations in support of the Prime Minister. In doing this it is working very closely with other government departments, including DCLG, and a wide range of other interested parties.

**■ Community Relations: North East**

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[45075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to support the work of anti-racism groups in North East England and celebrate the support shown for migrants and refugees in Newcastle following the vote to leave the EU.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Government welcomes local community initiatives that tackle hate crime and intolerance. In July, we published the cross-Government Hate Crime Action Plan in which we committed Government to tackling all forms of hate crime including race hate crime. We are currently supporting True Vision, an on-line hate crime reporting site, as well as the Anne Frank Trust and Streetwise, who work in schools to tackle prejudice

and intolerance. In addition, the Hate Crime Action Plan referred to 'community-led solutions' - a new initiative funded by the Home Office to explore innovative ways in which communities in the North East would be eligible to apply once the scheme is launched.

#### ■ Council Tax

**Karin Smyth:** [\[44650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if his Department will take steps to provide additional support for people who need to dispose of a property after the death of a relative by reviewing existing council tax liabilities.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Government provides an exemption from council tax for up to 6 months to people who have inherited properties which are left empty due to the death of the occupier. This applies after the granting of probate, or after letters of administration have been signed. Local authorities additionally have discretion to offer discounts of between 0% and 100% for empty homes. Authorities can also defer payment of council tax until the proceeds of a sale are made available.

The Government has no plans to change this support.

#### ■ Council Tax: Increases

**Mr Christopher Chope:** [\[45037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, which local authorities in England have held referendums seeking increases in council tax beyond the maximum threshold in each of the last three years.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Over the last three years, one local authority held a referendum to increase council tax beyond the threshold. A referendum was held on Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner's proposal to increase council tax.

**Mr Christopher Chope:** [\[45063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the Government's policy is on the maximum threshold for council tax increases in England in (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21 and (c) 2021-22.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Government is committed to maintaining the right of local electorates to approve or veto excessive council tax rises in a local referendum. Decisions on the threshold are made annually as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement.

#### ■ Fracking: Lancashire

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[44022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 25 July 2016 to Question 42908, for what reasons he does not plan to release the

Planning Inspector's report before issuing his decision on those appeals; and if he will make it his policy to publish that report in advance of the decision being issued.

**Gavin Barwell:**

As is normal practice, the Inspector's report on the Cuadrilla Appeals for sites around Preston and Roseacre and Wharles in Lancashire, will be published alongside the decision.

## ■ Homelessness

**Richard Burden:**

[\[44128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the causes of the increase in homelessness in 2015; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Homelessness is rarely a housing issue alone. The causes are varied and driven by issues such as health, education, justice, welfare, and employment.

That is why the work we have undertaken supports action across these. For example, we invested £5 million in the world's first homelessness Social Impact Bond, run by the Greater London Authority to turn round the lives around of 830 of London's most entrenched rough sleepers. Over half have achieved accommodation, employment or reconnection outcomes.

In addition we have invested £15 million to improve outcomes for young people through the Fair Chance Fund. This funding is turning around the lives of around 1,900 18 to 25 year olds with complex and overlapping needs, by supporting them into accommodation, education, training and employment.

Since 2010 we have invested over £500 million to enable local authorities and the voluntary sector to support those vulnerable and at risk of homelessness.

We have protected the homelessness prevention funding local authorities receive, totalling £315 million by 2019-20. This builds on our Spending Review commitment to increase central government funding to £139 million over the next four years. We are working with homelessness organisations to consider all options, including legislation, to ensure those at risk of homelessness get earlier and more effective support.

## ■ Homelessness: Social Rented Housing

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[44412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, when he plans to respond to the concluding observations and recommendations of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the UK's sixth periodic report in relation to social housing supply and homelessness; and if he will make a statement.

**Gavin Barwell:**

In paragraph 73 of the UN recommendations, the UN requested that the UK submits its next period report under the Covenant (inclusive of a response to all the

recommendations from this year's examination) by 30 June 2021; it would therefore not be appropriate for me to pre-empt this report by anticipating what we, or indeed a future UK government in 2021, might say.

This government remains committed to tackling homelessness. That is why we have increased central government funding for homelessness programmes to £139 million over the Spending Review period. We have also maintained and protected homelessness prevention funding for local authorities through the local government finance settlement totalling £315 million by 2019/20. In the Budget we announced further commitments to prevent homelessness including £100 million to provide at least 2,000 places for vulnerable people to enable independent living; £10 million to support initiatives to prevent and reduce rough sleeping; and an increase from £5 million to £10 million to launch a Social Impact Bond to support the most entrenched rough sleepers off the streets.

This will be supported by the government's broader commitments to increase the overall supply of housing. We remain committed to building more affordable housing, including shared ownership. More than 277,000 affordable homes have been delivered since April 2010, and the housing budget has been doubled to more than £20 billion to support the largest housing programme by any government since the 1970s, which includes £8 billion to deliver over 400,000 affordable homes.

#### ■ Homelessness: Unemployment

Charlotte Leslie:

[\[44180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of helping to provide a legal address at which homeless people can register better to enable them to apply for jobs.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

One person without a home is one too many. That is why the Government has increased central investment to tackle homelessness over the next four years to £139 million, including a new £10 million fund to support innovative ways to prevent and reduce rough sleeping, and a new £10 million Social Impact Bond to support rough sleepers with the most complex needs. This will build on the success of the world's first homelessness Social Impact Bond in London, which aimed to turn around the lives of 830 entrenched rough sleepers. So far, over half have achieved positive outcomes, including employment outcomes.

Employment can be an important part of an individual's recovery from a homelessness crisis, and homeless people can use addresses at hostels and day centres to make job applications.



## ■ Housing: Construction

**Justin Tomlinson:**

[\[44652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will take steps to ensure that planning permission for major housing developments can only be granted if the application includes the appropriate provision of green space for sporting and recreation use.

**Gavin Barwell:**

The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that local planning policies should take account of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provision. It is for local councils to apply these policies when determining applications for housing development, taking into account existing provision for sport and recreation in the area, and other material considerations.

## ■ Local Authorities: Land

**Mims Davies:**

[\[44752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many councils do not currently have a five-year land supply.

**Gavin Barwell:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* We do not hold information centrally on how many local planning authorities do not have a five-year land supply for housing. A local planning authority's five-year land supply position changes frequently and is subject to market conditions. The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to keep their land supply under regular review.

## ■ Local Authorities: Public Consultation

**Mr Christopher Chope:**

[\[45036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department has issued on whether responses from residents to public consultation questionnaires issued by local authorities should be anonymous or identified by name and address.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Department for Communities and Local Government does not publish guidance on local authority consultations. However, Local authorities should have regard to the rules on data protection when dealing with any personal information about residents, including personal information contained on consultation responses.

## ■ Local Government Finance

**Mr Christopher Chope:**

[\[45034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate the Government has made of the (a) amount and (b) proportion that net revenue expenditure by local authorities will increase in England in (i) 2017-18, (ii) 2018-19 and (iii) 2019-20.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Government does not estimate local authority net revenue expenditure. Local authorities estimate how they intend to spend their money for the next financial year and submit this information in Revenue Account (RA) budget returns. The returns from all 443 local authorities in England are compiled by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Revenue Outturn statistics published by DCLG at the end of the financial year show how local authorities actually allocate their expenditure. The latest information on the amount of net revenue expenditure estimated by local authorities in England is for 2016/17. It is available here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/532932/RA\\_Budget\\_2016-17\\_Statistical\\_Release.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/532932/RA_Budget_2016-17_Statistical_Release.pdf)

Local authority core spending power provides an estimate of the amount of funding available to local authorities. Local authority core spending power figures setting out indicative figures for the potential income from core components for 2016/17-2019/20 are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/core-spending-power-final-local-government-finance-settlement-2016-to-2017>

**■ Non-domestic Rates: Dorset****Mr Christopher Chope:**[\[45035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate the Government has made of the potential annual proportion increase in yield from business rates available for local authorities in Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth in (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21 and (c) 2021-22.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Department does not estimate future yields from business rates for specific local authorities. National level estimates of yield from business rates are available from the Office for Budget Responsibility.

**■ Planning Permission****Steve McCabe:**[\[44488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what recent steps his Department has taken to encourage local authorities to consider minor and major planning applications with equal priority.

**Gavin Barwell:**

Every planning application should be determined in a timely and efficient manner, irrespective of the scale of the proposed development. We took powers in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to enable us to extend to non-major planning applications the successful performance regime for major applications that has been running, which has seen the proportion of major applications determined on time rising from 57 per cent in July to September 2012, the quarter in which the performance regime was first

announced, to 82 per cent in the most recent quarter. We have also announced our intention to tighten the Planning Guarantee for minor applications, with the applicant being eligible for a refund of their fee after 13 weeks instead of the current 26 weeks.

#### ■ Planning Permission: Costs

**Mr Hugo Swire:** [\[44219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate his Department has made of the cost of retrospective planning applications to local councils in (a) Devon and (b) the UK in the last five years.

**Gavin Barwell:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* The Department does not collect the data requested.

**Mr Hugo Swire:** [\[44220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what proportion of the cost of a retrospective planning application is covered by the (a) applicant and (b) local authority.

**Gavin Barwell:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* The Department does not collect the data requested.

**Mr Hugo Swire:** [\[44221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether he plans to change the proportion of the cost of retrospective planning applications currently paid by developers.

**Gavin Barwell:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* A nationally set fee is payable where a retrospective planning application is submitted to regularise a breach of planning control, to support the council with the costs of determining the application. We are clear that unauthorised development is unacceptable and unfair to the majority who abide by the rules. However, the retrospective planning application process is there to give those who have made a genuine mistake the opportunity to rectify the situation. We have no plans to review the way fees are calculated for retrospective applications at this point.

#### ■ Shops: Public Lavatories

**Karl Turner:** [\[44780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government is taking to encourage business owners to provide accessible toilets for customers.

**Gavin Barwell:**

Persons carrying out building work to non domestic buildings need to comply with the requirements of Part M (Access to and use of buildings) of the Building Regulations. Statutory guidance on how to comply with these requirements is set out in Approved Document M and contains detailed guidance on accessible toilet and sanitary provision in buildings other than dwellings.

The Government also continues to support the provision of "Changing Places Toilets" which provide facilities for severely disabled people, most recently by funding the development of a website which provides detailed guidance on the location of and facilities contained in "Changing Places" toilets facilities.

**■ Social Rented Housing: EU Nationals****Deidre Brock:**[\[44098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Answer of 7 July 2015 to Question 5576, on social rented housing: EU nationals, whether it remains his Department's policy to introduce a four-year residency requirement for EU migrants following the decision of the UK to leave the EU.

**Gavin Barwell:**

The Government remains of the view that social housing should be for those with a strong connection to the local community. Statutory guidance issued in December 2013 already ensures that only people who have lived in their area for at least two years can apply to their council for social housing.

We are considering whether to go further and adopt a stronger residency test by extending this to four years.

**■ Tenant Services Authority****Rushanara Ali:**[\[44077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Answer of 3 May 2016 to Question 35113, what powers his Department can exercise if the Social Housing Regulator is failing to protect tenants from serious detriment by registered providers.

**Gavin Barwell:**

The Social Housing Regulator may use its enforcement powers if a Registered Provider of Social Housing has failed to meet a regulatory standard. This includes ensuring that their stock is adequately maintained and there is no serious detriment to their tenants.

However, if tenants of Registered Providers are not satisfied with the way the Regulator has handled their case, they will have to access the Regulator's complaint process. This involves complaining directly to the Regulator, the Regulator will reply within 20 working days. If the tenants are unhappy with the way their complaint was handled at the first stage, they can escalate their complaint to the Regulator's legal service team as an independent review of the original complaint. If they are still unhappy with the

response, then they can refer their complaint to the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution, who will carry out an independent review.

If following the Regulator's complaint procedure they are still unhappy, they can ask their MP to take their complaints to the independent Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman to review the handling of their complaint. Full details of how to make a complaint against the Regulator can be found on the Homes and Communities Agency's website.

## ■ Travellers: Caravan Sites

**Maggie Throup:**

[44038]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to increase the powers of local authorities to (a) remove travellers camped illegally on public land and (b) recover site clean-up costs from those illegally settled on public land.

**Gavin Barwell:**

Local authorities and the police have a range of strong powers that enable them to take action against unauthorised encampments and developments. Ministers sent a summary of these powers to all council leaders, Police and Crime Commissioners and Police Chief Constables in March 2015:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/418139/150326\\_Dealing\\_with\\_illegal\\_and\\_unauthorised\\_encampments\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418139/150326_Dealing_with_illegal_and_unauthorised_encampments_-_final.pdf)

The government is open to suggestions for how enforcement could be strengthened and continues to keep this issue under review.

## CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Arts: Yorkshire and the Humber

**Judith Cummins:**

[43899]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what Government funding schemes are available to member trusts for restoration of cultural venues in Yorkshire.

**Matt Hancock:**

Various grant schemes are available for the restoration of cultural venues in Yorkshire. The Heritage Lottery Fund have several schemes which can be used for restoring cultural venues, including their Heritage Grants, Sharing Heritage, and Townscape Heritage, amongst others. From the Arts Council, these include Grants For The Arts, Small Capital Grants, and Large Capital Grants. Historic England also give grants to properties on the Heritage at Risk Register, and these can be used for the restoration of cultural venues.

### ■ Broadband

**Stephen Timms:**

[906189]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps her Department has taken to roll out superfast broadband; and if she will make a statement.

**Matt Hancock:**

Superfast broadband rollout continues at pace, with coverage currently around 91% and on track to reach 95% by the end of 2017.

■ **Broadband: Rural Areas**

**Luke Hall:**

[\[43549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what support her Department is providing to support the development and innovation of (a) pure fibre and (b) FTTP broadband delivery technology in rural areas.

**Matt Hancock:**

Through the Government's investment of over £780 million, superfast broadband is now available to 90% of homes and businesses in the UK, compared to 45% in 2010. By the end of 2017 it will be available to 95% of homes and businesses. An increasing proportion of the additional coverage to be delivered in rural areas will be provided through fibre to the premises (FTTP).

■ **Broadcasting: Scotland**

**Chris Law:**

[\[906193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with Ministers of the Scottish Government on the devolution of responsibility for broadcasting policy.

**Matt Hancock:**

Broadcasting is a reserved matter, in line with the recommendations of the Smith Commission. As Lord Smith has said, the government is delivering the Smith Commission recommendations in full.

■ **Children: Obesity**

**Liz McInnes:**

[\[44972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what the role of her Department was in drafting the Government's childhood obesity plan.

**Tracey Crouch:**

The childhood obesity plan was developed and drafted by Department of Health with input from departments across Government, including the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. DCMS will continue to work with DH on the implementation of the actions within the plan.

■ **Gaming Machines**

**Ronnie Cowan:**

[\[906194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to tackle problems associated with the rise in availability of Fixed Odds Betting Terminals.

**Tracey Crouch:**

The Government tightened controls on FOBTs last year, and we are continuing to monitor developments. The next Triennial review of gaming machines will look closely at all the evidence on this issue.

**Internet: Data Protection****Chi Onwurah:**[\[43890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the (a) adequacy and (b) effectiveness of regulatory frameworks related to algorithms for (i) Facebook, (ii) Google and (iii) other online platforms.

**Chi Onwurah:**[\[43891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the (a) adequacy and (b) effectiveness of the level of consumer protection against misuse of consumer data in algorithm-driven applications; and what assessment she has made of the potential merits of ensuring that consumers are able to see how their data is used by such applications.

**Chi Onwurah:**[\[43892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the ease with which people can view algorithms which use their data in the public sector.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Government Office for Science published an evaluation report on Distributed Ledger Technology: beyond block chain on 19 January 2016, which provides an assessment. In addition, the report recommends 8 actions for government to maximise the opportunities and reduce the risks of this new technology. A copy of the report is available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/492972/gs-16-1-distributed-ledger-technology.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/492972/gs-16-1-distributed-ledger-technology.pdf)

Consumers' rights with regard to the collection, processing and disclosure of their personal data are governed by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). The DPA provides rights for individuals in respect of their personal data, including rights in relation to automated decision-making, the right of subject access, the right to prevent processing likely to cause damage or distress compensation for failure to comply with certain of the Act's requirements, and the right to have data rectified, blocked, erased or otherwise destroyed in certain circumstances.

There have been significant advances in digital technology since the DPA came into force nearly 20 years ago. The Government is reviewing the current regulatory framework to ensure it is fit for purpose for the digital age.

**■ Mobile Phones: Aerials**

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[44955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of moving from the current system of rooftop valuation for mobile network base stations to a no scheme valuation model on (a) the supply of sites, (b) the revenues received by Newcastle City Council and other public sector organisations from rooftop rentals and (c) mobile phone operator profits.

**Matt Hancock:**

Effective working relationships between network operators and landowners, including avoiding costly and time-consuming litigation, will remain in the interests of both parties. The reforms will not be retrospective and the new valuation basis will have no impact on existing agreements.

The Government's impact assessment on the reformed Code can be found here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/407579/Annex\\_4\\_Electronic\\_Communications\\_Code\\_Reform\\_IA\\_-\\_DCMS075.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/407579/Annex_4_Electronic_Communications_Code_Reform_IA_-_DCMS075.pdf).

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[44956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with the Department for Communities and Local Government on how to replace the funding potentially lost to public sector organisations for rooftop rental as a result of the changes to rooftop valuation proposed in the Digital Economy Bill.

**Matt Hancock:**

Government remains committed to a Code that is fit for a digital economy, delivers improved coverage and connectivity for the UK, and greater investment in UK infrastructure. The revised Electronic Communications Code has been developed in discussion with colleagues across Government including the Department of Communities and Local Government.

**■ Olympic Games: Brazil**

**Gareth Johnson:** [\[906192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the reasons for the success of Team GB at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

**Tracey Crouch:**

Team GB's historic medal haul in Rio is an amazing achievement and our athletes have made the country incredibly proud.

Our greatest Olympic performance in a century owed much to UK Sport's 'no compromise' approach and an increase in funding. It is crucial that this funding was invested strategically in the right sports, the right athletes and the right support programmes.



We must not forget the crucial role the British public has played in making us one of the leading Olympic and Paralympic nations in the world with the continued support the public has given our top athletes through the National Lottery.

I am confident that this success will continue at the current Paralympics, and through to Tokyo in 2020.

## ■ Sports: Drugs

Christina Rees:

[\[906196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with UK Anti-Doping and its international partners on doping in sport.

**Tracey Crouch:**

I have regular meetings with UK Anti-Doping, as well as the UK's international partners, to discuss a range of anti-doping matters. The most effective way to combat doping in sport is through a collaborative approach where Governments work in partnership with the sports movement, the World Anti-Doping Agency and other National Doping Organisations.

## ■ Sportsgrounds: Disability

Mrs Flick Drummond:

[\[45033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of wheelchair access at sports venues.

**Tracey Crouch:**

I refer my honourable friend to my answer to question 44837, answered on 7th September.

## ■ Tourism: World Heritage Sites

Jo Churchill:

[\[906191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to support tourism through increasing the number of UNESCO-recognised World Heritage sites in the UK.

**Tracey Crouch:**

World Heritage Sites are internationally recognised. As a result, they attract visitors from near and far.

In July, the Gorham Cave Complex in Gibraltar became the UK's 30th World Heritage Site. I very much hope to see the Lake District become our 31st in 2017.

The Prime Minister's Tourism Action Plan sets out how we are working to make it easier for visitors to travel around our country and discover these sites for themselves.

**DEFENCE****■ Armed Forces Covenant**

**Justin Tomlinson:** [44796]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many companies have signed the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Armed Forces Corporate Covenant was subsumed into the Armed Forces Covenant in January 2016. As at 2 September 2016 a total of 1,156 organisations have signed the Armed Forces Covenant. This total includes those organisations who signed the previous Corporate Covenant. Details of all Armed Forces Covenant signatories and their pledges are available on-line at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/armed-forces-covenant>.

**■ Armed Forces Covenant Reference Group: Northern Ireland**

**Danny Kinahan:** [44297]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with the Northern Ireland Executive on the appointment of a representative from Northern Ireland to the Armed Forces Covenant Reference Group.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Armed Forces Covenant is making a real difference in Northern Ireland, where it is enshrined in law. Funding bids have been more successful there than in any other part of the UK - grants include £450,000 to Combat Stress to provide mental health support to veterans.

There is an open invitation to the Northern Ireland Executive to join the Covenant Reference Group (CRG). The Government wishes them to take a full and active part in the group, alongside the other Devolved Administrations. Whilst the Northern Ireland Executive has not yet put forward a representative for the CRG, much useful and effective engagement takes place at Executive departmental level.

**■ Armed Forces Day**

**Sir Jeffrey M. Donaldson:** [44988]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish the (a) criteria by which applicants are selected and (b) names of applicants who applied to host Armed Forces Day in 2017.

**Mike Penning:**

Guidance on applying to host the Armed Forces Day National Event is available from the Ministry of Defence's Ceremonial Events and Commemorations Team whose contact details are on the Armed Forces Day Website: [www.armedforcesday.org.uk](http://www.armedforcesday.org.uk).

Applications typically take the form of a letter from the Local Authority Leader /Chief Executive, to the Defence Minister in the House of Lords (Earl Howe). This letter is

assessed to gauge the strength of the applicant's argument as to why they should be selected, and the quality of their proposals for the event. In addition, the following aspects are considered:

Proximity to previous national events - there would be an aspiration to stage the event in a different region of the country to previous events, in order to capture a fresh local audience.

Maturity of any existing annual event hosted by the applicant.

Availability of a suitable venue and infrastructure within the applicant's jurisdiction.

Support of local populace for the Armed Forces.

The applicant's capacity to administer an event of equivalent scale and significance.

Financial resource available, and plans to secure adequate sponsorship.

While it would be inappropriate to name the authorities that lost out to Liverpool City Council in the process of selecting the hosts for the National Armed Forces Day event in 2017, we can confirm that no formal bid was received from any local authority in Ulster.

**Sir Jeffrey M. Donaldson:**

[\[44990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the deadline for the receipt of applications for Armed Forces Day 2018 will be.

**Mike Penning:**

Applications for the National Event are accepted at any time, though should typically be submitted by the end of March in the preceding year, so March 2017 for the 2018 event.

#### ■ **Armed Forces Day: Northern Ireland**

**Sir Jeffrey M. Donaldson:**

[\[44989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department asked local authorities in Northern Ireland to apply to host Armed Forces Day in 2017.

**Mike Penning:**

It is a matter for local authorities to decide whether to apply to host Armed Forces Day in 2017.

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### ■ Armed Forces: Children

**Mrs Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** [\[44597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many children in the UK have at least one parent serving in the armed forces.

**Mark Lancaster:**

This information is not held in the format requested

### ■ Armed Forces: Germany

**Clive Lewis:** [\[44890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many serving personnel will return from Germany as part of the planned rebasing in each year to 2020.

**Mike Penning:**

The number of serving personnel that will return from Germany as part of the planned rebasing in each year to 2020 is shown below.

YEAR	NUMBER OF SERVICE PERSONNEL
2016	1,270
2017	120
2018	0
2019	4,000
2020	20 (drawdown)

### ■ Armed Forces: Pay

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[44267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans his Department has to review the eligibility for the operational allowance for service personnel.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[45090\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to end payment of the operational allowance to armed forces personnel serving in South Sudan.

**Mark Lancaster:**

We review eligible locations every six months as standard but Ministers have no plans to change the qualifying criteria.

## ■ Armed Forces: Pensions

Kirsten Oswald:

[44002]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many service personnel in each of the armed forces were affected by the increase in the qualifying age for an armed forces pension.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Just over 90% (155,511) of all Armed Forces personnel transferred to the new Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2015 on 1 April 2015 and were therefore affected by the change in the qualifying age. For those who had to move to the new pension scheme it was agreed that those pension benefits already earned in existing schemes, up to the implementation date of the new scheme would be retained. The numbers of affected personnel, by Service, are provided below:

ROYAL NAVY	31,101
Army	92,588
Royal Air Force	31,822

The change of qualifying age was set out in detailed communications material published in the run up to, and following, the introduction of the Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2015. This change followed a review carried out by Lord Hutton in 2011 which concluded that all public sector workforces should change their pension ages for new schemes to reflect that people are living longer. The Armed Forces, along with other uniformed public sector schemes, gained agreement that this should be set at age 60.

## ■ Army: Training

Danny Kinahan:

[44104]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the rationale was for his Department's decision to allow soldiers who have completed only Phase One training to be called up to perform frontline tasks.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The rationale behind the decision to plan to use Army Phase 1 trained Regular and Reserve personnel in response to crises within the UK was set out in the Written Ministerial Statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Michael Fallon) on 29 June 2016 (HCWS49).

### **Attachments:**

1. Strategic Defence and Security Review [Hansard Extract 29 June 2016 HCWS49.docx]

## ■ Defence: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[43697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what proportion of the defence budget was spent on single-source contracts in 2015-16.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) spent £8.8 billion on single source contracts in the Financial Year 2015-16. This represents 25% of the Defence budget for that year.

The MOD regularly publishes statistics on defence expenditure and the latest data can be found at the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/548285/Commentary\\_relating\\_to\\_Finance-Economics\\_Annual\\_Statistical\\_Bulletin\\_Trade-Industry-Contracts\\_2016-a.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/548285/Commentary_relating_to_Finance-Economics_Annual_Statistical_Bulletin_Trade-Industry-Contracts_2016-a.pdf)

## ■ Islamic State: Military Intervention

Clive Lewis:

[\[43647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on how many sorties flown by RAF aircraft engaged on Operation SHADER in Syria and Iraq have (a) Brimstone missiles, (b) Hellfire missiles and (c) Paveway guided bombs been released; and how many of each such weapon type have been released in Syria and Iraq to date as part of Operation SHADER.

**Mike Penning:**

It is difficult to correlate the number of sorties and weapon types utilised as one sortie can often constitute multiple weapons releases, possibly of different munition types. The following table details the total number of sorties, and those with weapons released, as of 25 August 2016. All UK strikes, in support of the Coalition, are undertaken as part of a rigorous targeting process, which assesses the situation before, during and after a strike to ensure adherence to the Law of Armed Conflict. It should be noted that frequently sorties will be flown in Syria with weapons released that may also have had weapons released in Iraq.

AIRCRAFT	SORTIES FLOWN		SORTIES FLOWN WITH WEAPONS RELEASED	
	Syria <sup>[1]</sup>	Iraq	Syria	
Typhoon	859	82	303	13
Tornado	2,370	298	506	37
Reaper	1,503	547	234	29

Sorties can be conducted without weapons releases for multiple reasons, varying from the provision of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance in order to support forces on the ground, to development of future striking opportunities.

The number of each weapon type released is as follows:

AIRCRAFT	WEAPON TYPE RELEASED	LOCATION OF RELEASE	
		Iraq	Syria
FGR4 Typhoon	Paveway <sup>[2]</sup>	551	38
GR4 Tornado	DMS Brimstone	185	23
GR4 Tornado	Paveway <sup>[2]</sup>	685	63
MQ9 Reaper	Hellfire	423	45

<sup>[1]</sup> All Syrian sorties will have originated in Iraqi airspace.

<sup>[2]</sup> Includes all variants of Paveway munitions.

#### ■ Middle East: Unmanned Air Vehicles

**Richard Burden:**

[\[45010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish the rate of UK Reaper drone strikes in Iraq and Syria by month since the mission was launched; and if he will make a statement.

**Mike Penning:**

The number of RAF Reaper strikes in Iraq and Syria since November 2014 is as follows:

		NUMBER OF STRIKES	
Year	Month	Iraq	Syria
	2014	November	12 0
December	9	0	
	2015	January	14 0
February	7	0	
March	12	0	
April	13	0	
May	19	0	
June	10	0	
July	12	0	
August	15	0	

		NUMBER OF STRIKES	
September	21	0	
October	8	0	
November	17	0	
December	9	1	
	2016	January	8 6
February	1	3	
March	3	2	
April	2	2	
May	5	1	
June	23	1	
July	6	4	
August	9	2	

These strike numbers are constantly reviewed and updated by the Coalition to ensure records are as complete and accurate as possible. As such, past and future statements regarding statistics may differ to those given here.

**Richard Burden:** [\[45011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the UK is currently using armed Reaper drones outside of Iraq and Syria; and if he will make a statement.

**Mike Penning:**

The UK's Remotely Piloted Aircraft System - Reaper, currently operates in the Middle East in support of the Iraqi Government and Coalition allies' on-going operations to combat the threat of Daesh. I am unable to provide further information on the deployment of Reaper as its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

#### ■ Military Aircraft

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[43676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department spent on (a) refurbishment of and (b) operations by the Command Support Air Transport Fleet in each of the last 12 months.



**Harriett Baldwin:**

The Command Support Air Transport (CSAT) fleet managed by 32 (The Royal) Squadron comprises four BAe 146 aircraft and one contractor owned, but RAF operated, Agusta Westland AW109SP helicopter supplied under a £10.6 million five year contract. The BAe 146 aircraft have not undergone any major refurbishment in the 12 month period in question.

In addition to the AW109SP contract, for the period July 2015 to June 2016 operating costs for the CSAT fleet are attached.

**Attachments:**

1. Operating Costs for CSAT Fleet  
[20160908\_43676\_Kevan\_Jones\_MOD\_Operating\_Costs\_for\_the\_CSAT\_Fleet.docx]

**■ Military Intervention: Casualties**

Kirsten Oswald:

[44003]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what procedures his Department has in place for the regular receipt of information on non-combatant casualties arising from US airstrikes which are conducted from UK airbases.

**Mike Penning:**

Airstrikes from UK airbases are not a routine occurrence. The Secretary of State would approve such a request only if satisfied that the operation was compliant with UK and international law. Individual permission is granted for each operation. Similarly, battle damage assessments of such operations are shared with the UK on a case-by-case basis.

**■ Nuclear Power: Accidents**

Caroline Lucas:

[44105]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 2 March 2016 to Question 28220, which areas have locally determined arrangements for issuing iodine tablets in the event of a radiation emergency involving an operational nuclear reactor; to which nuclear reactors those arrangements are linked in (a) the UK, (b) other countries and (c) areas that have a pre-disposition to households in the detailed planning area; what other arrangements his Department has in place for issuing iodine tablets in areas that do not have pre-distribution to households; and if he will make a statement.

**Mike Penning:**

Locally determined arrangements for issuing stable iodine tablets in the event of a radiation emergency involving the operating reactor of a nuclear powered warship/submarine are in place at: HMNB Clyde, HMNB Devonport, HMNB Portsmouth, Port of Southampton, BAE Systems at Barrow-in-Furness, Portland Port, Loch Goil and Loch Ewe.

Arrangements for responding to radiation emergencies involving operational nuclear reactors in other countries are a matter for the country concerned.

Some pre-distribution of stable iodine tablets to households in the off-site emergency planning zone takes place at Loch Ewe, Portland Port and BAE Systems Barrow-in-Furness

The arrangements for issuing stable iodine tablets in areas that do not have pre-distribution to households are determined by the relevant Local Authority having responsibility for the off-site plan. At some locations the department supports the arrangements through the provision of local Ministry of Defence personnel to assist in the distribution of stable iodine tablets.

■ **South Sudan: Armed Conflict**

**Stephen Doughty:** [\[44909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the effect of the recent violence and instability in South Sudan on the deployment plan of British armed forces as part of the UN peacekeeping mission in that country.

**Mike Penning:**

Following the recent instability in South Sudan, we reviewed our deployment and judged that we should proceed as planned. We are now assessing with UN leads and the Government of South Sudan the timelines for the deployment of our forces. We have already deployed a small team to support the UN Mission in South Sudan and to pave the way for further UK military personnel.

■ **Veterans: Mental Illness**

**Stephen Gethins:** [\[44139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what support his Department or other bodies provide to help veterans experiencing mental health difficulties as a result of military service.

**Mark Lancaster:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 27 June 2016 to Question 40418 to the hon. Member for Liverpool, Wavertree (Luciana Berger).

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-06-13/40418/>

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**Attachments:**

1. Veterans: Mental Health Services [Hansard Extract 27 June 2016 40418.docx]

**EDUCATION**■ **Arts: GCSE****Gloria De Piero:**[\[43796\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect on uptake at secondary schools of (a) art, (b) drama, (c) music and (d) other arts subjects at GCSE of the introduction of the Ebacc target for GCSE attainment.

**Nick Gibb:**

The numbers and percentages of pupils in English state-funded schools entering GCSEs in art, drama, music and other arts subjects each academic year are published as part of the GCSE and equivalent results statistical first release.[1]

Whilst JCQ exam entry data[2] shows a fall in GCSE entries to arts subjects this year, entries to arts subjects increased between 2013 and 2015.[3] The proportion of pupils in state-funded schools entering at least one GCSE in an arts subject has increased since the EBacc was first introduced, rising from 45.8% in 2011 to 49.6% in 2015.[4]

On average, pupils in state-funded schools enter nine GCSEs and equivalent qualifications, rising to ten for more able pupils.[5] As the EBacc covers seven GCSEs, or eight for those pupils taking triple science, there continues to be room to study other subjects.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-gcses-key-stage-4>

[2] <http://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/gcses>

[3] <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-gcses-key-stage-4>

[4]

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/473178/EBacc\\_and\\_non-EBacc\\_subject\\_entries\\_and\\_achievement.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/473178/EBacc_and_non-EBacc_subject_entries_and_achievement.pdf)

[5] <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=phase&geographic=all&region=0&phase=secondary&for=Key%20stage%204%20performance&basedon=Exam%20entries&show=All%20pupils&&schoolTypeFilter=allSchools>

■ **Children: Day Care****Conor McGinn:**[\[45020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding per head is received for childcare in (a) St Helens North, (b) Merseyside and (c) the UK in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

Local authorities in Merseyside (including St Helens) currently (2016-17) receive the following funding rate per child per hour from central Government for delivering the two year old and three and four year old entitlements:

LA's	THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLD ENTITLEMENT	TWO YEAR OLD ENTITLEMENT
St Helens	£3.61	£4.87
Halton	£3.54	£4.93
Knowsley	£4.49	£4.87
Liverpool	£5.24	£4.87
Sefton	£4.03	£4.87
Wirral	£4.02	£4.87

In 2016-17 the national average hourly rate paid by the Department of Education to local authorities in England is £4.56 for three and four year olds and £5.09 for two year olds. This includes the early years pupil premium.

The figures given above relate to England. Childcare policy for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is devolved.

We are currently consulting on proposals to change the way we fund free childcare and early years education. Our consultation can be found at:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/early-years-funding/eynff>

#### ■ Children's Centres: Expenditure

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [44978]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much her Department has spent on children's centres in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [45052]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of how much her Department will spend on children's centres in each of the next five years; and if she will make a statement.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

Local authorities have a duty under the Childcare Act 2006 to ensure sufficient children's centres to meet the needs of local families. Local authorities must meet their statutory duties on children's centres from funding that forms part of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Business Rates Retention Scheme. In addition, other government funding, including that for public health, adult skills training and troubled families may also be used locally to support services delivered wholly, or in part, through children's centres.

Since April 2010 local authorities have reported actual and planned expenditure on children's centres (regardless of the funding source) through annual Section 251 returns. This information is published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/expenditure->

[on-education-children-and-young-peoples-services-academic-year-2011-to-2012](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/section-251-materials) and:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/section-251-materials>

■ **Department for Education: Consultants**

**Margaret Hodge:** [44328]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will publish a list of all secondees to her Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The Department for Education hosted four secondments from KPMG in 2013/14. All four individuals were seconded into external assurance roles in the department's Education and Funding Agency. There were no secondments from PwC, Deloitte, Ernst and Young or any other consulting firm in 2013/14, and none from any consulting firms in 2014/15 or 2015/16.

■ **Department for Education: Living Wage**

**Frank Field:** [43504]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many people working for her Department or its executive agencies on a (a) directly employed, (b) agency or (c) outsourced basis are paid less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation; and how many of those people are employed on zero-hours contracts.

**Nick Gibb:**

All directly employed staff, agency workers and outsourced contractors who work for the Department for Education and its executive agencies are paid at least the Living Wage Foundation rate.

No staff or agency workers are employed via zero-hours contracts and only 23 of 164 outsourced contractors are employed on this basis.

■ **Extended Schools**

**Justin Tomlinson:** [43480]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on opening up school facilities to the local community for use outside the school day.

**Nick Gibb:**

Schools play an important role in supporting their local communities and often make land available in various ways for a variety of community uses alongside their core education purpose.

We support these efforts and the academy funding agreement contains a specific provision stating that "the Academy Trust must ensure that the academy is at the heart of its community, promoting community cohesion and sharing facilities with other schools and the wider community".

Decisions on making specific facilities available are for the individual school.

■ **Further Education: Calderdale**

**Craig Whittaker:** [\[43871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has for future provision of post-16 education provision in Calderdale; and whether she has received any representations on that subject from Calderdale Council.

**Robert Halfon:**

Post-16 education in Calderdale was considered within the West Yorkshire Area Review, the final steering group meeting was held on 17 June 2016. The review will deliver a further education system that meets the economic and educational needs of areas whilst also ensuring the long term sustainability of colleges to support productivity.

Calderdale Council were represented on the West Yorkshire area review steering group and played a full part in discussions and the agreement of recommendations of the review.

We will publish the report of the West Yorkshire area review, including the agreed recommendations, shortly.

■ **Further Education: Knowsley**

**Maria Eagle:** [\[43654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has of future provision of post-16 education provision in Knowsley Metropolitan Borough; and if she will make a statement.

**Robert Halfon:**

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough is included in the Liverpool City Region (LCR) area review, and is represented on the steering group by the LCR Combined Authority. The first meeting of the steering group was held on 12 May, and we expect the review to conclude in October 2016. The LCR review will include an assessment of post-16 education in each of the local authorities covered by the review, including Knowsley Metropolitan Borough.

Area reviews are aimed at delivering a further education system that meets the economic and educational needs of areas whilst also ensuring the long term sustainability of colleges to support productivity.

■ **GCE A-level: Knowsley**

**Maria Eagle:** [\[43653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that A-level provision will be available in Knowsley Metropolitan Borough by September 2017.

**Maria Eagle:** [\[43655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what future plans she has for A level provision in Knowsley Metropolitan Borough.

**Robert Halfon:**

It is essential that the young people of Knowsley have good options for their post-16 education. The Department is currently exploring options for future A level provision in Knowsley with providers, local trusts and the local authority. The goal is to attain a collaborative approach to securing excellent post-16 provision in Knowsley.

**Members: Correspondence****Mr David Winnick:**[\[44903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when she plans for the hon. Member for Walsall North to receive a reply to his letter of 1 August 2016 on behalf of a constituent concerning the teaching of mathematics.

**Nick Gibb:**

I can confirm that the Department has received the letter to which the Hon. Member refers. I have responded on behalf of the Secretary of State, and he will now have received this response.

**Pre-school Education: Finance****Amanda Solloway:**[\[44446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will ensure that the review of fair funding for early years education includes steps to close the attainment gap in children at age five.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

This Government is committed to narrowing the gap in attainment between the most disadvantaged children and their peers, including in the early years. We will be investing over £1 billion more per year by 2019-20 to fund our commitments on the early years entitlements – this includes £300 million per year from 2017-18 for a significant increase to the hourly rate paid for the two, three and four year old entitlements.

The 2014-15 Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results tell us that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development continues to increase – 66% in 2015, compared to 60% in 2014 and 52% in 2013. A higher proportion of children eligible for free school meals are achieving a good level of development – 51% in 2015 compared to 45% in 2014.

We need to continue this improvement. This is why we propose an additional needs factor in our new early years national funding formula, to channel funding towards local authorities with a higher relative proportion of children with additional needs.

The Government already provides additional funding for the most disadvantaged three- and four-year olds through the Early Years Pupil Premium. This will continue as a separate funding stream, additional to the early years national funding formula.

## ■ Pre-school Education: Teachers

Amanda Solloway: [44447]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential of the early years workforce strategy to increase recruitment and retention of early years teachers in (a) Derby North and (b) England.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The Government recognises the importance of the early years workforce in improving quality and delivering better outcomes for children. That is why we are committed to publishing an early years workforce strategy. The national strategy will set out how we will help to remove barriers to attracting, retaining and developing staff. As part of the strategy, we will look at the barriers to growing the body of graduates in the workforce in England.

The Government currently delivers early years initial teacher training places in England. We fund eligible graduates to undertake the training, and provide student bursaries. Information about training routes is available on the Get into Teaching website, available at: <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/>

## ■ Primary Education: Standards

David Morris: [43558]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance her Department has provided to teachers on the value added measure for 2016-17 for Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department published guidance, Primary School Accountability in 2016, which explains how the new progress measures will be calculated. It is available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/496158/Primary\\_school\\_accountability\\_in\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496158/Primary_school_accountability_in_2016.pdf)

This guidance will be updated in the autumn.

## ■ Schools: Finance

Jeremy Lefroy: [43987]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average cash balance held by schools in England as a percentage of their annual budget was on 31 March (a) 2015 and (b) 2016.

**Nick Gibb:**

The latest available revenue balances for Local Authority (LA) maintained schools are given in the table below. They are on an accruals rather than cash accounting basis. Equivalent figures for academies are not available as they report on academic years ending 31 August.

**Total revenue balance <sup>1</sup> as a % of total revenue income <sup>2</sup> in LA maintained schools**



DATE	%
31 March 2014	6.7
31 March 2015	8.2

Source: Consistent Financial Reporting survey

1. A school's total revenue balance is calculated from the combination of any unspent allocations and the cumulative balance of income minus expenditure from revenue funding sources during the financial year and any balances carried forward from previous years.

2. A school's total revenue income for the year includes all revenue funding available in the year as well as any additional income generated by the school. This does not include any revenue balances carried forward from previous years.

These data are published annually, most recently in the Department's Statistical Release LA and school expenditure: 2014 to 2015 financial year, available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-education-and-childrens-services-spending-2014-to-2015>

Figures for 31 March 2016 will be published in December 2016.

## ■ Schools: Sports

Liz McInnes:

[44974]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans the Government has for the distribution of funding from the soft drinks undertaking levy between schools across the UK for sporting activity.

**Edward Timpson:**

Revenue from the soft drinks industry levy will be used to double the PE and sport premium for primary schools in England from £160million a year to £320million from September 2017. This will enable schools to make further improvements to the quality and breadth of PE and sport they offer, including introducing new activities and after school clubs, and hiring specialist coaches to work alongside teachers.

Schools currently receive an average of between £8,000 and £9,000 a year from the premium, depending on pupil numbers. We are currently reviewing how best to allocate the doubled funding for September 2017 onwards, and will announce further details in due course.

## ■ Teachers: Males

Justin Tomlinson:

[43482]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to encourage the recruitment of more male teachers.

**Nick Gibb:**

We value diversity in the workforce but want the best people in the classroom, regardless of their gender; evidence shows that the quality of teaching is the single most important factor in determining how well pupils achieve.

Recent figures show that between 2011 and 2015 the number of male teachers (FTE) has increased from 115,000 to over 119,000. In 2015, 26 per cent of teachers in publicly funded schools in England were male; this proportion has remained broadly stable over time.

The proportion of entrants to primary postgraduate initial teacher training (ITT) in 2015/16 that are male is 22 per cent, an increase of 1 percentage point since 2010/11. The proportion of entrants to secondary postgraduate ITT courses in 2015/16 that are male is 40 per cent, an increase of 2 percentage points since 2010/11. 34 per cent of entrants to the School Direct (salaried) scheme in 2015/16 are male.

It is the responsibility of schools and employers to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Guidance for schools on the Act is available online.

**■ Teachers: Training****Justin Tomlinson:**[\[43671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to encourage professionals from the private sector to train as teachers.

**Nick Gibb:**

Professionals are an important source of new teachers and bring relevant knowledge and skills from their previous employment. In 2015/16, 45% of new entrants to initial teacher training (ITT) courses were aged 25 or over. To attract more potential career changers, our marketing campaign, Your Future | Their Future, uses a range of media including television advertising, national newspaper advertising and targeted digital and print communications.

We provide support specifically for career changers to make the transition to teaching, especially in the subjects where they are needed most, including:

- The School Direct (salaried) route which is specifically targeted at career changers with three years' work experience and allows them to earn a salary whilst they train to teach. We provide grant funding to schools to subsidise the costs of salary and training for trainees on this route.
- Our new flexible routes pilot from September 2016, which will allow career changers to train as maths and physics teachers. The pilot, which is delivered by 18 School Direct lead schools, will test whether schools can attract more career changers by offering flexible training routes which meet the needs of different individuals.

In addition, career changers can access extensive support that is available for all ITT candidates. This includes bursaries or scholarships of up to £30,000 tax-free; advice and guidance from the expert advisers on the Get Into Teaching Line; help with arranging

school experience to assist with their ITT application; and access to our free Train to Teach events.

Those who wish to teach secondary biology, geography, mathematics, physics, chemistry, languages or computing are also eligible for our enhanced Premier Plus service. This includes tailored advice from a dedicated adviser, including the practicalities that often affect career changers, such as childcare funding. Applicants who wish to teach these subjects can also access funded Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) courses, through which they can boost or refresh their subject knowledge.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Agricultural Products: Marketing

**Justin Tomlinson:** [\[44622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to promote farm produce made in the UK.

**George Eustice:**

The Great British Food Unit brings together experts from across government and celebrates British food, encourages innovation and increases investment and exports by opening new global markets. 2016 is the Year of British Food and is the start of a five-year campaign. An example of recent campaign activity includes Defra jointly hosting a business summit with the Institute of Directors on 5 September. The summit was attended by around 120 representatives from Small and Medium enterprises (SME), including farmers, who attended sessions on how to grow their businesses.

### ■ Agricultural Products: Origin Marking

**Justin Tomlinson:** [\[44623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to ensure that produce labelling does not suggest that produce not from British farms is from such farms.

**George Eustice:**

The Food Information to Consumers Regulation (No 1169/2011) requires labelling to adhere to the principle that the consumer should not be misled. Article 26(2) of the Regulation imposes an obligation on food business operators to include an indication of the country of origin or place of provenance of a food if the failure to give that information might mislead an average consumer taking into account the label as a whole.

The food business operator is responsible for ensuring that a brand name it uses does not mislead the consumer. It is for the relevant enforcement authorities to assess whether they consider that the use of a brand name is ambiguous or confusing for the consumer on an individual case basis.

## ■ Agriculture: Subsidies

**Mr Nigel Evans:** [\[45009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is planning to take to assist farmers in the (a) North West and (b) Ribble Valley constituency with transitional funding after the UK leaves the EU.

**George Eustice:**

Supporting our farmers and protecting the environment will form an important part of our exit from the EU. The Secretary of State is very clear this needs to be looked at carefully and is looking forward to working with industry and the public to develop new proposals that support our agricultural industry as we leave the EU.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> August, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the agricultural sector will receive the same level of funding that it would have received under Pillar 1 of the Common Agricultural Policy until the end of the Multiannual Financial Framework in 2020. Any agri-environment agreements, including those continuing beyond departure from the EU, finalised before the Autumn Statement will be fully funded, and there will be a further announcement before the Autumn Statement.

## ■ Air Pollution

**Deidre Brock:** [\[44855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she plans to maintain air pollution targets set out in the ambient air quality directive following UK withdrawal from the EU.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Air quality has improved significantly in recent decades; we are working at local, national and international levels and will continue to do more.

The UK has a long commitment to improving the environment even before the EU – the Clean Air Act was introduced in 1956 – and our strong commitment to environmental issues will continue after the UK leaves the EU.

We are now preparing to negotiate our exit. Defra will continue to ensure the right policies are in place for a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone.

Defra will be working with the Department for Exiting the EU on the UK's withdrawal and future relationship with the EU, liaising closely with other key Departments on future support for farmers, the food and drink industry and the environment. The Government will work with industry and the public to develop these new arrangements.

## ■ Coastal Areas: Flood Control

**Tim Farron:** [\[45019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much her Department has spent on coastal defences for each UK region, in each of the last five years.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Historically the Environment Agency has not collected separate financial information for the different types of flooding it reduces through investment, but by the community that benefits. Therefore the specific information requested cannot be provided.

The following table shows Government spend on all flood and coastal erosion risk management schemes by Office of National Statistics region between 2011-2012 and 2014-15.

<b>FLOOD AND COASTAL EROSION RISK MANAGEMENT (FCERM) GRANT IN AID CAPITAL SPEND (£k)</b>				
<b>ONS Region</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>
<b>East Midlands</b>	24,670	21,567	24,533	33,594
<b>East of England</b>	32,007	23,295	28,890	46,592
<b>London</b>	12,818	7,802	13,340	15,039
<b>North East</b>	17,138	23,716	11,463	13,190
<b>North West</b>	12,833	16,925	23,125	44,790
<b>South East</b>	32,241	46,467	38,801	63,320
<b>South West</b>	16,476	16,048	23,731	34,450
<b>West Midlands</b>	1,258	4,374	9,299	6,779
<b>Yorkshire and the Humber</b>	20,564	22,001	37,464	59,240

As part of the six year capital investment programme the Environment Agency has updated their financial systems and will be able to provide information on schemes for coastal erosion and sea flooding from 2015-16 onwards. Information on budget allocations for coastal erosion and sea flooding schemes between 2015 and 2021 have been provided in the following table.

**FCERM GRANT IN AID (GiA) BUDGET ALLOCATIONS FOR COASTAL EROSION AND SEA FLOODING  
SCHEMES**

<b>ONS Region</b>	<b>2015-2016 FCERM GiA (£k)</b>	<b>2016-2017 FCERM GiA (£k)</b>	<b>2017-2018 FCERM GiA (£k)</b>	<b>2018-2019 FCERM GiA (£k)</b>	<b>2019-2020 FCERM GiA (£k)</b>	<b>2020- 2021 FCERM GiA (£k)</b>
<b>East</b>	9,772	9,894	20,500	45,386	23,451	7,025

**FCERM GRANT IN AID (GIA) BUDGET ALLOCATIONS FOR COASTAL EROSION AND SEA FLOODING SCHEMES**
**Midlands**

<b>East of England</b>	38,702	15,641	14,031	27,408	20,660	21,631
<b>London</b>	9,105	9,228	5,891	12,080	15,986	18,115
<b>North East</b>	7,811	1,908	231	268	1,343	4,626
<b>North West</b>	28,291	29,365	22,209	9,730	6,030	2,918
<b>South East</b>	31,708	40,852	56,736	52,050	52,158	64,360
<b>South West</b>	11,018	8,147	16,550	8,658	5,807	23,095
<b>West Midlands</b>	13	0	0	0	0	0

<b>Yorkshire and the Humber</b>	7,772	21,146	21,046	16,483	14,054	11,237
<b>144,192</b>	<b>136,181</b>	<b>157,194</b>	<b>172,063</b>	<b>139,489</b>	<b>153,007</b>	

**■ Countryside Stewardship Scheme**

Nic Dakin: [\[44637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans she has for a further round of Countryside Stewardship schemes in (a) January 2018 and (b) other years.

**George Eustice:**

On the 13 August, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that any agri-environment agreements signed or with funding agreements in place before the Autumn Statement will be fully funded, even when those agreements continue beyond the UK's departure from the EU.

The Government will make a further announcement before the Autumn Statement about arrangements for assessing how guarantees could be given to projects that might be signed after the Autumn Statement, but while we remain a member of the EU.

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

**Margaret Hodge:** [\[44329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will publish a list of all secondees to her Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

**George Eustice:**

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has had no secondees from PwC, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, KPMG or any other consultancy firm in the last three financial years.

## ■ Fisheries

**Kerry McCarthy:** [\[44902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make it her policy to ensure that UK fisheries are managed at or below maximum sustainable yield by 2020; what steps she plans to take to maintain a sustainable fisheries policy after the UK leaves the EU; and if she will take steps to work with European partners to support sustainable fishing after the UK leaves the EU.

**George Eustice:**

Exit from the European Union presents us with an opportunity to improve the way waters in the United Kingdom's Exclusive Economic Zone are managed. No decisions have yet been taken, although the government remains committed to sustainable fisheries and the discard ban, as set out in its manifesto commitments, and will promote international cooperation in the management of shared stocks.

## ■ Iron and Steel: Manufacturing Industries

**Tom Blenkinsop:** [\[44216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the effects of dumping steel flue dust on the surrounding environment; and what guidance and regulations apply to the disposal of steel flue dust.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Defra has not undertaken an assessment of the effects of disposing of flue dust from steelworks on the environment. Impacts of direct releases to the environment from steel production are assessed on a site-specific basis during determination of applications for environmental permits. Wastes produced from flue gas abatement are disposed of through many different disposal or recovery routes. Assessment of any environmental impact of these waste operations is also done on a site-specific basis.

Flue dust produced from steelworks will be hazardous waste to be treated and disposed of at a permitted hazardous waste disposal facility. Those who produce or handle hazardous waste have a duty to ensure that the waste causes no harm or damage. Waste producers have specific responsibilities known as 'duty of care'. Those who

produce, store, collect transport or receive waste for recycling or disposal must also meet extra requirements, which are described on the [GOV.UK website](#).

## ■ Microplastics

**Justin Tomlinson:**

[44863]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make it her policy to ban the use of microbeads and microplastics in all personal care products, washing powders, household cleaners and industrial blast media.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

On 3 September the Government announced plans to ban the sale and manufacture of cosmetics and personal care products containing microbeads where these are capable of harming the marine environment. Our plans will be informed by a formal consultation later this year. At the same time, evidence will be gathered on the extent of the environmental impacts of microbeads found in other products before considering what more can be done in future to tackle other plastics, for example microfibres, which enter the marine environment.

Given the trans-boundary nature of marine litter, we will also continue to work with other countries in the Oslo and Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR) to address marine litter, including microplastics.

## ■ Milk: Prices

**David Morris:**

[43557]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make representations to the Competition and Markets Authority on investigating the price of milk at major supermarkets.

**George Eustice:**

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) as the UK's competition authority can carry out investigations where there is evidence of abuse of a dominant position or market abuse. Whilst the Government does not generally intervene in what businesses charge consumers for their goods and services we do recognise concerns about transparency and trust in the dairy supply chain. A number of supermarkets have pledged to pay a premium over and above the current market price. This is welcome and gives some respite to farmers. Some retailers have also taken steps to increase the number of dairy products they source from the UK and improve country of origin labelling on cheese.

The Groceries Code which has been in operation since 2010 and the Adjudicator which came into force in 2013 have had a positive impact on the relationship between retailers and suppliers in the dairy chain. The Code was a specific remedy recommended by the Competition Commission following an extensive investigation into the UK grocery market. A review of the Adjudicator is due this year and will include a Call for Evidence on the case for extending the Groceries Code Adjudicator's remit in the UK groceries



supply chain and, as part of this, we will look at how this can further help the farming industry.

#### ■ Poultry: Animal Welfare

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[43718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make it her policy to ensure the UK maintains the requirements of Council Directive 1999/74/EC on battery hens.

**George Eustice:**

The EU-wide ban on keeping hens in 'battery' (conventional) cages in 2012 represented a significant welfare advance across the EU was supported by the UK and has been implemented in full. The Government has a manifesto commitment to protect farm animal welfare and to push for high animal welfare standards to be incorporated into farming policy.

#### ■ Shrimps: Morecambe Bay

**David Morris:**

[\[43559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will assess the potential merits of giving protected name status to Morecambe Bay shrimps.

**George Eustice:**

We recognise the benefits of protecting our traditional and geographical food products and continue to work with producers to encourage protected food name (PFN) applications. Each application is assessed on its own merits and eligibility under the scheme. We would encourage producers to make applications for PFNs in order to promote high quality products such as Morecambe Bay shrimps.

The Protected Food Name (PFN) scheme enables producers to add value to their product and helps consumers to identify foods with a clear regional provenance.

### EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

#### ■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Staff

**Stephen Gethins:**

[\[44229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many members of staff his Department has recruited since it was established.

**Mr David Jones:**

The department now has over 180 staff in London. The Department has recruited the brightest and the best from across the civil service and brings together policy expertise from across the Cabinet Office, Treasury, Foreign Office and the wider Civil Service.

**■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Vacancies**

**Stephen Gethins:** [\[44230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many staff vacancies remain to be filled in his Department.

**Mr David Jones:**

The department now has over 180 staff in London, plus the expertise of over 120 officials in Brussels, and is still growing rapidly with first class support from other government departments.

**■ EU Law**

**Diana Johnson:** [\[43446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what process his Department has put in place to assess EU Directives and Regulations and whether it will be necessary to transpose each into UK statute.

**Mr David Jones:**

As the Prime Minister has made clear, the UK remains a member of the EU until our withdrawal is completed. We will exercise our rights and meet our obligations as a member of the EU accordingly, including the existing directives. The Department for Exiting the European Union, with the support of other Government Departments, will continue to assess, negotiate and implement all relevant EU Directives and Regulations.

**■ UK Withdrawal from EU**

**Deidre Brock:** [\[44679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, over what timetable he plans for negotiations with the EU and with other EU member states to take place on the UK leaving the EU; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr David Davis:**

The Prime Minister has been clear that we won't be triggering Article 50 before the end of 2016. She has said that we won't be triggering Article 50 until we have a UK approach and clear objectives for negotiations.

The first formal step in the process of leaving the European Union is to invoke Article 50, which will start two years of negotiations.

**FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE****■ Bangladesh: British Council**

**Jim Fitzpatrick:** [\[44114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions took place between (a) his Department and the British Council and (b) the UK High Commission in

Dhaka and the British Council in Bangladesh before the decision was taken to close that Council's centres in that country; and what timetable is in place for reopening those centres.

**Alok Sharma:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and UK High Commission in Dhaka have maintained close contact with the British Council before and since the closure, following the 1 July terrorist attack at Holey Bakery. The Council has completed its security review and is taking the necessary steps to ensure the safety and security of its staff and buildings before reopening.

## ■ Bangladesh: Human Rights

**Graham Jones:**

[44162]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what account his Department plans to take of alleged human rights abuses in Bangladesh in advising on any future trade deal with that country; and what assessment he has made of the potential merits of imposing sanctions on Bangladesh in order to improve that country's respect for political and other rights.

**Alok Sharma:**

The Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) has established the Department for International Trade to promote British trade across the world and ensure the United Kingdom takes advantage of the huge opportunities open to us. The Government is currently reviewing its trade policy. We will engage fully with a broad range of stakeholders, including both governments and business over the coming weeks and months, taking a large number of political and economic factors into consideration.

We are concerned about protection of human rights in Bangladesh, but believe that engagement, not sanctions, is the correct course of action. Sanctions would isolate Bangladesh at a time when it is, like so many, facing the global threat of terrorism. Trade sanctions would have a damaging effect on Bangladesh's development and on efforts to bring people out of poverty.

## ■ Bangladesh: Politics and Government

**Graham Jones:**

[44160]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to encourage the Prime Minister of Bangladesh to (a) hold fair and open elections in 2019 and (b) ensure Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal investigates impartially the 1971 War of Independence.

**Alok Sharma:**

The United Kingdom will continue to engage constructively with all political parties in Bangladesh and with international partners, to strengthen democratic accountability and build the willingness and capacity to hold future participatory elections. Peaceful, credible elections are the true mark of a mature functioning democracy, and all political parties share a responsibility for delivering them. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office

named Bangladesh as one of its 30 Human Rights Priority Countries in its 2015 report. The report cited the confrontational actions of the two main political parties as one of the areas of particular concern.

The Government has made clear its support for Bangladesh's efforts to bring to justice those accused of atrocities committed during the 1971 War of Independence. However, this must be done in a way that meets appropriate international legal standards. NGOs continue to raise concerns about the process and we urged the Bangladesh government to ensure compliance with these standards during Bangladesh's second Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council in 2013. We continue to emphasise these points in our discussions with the Bangladeshi authorities.

**Graham Jones:** [\[44161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department plans to take to assist Bangladeshis living in the UK to bring their families to the UK in the event of an escalation in political violence in Bangladesh.

**Alok Sharma:**

The UK has consistently called upon all parties to refrain from using violence, intimidation and confrontational action. The UK will continue to engage constructively with all political parties in Bangladesh and with international partners, to strengthen democratic accountability and build the willingness and capacity to hold future participatory elections. We are under no obligation to consider asylum claims lodged outside UK territory and it is not appropriate to do so. Those who need international protection should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach; that is the fastest route to safety.

## ■ Bangladesh: Terrorism

**Graham Jones:** [\[44159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports his Department has received on the changing level of threat of Islamist terrorism in Bangladesh.

**Alok Sharma:**

The British Government is concerned by the increase in terrorist and extremist-related violence in Bangladesh. Since the 1 July 2016 attack on the Holey Bakery Café in Dhaka, targeting foreign nationals, the Government has continued to raise its concerns over security directly with senior officials in the Bangladeshi government. We will continue to engage with regional partners and the wider international community to support efforts to address terrorism, extremism and to promote human rights in Bangladesh.

## ■ China: Dogs

**Scott Mann:** [\[44110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Chinese government on the treatment of dogs during that country's Yulin Dog Meat Festival.

**Alok Sharma:**

The United Kingdom Government takes seriously all reports of animal cruelty. We are committed to raising standards of animal welfare and to phasing out cruel and inhumane practices both in the UK and overseas. However, there are limits to what the UK can do. Consumption of dog meat is legal in the People's Republic of China and the UK has no legal grounds to intervene or take trade measures to prevent this.

We have instead focused our efforts on co-operation with China to tackle the illegal wildlife trade. We also work through the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), to promote the welfare of a range of species internationally, such as stray dogs and farmed animals. We encourage China, as a member of OIE, to meet the required standards.

**Iran: British Nationals Abroad****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[44976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Iranian counterpart on British nationals detained in that country; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We continue to raise our strong concerns about British prisoners in Iran at the highest levels in both London and Tehran. Both the Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) and the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson) did so in their introductory calls with their Iranian counterparts recently, and the Foreign Secretary followed up in writing to Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif on 29 August.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[44977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many British nationals are currently detained in Iran; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We do not provide information about numbers of British nationals detained in a country when the low numbers involved may lead to individuals being identifiable.

**Israel: Palestinians****Kelly Tolhurst:**[\[44016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he expects the follow-up report to Children in Military Custody, a report written by a delegation of British lawyers on the treatment of Palestinian children under Israeli military law, published in June 2012, to be published.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The question of when a follow-up report will be published is a matter for the delegation of lawyers that will write it. Meanwhile, the UK Government continues to push for the full implementation of changes recommended in the 2012 report and will work with the Israeli authorities to identify ways to improve these practices.

## ■ Kashmir

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[44134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Indian government on the killing of protestors in the Kashmir Valley in July 2016.

**Alok Sharma:**

I remain very concerned by reports of violence and offer my condolences to the victims and their families. The United Kingdom abides by its commitments under international law and expects all countries to comply with their international legal obligations. Our High Commission in Delhi is monitoring the situation closely and we have changed our travel advice. The long standing position of the UK is that it is for India and Pakistan to find a lasting resolution to the situation in Kashmir, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. It is not for the UK to prescribe a solution or to act as a mediator.

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[44135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Commonwealth Secretary General on the situation in Kashmir.

**Alok Sharma:**

I have not discussed Kashmir with the Commonwealth Secretary General. The long standing position of the United Kingdom is that it is for India and Pakistan to find a lasting resolution to the situation in Kashmir, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. It is not for the UK to prescribe a solution or to act as a mediator.

**Imran Hussain:** [\[44278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he and his Department have had with the Indian government on recent violence in Kashmir.

**Alok Sharma:**

I remain very concerned by reports of violence and offer my condolences to the victims and their families. The United Kingdom abides by its commitments under international law and expects all countries to comply with their international legal obligations. Our High Commission in Delhi is monitoring the situation closely and we have changed our travel advice. The long standing position of the UK is that it is for India and Pakistan to find a lasting resolution to the situation in Kashmir, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. It is not for the UK to prescribe a solution or to act as a mediator.

## ■ Kashmir: Politics and Government

**Martyn Day:** [\[44958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government is making to the governments of India and Pakistan on finding a peaceful solution to the situation in Kashmir which fully involves the people of Kashmir in the process.

**Alok Sharma:**

The longstanding position of the United Kingdom is that it is for India and Pakistan to find a lasting resolution to the situation in Kashmir, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. It is not for the United Kingdom to prescribe a solution or to act as a mediator. We encourage both sides to maintain positive dialogue, but the pace and scope of this is for them to determine.

## ■ Marriage

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[\[44600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to encourage recognition of same-sex marriage in countries where it is not currently recognised.

**Alok Sharma:**

The United Kingdom is committed to tackling discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. We take discrimination to include the non-enjoyment of equal civil rights by all members of society, including the right to marry. Through our diplomatic network, Her Majesty's Government regularly demonstrates its support for the principle of same sex marriage and encourages others to follow that example.

## ■ Mining: Seas and Oceans

**Martyn Day:**

[\[44959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of putting in place a comprehensive system of environmental protection before deep sea mining operations are allowed to commence in oceans worldwide.

**Alok Sharma:**

The UK is committed to the development and implementation by the International Seabed Authority of a deep sea mining code in respect of areas outside national jurisdiction. A clear red line for the United Kingdom is that such a code, which is a prerequisite for the commencement of deep sea mining operations, ought to contain strong environmental protection. A first draft of a mining code was released by the International Seabed Authority in July 2016, and the UK will be submitting comments in due course.

## ■ Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

**Richard Benyon:**

[\[44142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on the availability of legal representation for Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe in Iran.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe is a dual UK-Iranian national. Iran does not recognise dual nationality for Iranian nationals and therefore does not permit our consular staff to visit British-Iranian dual nationals detained there. Nonetheless we continue to push for

consular access to Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe and for more information about the charges against her – along with assurances that she has access to a lawyer.

**Richard Benyon:** [44143]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what levels of UK consular access the government of Iran has granted for Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe is a dual UK-Iranian national. The Iranian Government does not recognise dual nationality for Iranian nationals and therefore does not permit our consular staff to visit British-Iranian dual nationals detained there. Nonetheless we continue to push for consular access to Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe and for more information about the charges against her – along with assurances that she has access to a lawyer and appropriate medical care.

## ■ Rendition

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [44793]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs' comments of 29 June 2016, Official Report, columns 442-3, on UK involvement in rendition, what the document was which that Minister referred to as not having been received by the Intelligence and Security Committee by that date; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

I refer to my letter of correction to the House on 11 July 2016, Official Report, 11 July 2016, Vol. 613, c. 1MC.

The letter of correction is available online at the following link:

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2016-07-11/debates/1607111000003/ForeignAndCommonwealthOffice>

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [44795]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, for what reasons the oral contribution of the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on UK involvement in rendition of 29 June 2016, Official Report, columns 442-3, relating to a document not yet received by the Intelligence and Security Committee, fell to be corrected by Ministerial Correction on 11 July 2016, Official Report, columns 1-2 MC.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Once an error had been identified, I took the decision that a ministerial correction entry to correct the record was appropriate in the light of the nature of the error.



## ■ South Sudan: Diplomatic Service

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[44908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure the security of British Embassy employees returning to Juba, South Sudan after the attacks on civilians at the Terrain hotel in July 2016.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We are appalled by reports of aid workers coming under attack at the Terrain hotel. It is completely unacceptable to target people who have themselves gone to help those in greatest need. The UN Security Council emphasised concerns about this incident during the visit to Juba in early September 2016. We take very seriously the security of all our staff overseas – both UK and locally engaged – in line with our duty of care obligations, and regularly review security at our missions. Our Embassy was reduced to only essential staff during the crisis and careful consideration is being given on numbers returning.

## ■ South Sudan: Sanctions

**Mark Durkan:**

[\[44825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the obstruction of humanitarian agencies delivering assistance to civilians and the expulsion of international NGOs in South Sudan would trigger the sanctions regime provided for in UN Security Council Resolution 2304.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The sanctions threat in UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2304 relates specifically to the obstruction of the UN Mission in South Sudan or the deployment of a Regional Protection Force. However, the obstruction of the activities of international peacekeeping, diplomatic, or humanitarian missions in South Sudan or of the delivery or distribution of, or access to, humanitarian assistance are some of the criteria set out in UNSCR 2290, which renewed the sanctions regime on South Sudan until 31 May 2017.

## ■ South Sudan: Violence

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[44907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his South Sudanese counterpart on tackling recent violence in Jonglei state in South Sudan; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We regularly urge the South Sudanese Government to fully implement the August 2015 peace agreement and bring an end to the continual cycle of violence in all parts of the country. Most recently, the UK's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations made this clear with Ministers of the Transitional Government of National Unity during the UN Security Council's visit to Juba in early September 2016.

**■ Sudan: South Sudan**

**Mr Andrew Smith:** [\[44485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the United Nations to provide an update on progress towards the construction of Antony airport near Abyei; and when construction of that airport is expected to be completed.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Through our regular engagement with the UN, we will ask for an update on progress with the construction of Athony airport to be included in the next Secretary General's Report on Abyei, which is due by 15 October 2016. The UN have faced considerable disruption to the construction of the airport, and have thus been unable to confirm to us an exact date for completion.

**Mr Andrew Smith:** [\[44486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received from representatives in Abyei on the alleged detention without charge of members of the Misseriya peace committee in Sudan; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We were aware of the arrest of four members of the Misseriya peace committee in October 2015, and are able to confirm that they were released without charge in early December 2015. We have not received any more recent reports of arrests of this kind from representatives in Abyei.

**■ UK Mission to United Nations: Staff**

**Mr David Lammy:** [\[44953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many additional staff have been deployed to the UK's mission to the UN in Geneva to work on World Trade Organisation (WTO) policy and to renegotiate the UK's membership of the WTO since the EU referendum.

**Alok Sharma:**

A Deputy Permanent Representative to cover the WTO is being appointed. Further decisions will be taken in due course to provide the additional staff required in Geneva to work on the UK's evolving status in the WTO, and in the longer term to cover all WTO business.

**■ Yemen: Cultural Heritage**

**Dawn Butler:** [\[44503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what operational orders are given to the armed forces serving in Yemen on the protection of cultural property.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK is not a member of the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition and British military personnel are not directly involved in the Saudi led Coalition's operations. We remain concerned about any damage to cultural property in Yemen and are aware of reports of alleged damage by actors in the conflict. Yemen and many members of the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition are parties to the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict and to the 1972 World Heritage Convention. We have raised our concerns regarding protection of cultural property with both the Government of Yemen and the Saudi Arabia.

**■ Yemen: Military Intervention****Hilary Benn:**[\[45062\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will place in the Library all emails, notes, letters or other documents or records relating to his Department's exercise of reviewing all correspondence and parliamentary proceedings on the subject of allegations of breaches of international humanitarian law in Yemen by the Saudi-led Coalition and on the publication of the Written Ministerial Statement Corrections to Parliamentary Questions and Westminster Hall Debates, HCWS125.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

This information has been requested under the Freedom of Information act and will be placed on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website in due course. I would also be happy to place this in the Library.

**HEALTH****■ Aditya Agrawal****Sir Peter Bottomley:**[\[43638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for how many months Mr Aditya Agrawal was (a) employed and (b) not suspended by East Lancashire Hospitals Trust.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:**[\[43639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which five clinical events caused the medical director of the East Lancashire Hospitals Trust to exclude Mr Aditya Agrawal.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:**[\[43640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when the East Lancashire Hospitals Trust first checked the case notes of patient KM; and whether the medical director of that Trust wrote to Mr Agrawal to withdraw and to apologise for believing that the patient had died.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:**[\[43641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the patient said to have been discharged unsafely by Mr Agrawal, who the responsible consultant was; and on what

grounds did East Lancashire Hospitals Trust believe that Mr Agrawal had discharged that patient when he had himself been excluded from the hospital in question.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[43642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the reasons given for the dismissal of Mr Agrawal were related to clinical concerns.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[43643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the cost to the East Lancashire Hospitals Trust of legal proceedings concerning Mr Agrawal.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[43730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the employment of Mr Aditya Agrawal at East Lancashire Hospitals Trust, (a) what mediation has been offered by the Trust, (b) when (i) Mr Watson, (ii) Mr Chang and (iii) Mr Harris will cease to be full-time NHS consultants, (c) whether one of those three consultants was the originator or conveyor of the false, fabricated or misattributed clinical accusation to the GMC on clinical care provided by Mr Agrawal, (d) whether the Trust has withdrawn in writing any wrong accusation concerning clinical care provided by Mr Agrawal and (e) who was responsible for arranging the revalidation of Mr Agrawal with the GMC (i) up to and (ii) after October 2015; and if he will make a statement.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[43925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether East Lancashire Hospitals Trust has insurance cover for legal costs and awards in the event of the Trust or one of its employees being subject to legal action for defaming someone by a statement that is untrue, damaging and not privileged.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[43926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when the responsible officer at East Lancashire Hospitals Trust last signed the appraisal of Mr Aditya Agrawal; and whether a clinical concern was mentioned in that appraisal.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[43927\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether East Lancashire Hospitals Trust authorised Mr David Chang to say that the General Medical Council had ever given formal advice or a warning or decided on a sanction on Mr Aditya Agrawal.

**Sir Peter Bottomley:** [\[43928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether East Lancashire Hospitals Trust holds a record of incident reports in relation to the clinical work of Mr Aditya Agrawal.

**Mr Jeremy Hunt:**

This is an employer and employee matter between the East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust and Mr Aditya Agrawal respectively. The Department cannot comment on individual employment matters that are the responsibility of independent organisations, and that are subject to ongoing legal proceedings or on matters relating to individual

clinical cases or other personal information. We understand that the cost to East Lancashire Trust of legal proceedings concerning Mr Agrawal is £296,848.42 to date, and that the Trust does not have insurance costs for legal awards in the event of the Trust or one of its employees being subject to legal action for defamation.

■ **Agency Nurses: Migrant Workers**

**Mr Nigel Evans:**

[\[44960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NHS trusts use agency nurses who are brought in from other countries.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The information requested is not held by the Department.

■ **Capita: Primary Health Care**

**Justin Madders:**

[\[44969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the performance of Capita in delivering primary care support.

**David Mowat:**

NHS England recognises that there have been transition issues following the transfer of primary care support services to Capita. NHS England is working together with Capita to resolve these issues.

NHS England has established a dedicated service management team, and regular monthly oversight and management processes to oversee Capita's operational performance and the transformational changes to the service. These include monthly Board meetings, chaired by a National Director, to review and hold Capita to account for operational performance and their transformation plans.

NHS England's scrutiny of Capita is underpinned by a number of robust contractual mechanisms designed to ensure that primary care support services are delivered in line with expectations. These include financial service credits where agreed performance targets across the service are not achieved. There are also mechanisms to monitor and ensure compliance with information governance requirements, a six-monthly user satisfaction survey, and an annual external audit of the services.

■ **Children: Mental Health**

**Valerie Vaz:**

[\[45031\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Answer of 21 July 2016 to Question 42766, whether he has accepted the recommendation of the independent Mental Health Taskforce in its report published in February 2016 to bring together an expert group to examine the needs of children who are particularly vulnerable to developing mental health problems, including those with long-term conditions.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Government has accepted the recommendations set out in the Mental Health Taskforce report including the recommendation that: "The Departments of Education and Health should establish an expert group to examine the needs of children who are particularly vulnerable to developing mental health problems and how their needs should best be met, including through the provision of personalised budgets." The focus of the group that has been set up, which met for the first time in July, is on looked after and adopted children and care leavers, all of whom are considered particularly vulnerable to mental health problems.

There are currently no plans to set up any other group to look into the needs of children who are vulnerable.

■ **Department of Health: Standards**

**Justin Madders:** [44971]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many performance meetings the Departmental Board has held since his appointment; and how many of those meetings he has attended.

**David Mowat:**

The frequency of performance meetings held by the Departmental Board and how many of these were attended by the Secretary of State for Health is published in the Annual Reports and Accounts which can be located via the following links to the Gov.UK website for each financial year of his term –

201 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-of-health-annual-report-and-accounts-2012-to-2013>

201 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-of-health-annual-report-and-accounts-2013-to-2014>

201 [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/447002/DH\\_accounts\\_14-15\\_web.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447002/DH_accounts_14-15_web.pdf)

201 [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/539602/DH\\_Annual\\_Report\\_Web.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539602/DH_Annual_Report_Web.pdf)

■ **Doctors: Migrant Workers**

**Mr Nigel Evans:** [44961]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost to the NHS is of using agency doctors who are brought in from other countries.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The information requested is not held by the Department.

## ■ Medical Treatments

**Rob Marris:** [\[44911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions his Department has had with NICE on increasing capacity for highly specialised technology evaluations.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

There have been no such recent discussions.

## ■ Mental Health Services

**Luciana Berger:** [\[45015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many mental health services he has visited in his capacity as Secretary of State since December 2015; and what the date was of each such visit.

**David Mowat:**

The Secretary of State for Health has visited the following mental health services in an official capacity since December 2015.

29 January 2016 King's College Hospital, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

5 February 2016 Coombe Wood Perinatal Mental Health Unit, Park Royal Centre for Mental Health, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust

27 July 2016 STITCH project, Royal Bristol Infirmary, University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust

## ■ Mental Health Services: Inspections

**Luciana Berger:** [\[45014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many full-time equivalent mental health inspectors are employed by the Care Quality Commission.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The Care Quality Commission currently employs 130 full-time equivalent mental health inspectors.

## ■ Neuromuscular Disorders

**Rob Marris:** [\[44910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to encourage GPs to undertake collaborative work with Muscular Dystrophy UK to increase their knowledge of care and management of people with neuromuscular conditions.

**David Mowat:**

NHS England is working on Muscular Dystrophy UK's Bridging the Gap project to develop local neuromuscular services – creating expert forums to help share best practice and advice and provide extra support to clinicians.

In addition to this, the Royal College of General Practitioners (GPs) has developed a learning module with Muscular Dystrophy UK to help GPs have a better understanding of their role in the management of neuromuscular conditions. It will also help them recognise the key moments when a patient needs to be referred to a specialist neuromuscular service.

## ■ NHS: Redundancy Pay

**Tulip Siddiq:** [\[44966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people who received redundancy payments from the NHS in 2015-16 were subsequently re-employed by the NHS on a (a) consultancy and (b) permanent basis; and what the cost to the NHS was of those redundancy repayments.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The number of compulsory redundancies in 2015-16 was 1,944.

The number of staff made redundant and then re-employed is not currently available.

In May 2015 the Government announced that it intended to take forward its manifesto commitment to end six-figure exit payments for public sector workers, including the National Health Service. The Enterprise Act containing provisions for the £95,000 public sector exit payment cap received Royal Assent in May 2016 and will come into force later this year.

Further legislation is being taken forward to allow for the recovery of exit payments from all high earning public sector workers who return to any part of the public sector within 12 months of leaving.

The Government's changes to the NHS mean a huge net gain for the taxpayer. The Department published a written ministerial statement on 21 July 2015: Column 90WS NHS Modernisation setting out the costs and benefits of NHS modernisation. "The Department of Health also originally forecast that between 2010-11 and 2014-15 the reforms would save the NHS £4.5 billion in lower administration costs, as well as a further £1.5 billion a year thereafter. Actual savings were far greater, in cash terms at £6.9 billion over this period, including £2 billion in 2014-15—and in 2010-11 prices comparable to the impact assessment £6.5 billion, including £1.8 billion in 2014-15. This means the Government have successfully achieved their aim to reduce NHS bureaucracy costs by a third".

## ■ NHS: Sustainable Development

**Justin Madders:** [\[44968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish the minutes of all the meetings his Department has held related to each of the 44 sustainability and transformation plans.

**David Mowat:**

Every health and care system in England is producing a multi-year Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP), showing how local services will evolve and become



sustainable over the next five years – ultimately delivering the Five Year Forward View vision of better health, better patient care and improved National Health Service efficiency. The Department has held two meetings relating to STPs with the national bodies responsible for the development of the STP programme. As is usual practice, the minutes of such policy development meetings are not normally published. The Department has not been involved in meetings with the 44 local STP areas directly.

**Justin Madders:**

[\[44970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish all sustainability and transformation plans that were submitted within the June 2016 deadline.

**David Mowat:**

The June Sustainability Transformation Plan (STP) submissions were a 'checkpoint' for draft plans and, as works in progress, will not be published. STP proposals are currently at a draft stage, but it is expected that all local leaders will be talking to the public and stakeholders regularly as it is vital that people are able to shape the future of their local services. No changes to the services people currently receive will be made without local engagement and, where required, consultation. There are longstanding assurance processes in place to make sure this happens. All footprints will submit an updated plan in October, with further formal public engagement and consultation taking place from this point, as appropriate. Many footprints are already publishing patient-facing summaries as part of their engagement programme. All footprints will submit an updated plan at the end of October and, following this, we would expect to see areas publishing proposals for engagement by the end of the year. Many footprints are already publishing patient-facing summaries as part of their engagement programmes.

## ■ Obesity: Children

**Liz McInnes:**

[\[44975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the eight key actions recommended in the Public Health England report entitled *Sugar Reduction*, the evidence for action, published in October 2015, for what reasons all of those actions were not included in the Government's childhood obesity plan.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

We launched *Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action* on 18 August. Our plan focuses on actions that are likely to have the biggest impact on childhood obesity. The policies in the plan are informed by the latest research and evidence, including from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition report *Carbohydrates and Health*, Public Health England's evidence package *Sugar reduction: the evidence for action*, other Government Departments, debates in this House and various reports from key stakeholders including the Health Select Committee.

We are confident that the measures we have announced will make a real difference to obesity rates. Though we are clear in our goals and firm in the action we will take, the launch of this plan represents the start of a conversation, rather than the final word.

## ■ Primary Health Care: Mid Sussex

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [45006]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much of the primary care transformation fund will be invested in Mid Sussex constituency in the next four years.

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [45007]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department has taken to improve access to GPs in Mid Sussex constituency.

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [45008]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much the NHS spent on primary care in (a) West Sussex and (b) Mid Sussex constituency in each of the last five years.

**David Mowat:**

NHS England does not hold data at constituency level. NHS England advises that clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) across the country, including Horsham and Mid Sussex CCG, were invited to put forward proposals for investment from the Estates and Technology Transformation Fund (formerly the Primary Care Transformation Fund) in line with local estates and digital plans by the end of June 2016. A detailed review of submissions has begun and NHS England plans to provide feedback to CCGs on their investment bids this autumn.

In the meantime, NHS England is currently in ongoing dialogue with Horsham and Mid Sussex CCG and three practices in East Grinstead with regards to proposals concerning support required to increase capacity and build resilience. The national *General Practice Forward View* published recently by NHS England sets out the support that is being made available to general practitioner (GP) practices to help address some of the challenges they are facing and to support them to meet future patient need. This document can be found at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/gpfv>

Spend on GP services in West Sussex and Mid Sussex

CCG AREA	2016-17 BUDGET	2015-16 OUTTURN	2014-15 OUTTURN
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Coastal West Sussex	62,051	59,965	54,118
Horsham and Mid Sussex	27,269	26,284	24,311
Crawley	15,025	14,931	14,144
	104,345	101,180	92,573

Source: NHS England

## Notes:

1. Mid Sussex constituency falls within the Horsham and Mid Sussex CCG area, and data is provided for this and the two other West Sussex CCG areas. This table includes expenditure on GP services, and excludes primary care dentists, optometrists and pharmacists.
2. NHS England has been developing reporting of expenditure at CCG level as a consequence of delegated co-commissioning, which began in 2015-16 with preparations in the previous financial year. For this reason, NHS England does not hold this level of detail for 2013-14. Before April 2013, primary care trusts were responsible for this expenditure, and NHS England does not hold records which would enable it to identify expenditure at this level.
3. The table records expenditure only for which NHS England South (South East) is responsible. CCGs provide some enhanced services, and are also responsible for funding GP out-of-hours services, but this expenditure is not included.

## ■ Prisons: Mental Health Services

Luciana Berger:

[\[45018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure the efficient and timely transfer of prisoners to hospitals under the provisions of the Mental Health Act 1983; and how many prisoners have waited for more than 14 days for such a transfer in each quarter since April 2015.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Department of Health guidance was published in 2011 on best practice to achieve urgent transfers within 14 days. NHS England continues to work with prison healthcare and secure mental health providers to improve processes so that this can be achieved.

NHS England has provided information on transfers as detailed below.

PERIOD	TRANSFERS	TRANSFERS >14 DAYS
Quarter 1 Financial Year (FY) 2015-16	72	232
Quarter 2 FY 2015-16	136	238
Quarter 3 FY 2015-16	92	213
Quarter 4 FY 2015-16	112	458
Quarter 1 FY 2016-17	92	209

Note: the numbers above are reported transfers in the time period, an individual prisoner may be represented in more than one time period

Data for this indicator has improved since data collection began in April 2015. NHS England have since improved the data collection and quality under the Health and Justice Indicators of Performance and the information above now represents data from all prisons.

NHS England intends to publish data collected through Health and Justice Indicators of Performance since April 2016 in future, but a firm date for publication is not yet available.

#### ■ Schools: Nurses

**Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:** [\[44839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to NHS workforce statistics, what assessment his Department has made of the reasons for the reduction in the number of school nurses since 2010.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Since April 2013, local authorities have been responsible for public health locally, including commissioning public health services for school aged children and decisions should be based around local needs.

No formal assessment has been made of recent changes to school nursing numbers by the Department or Public Health England (PHE).

PHE has professional leadership responsibility for school nursing and supports local decision making through the sharing of evidence and guidance. PHE published [commissioning guidance](#) in January 2016 and continues to work with key partners, including the Department, to develop further approaches to strengthen and support school nursing teams and local delivery.

#### ■ Strokes: Medical Treatments

**Mrs Cheryl Gillan:** [\[44753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the use of mechanical thrombectomy in treatment of stroke on length of stay in hospital and bed occupancy rates.

**Mrs Cheryl Gillan:** [\[44754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what consideration has been given to using the information collected through the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme to assess the potential benefits of wider implementation of mechanical clot retrieval treatment and its side effect on post-stroke rehabilitation.

**Mrs Cheryl Gillan:** [\[44755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when NHS England plans to consider mechanical thrombectomy for the treatment of stroke in its specialised commissioning prioritisation process.

**David Mowat:**

As yet, there are insufficient patients being treated with mechanical thrombectomy to assess its impact on processes, such as length of hospital stay and bed occupancy rates, outcomes of care and the effect on post stroke rehabilitation.

However, the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme is now collecting data on patients treated with mechanical thrombectomy and the results will be reported as soon as it is feasible. Sufficient cases will need to be undertaken before conducting the necessary statistical analyses and reporting the data.

NHS England is considering whether mechanical thrombectomy should be an area covered by its specialised commissioning portfolio and work is underway on this.

**HOME OFFICE**■ **Animal Welfare: Foxes****Christian Matheson:**[\[44448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what representations her Department has received on alleged conflicts of interest in the appointment of Sir John Chadwick to head an inquiry into the mistreatment of live foxes by the South Herefordshire Hunt.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Home Office has not received any representations regarding the appointment of Sir John Chadwick to head the independent inquiry into the mistreatment of live foxes by the South Herefordshire Hunt.

■ **Asylum: Liverpool Wavertree****Luciana Berger:**[\[45017\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce the application waiting times for people resident in Liverpool, Wavertree constituency who are seeking asylum.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

All asylum claims are considered on their individual merits and based on the information provided throughout the process. Some decisions can be taken more quickly than others, for example if further information is needed to reach an informed decision it can take longer. If an asylum claim is refused then the claimant might appeal against that decision.

All straightforward claims are decided within 6 months.

## ■ Calais: Migrant Camps

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[44614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with her French counterpart on the conditions at the refugee camp in Calais; and what assistance the UK is providing to improve living standards at that camp.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* The management of the migrant camp in Calais is the responsibility of the French Government, and they have made suitable alternative accommodation places available for migrants inside the camp.

With the support of the UK, the French Government has also created more than 160 new centres away from Calais where migrants can consider their options, including whether to claim asylum, in comfort and safety away from the traffickers. Both Governments are clear that there is no reason for migrants to live in the difficult conditions in the camp, there is a reasonable and accessible remedy available in France.

## ■ Community Relations

**Siobhain McDonagh:** [\[45264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential effect on community cohesion of the presence of (a) Mufti Hanif Qureshi, (b) Muhammad Naquib ur Rehman and (c) Hassan Haseeb ur Rehman in the UK in 2016.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Home Office does not routinely comment on assessments of foreign visitors to the UK.

## ■ Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority: Finance

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[44295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 5 July 2016 to Question 41352, (a) by how much and (b) from what date the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority's funding will be increased.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Gangmasters Licensing Authority's budget has seen an increase in 2016-17 to reflect its changing and broader functions. The budget has been published on page 80 of the Main Supply Estimate 2016-17. We remain committed to resourcing the GLA and continue to work with GLA to ensure it can deliver its purpose of protecting vulnerable and exploited workers in future years. The budget for GLA will be confirmed as part of the Main Estimate Supply exercise ahead of each financial year.

## ■ Hate Crime: Disability

**Jim Shannon:**

[45208]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many hate crimes were committed against disabled people in each of the last five years.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Home Office has collected disability hate crime data from the police since 2011/12.

In 2011/12, the police recorded 1,748 disability hate crime offences, 1,911 in 2012/13, 2,006 in 2013/14 and 2,508 in 2014/15.

Further information on hate crime can be found in Hate Crimes, England and Wales, 2014/15, available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2014-to-2015>

Data for 2015/16 are due to be published in October 2016.

As stated by the Office for National Statistics, action taken by police forces to improve their compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard has led to improved recording of crime over the last year, especially for violence against the person offences. Together with a greater awareness of disability hate crime, and improved willingness of victims to come forward, this is likely to be a factor in the increase in disability hate crimes recorded by the police.

This Government is committed to tackling hate crime. The UK has one of the strongest legislative frameworks in the world to tackle hate crime. We are working across Government with police, (including National Community Tensions Team), the Crown Prosecution Service and community partners to send out a clear message that hate crime will not be tolerated and we will vigorously pursue and prosecute those who commit these crimes.

## ■ Home Office: Consultants

**Margaret Hodge:**

[44333]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish a list of all secondees to her Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Home Office has seconded less than five people from consultancy firms including those listed, in the last three financial years. It is not possible to provide a further breakdown as it would breach the Department's obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998, not to disclose to a third party, personal information about another person.

## ■ Human Trafficking

**Fiona Mactaggart:** [\[44784\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans for a training programme on human trafficking for existing independent advocates to be available to all looked-after children under the Children Act 2004 will commence; which organisation she plans to provide such training; and if she will confirm whether her Department plans to fund that training.

**Sarah Newton:**

We are finalising arrangements for training with other Government departments and the Welsh Government, including how this will be structured and who will deliver the training. Further details will be announced later this year.

## ■ Human Trafficking: Children

**Fiona Mactaggart:** [\[44785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many trafficked children she estimates will receive an advocate in the next phase of trials of the Independent Child Trafficking Advocates Service.

**Sarah Newton:**

Every child that is identified as being potentially trafficked will be allocated an independent child trafficking advocate in each of the early adopter sites.

**Fiona Mactaggart:** [\[44800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to roll out the independent child trafficking advocate scheme nationally beyond the early adopter sites; what response she has made to the recommendations of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner that a national roll-out should be implemented before the end of the designated second phase trial period if preliminary evaluations are positive; and when she plans to develop the secondary legislation and statutory guidance accompanying that section.

**Sarah Newton:**

As the previous Minister for Preventing Abuse, Exploitation and Crime set out in June 2016, the Government intends to roll out independent child trafficking advocates nationally as soon as the procedures for Parliamentary commencement and the introduction of statutory guidance secondary legislation are completed. We will consider carefully the evaluation of the early adopter sites which will assist us in ensuring the secondary legislation and statutory guidance provide for the most effective model to be rolled out.

**Fiona Mactaggart:** [\[44822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what criteria were used to select Wales, Hampshire and Greater Manchester as the locations for the early adopter sites for the second phase trials of independent child trafficking advocates.



**Sarah Newton:**

The early adopter sites were chosen because they offer a wide geographical coverage across England and Wales with the potential for differing levels and types of referrals, including children who may have been internally trafficked, as well as those that have been trafficked from abroad.

**Fiona Mactaggart:**

[[44823](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the oral contribution of the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department of 28 June 2016, Official Report, columns 50-1WH, announcing a new child trafficking protection fund, (a) when that fund will be established, (b) how such funds will be distributed, (c) what types of organisations will be eligible to apply for the fund and (d) whether the fund will be targeted at initiatives taking place in the UK or overseas.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Child Trafficking Protection Fund will be established later this year and further detail on the bidding process will be provided when the fund opens. The fund will have up to £3 million of Government funding initially available over the next three years. The fund has two main aims: to reduce the number of trafficked children from going missing and having contact with traffickers, and providing better support for children from states where we have seen consistently high numbers of trafficked children. The fund will support work at a local level, adding value to the existing provisions for child victims of trafficking. The fund will be open to organisations involved with child victims of trafficking and will be aimed at innovative projects that offer enhanced outcomes of care for victims, both nationally and internationally.

**Fiona Mactaggart:**

[[44824](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what mechanisms there are to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of children who received an independent child trafficking advocate under the 2014-15 trials of such advocates; and how her Department plans to evaluate the planned second phase trials in three early adopter sites of such advocates.

**Sarah Newton:**

The evaluation of the 2014/15 trial of Independent Child Trafficking Advocates was completed in September 2015 and the evaluation findings were published in December 2015. Following the trial, children with an advocate were provided support to transition into existing trafficking or other support services.

Independent Child Trafficking Advocates will be introduced in three early adopter sites. The Home Office will conduct an assessment through monitoring outcomes for children who receive an advocate and considering how the advocates were implemented in the three sites. This will be overseen and informed by an expert panel of independent individuals. The learning from the early adopter sites will be used to refine the model for Independent Child Trafficking Advocates to be rolled out across England and Wales.

## ■ Human Trafficking: Females

**Luciana Berger:** [\[45016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 11 April 2016 to Question 32631 on human trafficking: females, if she will take steps to ensure that data referred to is collected.

**Sarah Newton:**

*[Holding answer 8 September 2016]:* Data about the number of victims of human trafficking with mental health issues who receive support through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is not collated centrally. We work with victim support providers to strengthen data collection systems and will consider this as part of that.

## ■ International Modern Slavery Fund

**Frank Field:** [\[44226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the (a) specific functions and (b) scope of the recently established International Modern Slavery Fund will be.

**Sarah Newton:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* The Prime Minister has announced £33.5 million of Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding over five years. The fund will be used to prevent slavery in ODA eligible countries and bring perpetrators to justice; helping communities to fight modern slavery. We have already announced that:

- The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK has been funded to work with parliaments across the Commonwealth to support them in considering legislation similar to the UK's world-leading Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- £2.4 million has been allocated to the £3 million Child Trafficking Protection Fund.

Some funding will be used to support innovative programmes to reduce the prevalence of modern slavery and improve the evidence base on what works. A call for proposals on the innovation fund will be issued later this year.

## ■ Internet: Bullying

**Jim Shannon:** [\[45144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce (a) trolling and (b) cyber-bullying.

**Sarah Newton:**

We continue to make tackling all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, a priority. All schools are required by law to have a behaviour policy with measures to tackle bullying among pupils, including cyberbullying.

Since September 2014 e-safety has been taught at all four key stages of the curriculum. We have made sure schools have the power to search for, and if necessary delete, inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

We have invested £3.85 million in a new phase of our This is Abuse campaign, which tackles abuse within teenage relationships and was launched in March. The National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) has developed a comprehensive education programme, called Thinkuknow, which provides targeted advice to children, parents and carers, including on how to use social media safely.

We have taken action to improve the police response to online abuse. Since the introduction of the College of Policing's Cyber Crime Training course in February 2014 over 150,000 modules have been completed across all forces and, in September last year, the College of Policing launched the second phase of its Mainstream Cyber Crime Training course for police forces.

Additionally, over 3,900 National Crime Agency officers have completed Digital Awareness training as part of equipping the next generation of highly skilled digital detectives. 1,200 Digital Media Investigators have been trained over the past 18 months.

Work is under way to ensure the appropriate recording of digital crime and abuse. The Home Office launched a mandatory 'online' flag as part of the police recorded crime data collection from April 2015. These data are currently in development and will be published in due course.

The Crown Prosecution Service annual Violence Against Women and Girls Report published on September 6 shows that there have been more offences prosecuted under section 127 of the Communications Act and section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988. Under s.127, in 2015-16 there was a rise in prosecutions related to grossly offensive or indecent communications to 2,026. In total the offences under s.127 of the Communications Act rose by 13% and s.1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988 by 32%. There have also been 206 prosecutions for the new offence of disclosing private sexual photographs and films with intent to cause distress.

#### ■ Ministerial Policy Advisers: Business Interests

**Tom Watson:**

[\[44096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many former special advisers of her Department submitted applications under the business appointment rules between June 2014 and October 2015.

**Sarah Newton:**

The information requested is available at:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/advisory-committee-on-business-appointments](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/advisory-committee-on-business-appointments)  
where details of all recommendations by the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments in response to applications submitted under these rules are published.

#### ■ Police: Lancashire

**Mr Nigel Evans:**

[\[44962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her plans are to tackle trends in stress-related illnesses among police officers in Lancashire.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Government recognises that policing can be a challenging job and it is the responsibility of chief officers – supported by the College of Policing – to ensure the welfare of all officers and staff. We welcome the work in forces, led nationally by Lancashire's Deputy Chief Constable – to promote officer health and wellbeing. It is encouraging to see that all forces have signed up to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter.

As part of a commitment to police welfare in October 2014 the Government allocated £10m to help support emergency services personnel and volunteers, focused on mental health, physical recuperation and bereavement support for those who need it.

**■ Racially Aggravated Offences****Mr Barry Sheerman:**[\[44716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she has taken to reduce racist hate crimes since the EU referendum.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Government condemns all hate crimes and is committed to tackling these crimes in partnership with the communities affected.

The scenes and behaviour we saw over the summer, including offensive graffiti and abuse hurled at people because they are members of ethnic minorities or because of their nationality, are despicable and shameful. We must stand together against such hate crime and ensure that it is stamped out.

We already have in place some of the strongest legislation to tackle hate crime in the world – this includes specific offences for racially and religiously aggravated activity and offences of the stirring up of hatred on the grounds of race, religion and sexual orientation. We also have stronger sentences for hate crime.

The Government has committed to taking action to improve our response to hate crime. This includes joint training between the police and Crown Prosecution staff to improve the way the police identify and investigate hate crime; building on the improvements to police recording of hate crime by working with the police to break down religious-based hate crime by religion; and working with victims and advocacy groups to improve victims confidence to come forward and report such crimes.

The police are also improving their operational practices and recording. Last year, the College of Policing published Operational Guidance for officers responding to hate crime which comprehensively covers how to address all forms of hate crime.

On 26 July, the Home Office published a comprehensive new hate crime action plan which builds on the work already done, and sets out Government action over the next four years to tackle hate crime. It includes:

- new steps to boost reporting of hate crime and support victims;
- new CPS guidance to prosecutors on racially aggravated crime;

—a new fund for protective security measures at places of worship, which is currently open for applications; and

—additional funding to community organisations tackling hate crime, including racist hate crime.

The increased levels of hate crime reporting seen over the summer have now reduced and we have observed three consecutive weeks of reporting levels that fall within the expected levels that we have observed in previous years. Police will continue to monitor the signs of tension and will react swiftly if they identify any future raised levels.

Nobody in this country should live in fear because of who they are and anyone who experiences hate crime should report it to the police, either in person at a police station, online through the True Vision website, or by phoning 101.

#### ■ Road Traffic Offences: Mobile Phones

**Stephen Hammond:** [\[44935\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the (a) ability and (b) willingness of police forces to catch those using their mobile phone while driving.

**Stephen Hammond:** [\[44950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what statistics her Department holds on (a) convictions and (b) fines for mobile phone use while driving in each police force area.

**Brandon Lewis:**

There has been no assessment made of the enforcement by the police of the offence of driving whilst using a mobile phone. The enforcement of this offence is an operational matter for individual Chief Officers of police.

The attached table, "Fixed Penalty Notices" includes figures for Fixed Penalty Notices for use of mobile phones whilst driving, broken down by Police Force Area and by Year.

Based on information provided by the Ministry of Justice, statistics on offenders found guilty and sentenced, including sentence outcomes, for using or causing others to use a mobile phone whilst driving, at all courts in England and Wales, by police force area, from 2005 to 2015, can be viewed using the 'Motoring data tool: with criminal justice area' in the annual publication, linked below:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2015>

#### **Attachments:**

1. Fixed Penalty Notices [Copy of Fixed Penatly Notices v1.xls]

## ■ Terrorism

**Deidre Brock:** [\[44032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is the Government's policy that anti-terrorism cooperation under the Schengen Agreement should continue after the UK leaves the EU.

**Sarah Newton:**

Cooperation against terrorism between the UK and European Union Member States has continued following the referendum. We continue to participate in those parts of the Schengen Agreement that relate to law enforcement cooperation, including the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II).

Officials are exploring options for future cooperation arrangements once the UK has left the European Union. We will do what is necessary to keep people safe, but it would be wrong to set out unilateral positions in advance of negotiations.

## ■ Threat to Life Notices

**Mr Dominic Raab:** [\[44688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many threat to life notices each police force in England and Wales has issued in the last five years.

**Mr Dominic Raab:** [\[44689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many threat to life notices were issued to people with suspected links to organised crime in each of the last five years.

**Mr Dominic Raab:** [\[44690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many threat to life notices have been issued in each of the last five years.

**Brandon Lewis:**

This information is not held centrally. Where a threat is made to an individual, it is an operational matter for police forces and law enforcement agencies to decide whether to issue threat to life notices, taking account of individual circumstances, to mitigate the risk to potential victims.

## ■ UN Refugees and Migrants Summit

**Catherine McKinnell:** [\[44525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government plans to make a commitment at the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants on 19 and 20 September 2016 to provide more safe and legal routes for refugees to find protection in the UK.

**Catherine McKinnell:** [\[44526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government will be represented at the Leaders' Summit on Refugees to be hosted by President Obama on 20 September 2016.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* The Government has no plans to introduce additional pathways for refugees to come to the UK. The UK is already a leading resettlement state, offering a number of safe and legal pathways for refugees. In the year ending June 2016, a total of 3,439 people were resettled in the UK.

In addition to the 20,000 Syrian refugees and up to 3,000 vulnerable persons from the Middle East and North Africa region that the Government has committed to resettle by 2020, the UK has also committed to relocate unaccompanied refugee children from France, Greece and Italy. Under the family reunion policy we have reunited around 22,000 refugees with their immediate family over the past five years and will continue to do so. The Government supports the principle that those who need international protection should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach. This allows vulnerable persons to receive help quickly rather than risking their lives on hazardous journeys into and across Europe or falling victim to criminal gangs who are exploiting the situation. Providing humanitarian aid in the region is the best way to provide much needed support to the majority of those fleeing persecution while working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to resettle the most vulnerable who cannot reasonably remain.

HM Government will be represented at the UN General Assembly high level meeting on 19 September and the Leaders' Summit on refugees to be hosted by President Obama on 20 September.

**Patrick Grady:**[\[44583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to review the Government's commitments on the number of refugees to be granted access to the UK at the UN General Assembly Summit on Refugees and Migrants in September 2016.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* The Government has no plans to introduce additional pathways for refugees to come to the UK. The UK is already a leading resettlement state, offering a number of safe and legal pathways for refugees. In the year ending June 2016, a total of 3,439 people were resettled in the UK.

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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to resettle the most vulnerable who cannot reasonably remain.

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[\[44643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who will represent the Government at the UN General Assembly meeting on refugees and migrants on 19 and 20 September 2016; and if the Government will make a commitment at that meeting to creating safe, legal routes for refugees to enter the UK.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* Her Majesty's Government will be represented at the UN General Assembly high level meeting on refugees and migrant on 19 September and at the Leaders' Summit on refugees hosted by President Obama on 20 September. Who will attend is to be confirmed.

The Government has no plans to introduce additional pathways for refugees to come to the UK. The UK is already a leading resettlement state, offering a number of safe and legal pathways for refugees. In the year ending June 2016, a total of 3,439 people were resettled in the UK.

In addition to the 20,000 Syrian refugees and up to 3,000 vulnerable persons from the Middle East and North Africa region that the Government has committed to resettle by 2020, the UK has also committed to relocate unaccompanied refugee children from France, Greece and Italy. Under the family reunion policy we have reunited around 22,000 refugees with their immediate family over the past five years and will continue to do so. The Government supports the principle that those who need international protection should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach. This allows vulnerable persons to receive help quickly rather than risking their lives on hazardous journeys into and across Europe or falling victim to criminal gangs who are exploiting the situation. Providing humanitarian aid in the region is the best way to provide much needed support to the majority of those fleeing persecution while working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to resettle the most vulnerable who cannot reasonably remain.

## ■ Vetting: Teachers

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[45209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that self-employed tutors are subject to criminal records checks.

**Sarah Newton:**

Those wishing to engage a tutor to work with children may ask the tutor to show them an enhanced criminal record certificate obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). A self-employed tutor can apply for such a certificate through an agency, which will process the application and confirm that the activity provides eligibility for the check. Alternatively, any individual can apply directly for a criminal conviction certificate which is available from Disclosure Scotland and which contains details of unspent convictions and cautions.



Where parents or others do not want to take on a tutor without the reassurance of a DBS check, they are free to limit their selection process to people who can show them a certificate from the DBS. Ultimately, it is for those engaging a tutor to decide who is a suitable person to fill that role, taking into account all the information which is available to them.

## ■ Visas

**Marion Fellows:** [45004]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what number and proportion of (a) overall visa applications and (b) applications from Syrian passport holders have been rejected by her Department in the last year.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The latest quarterly Home Office immigration statistics on entry clearance visas are published in 'Immigration Statistics, April - June 2016', available from the Home Office website at:

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

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### ■ Department for International Development: Holiday Leave

**Tim Farron:** [44957]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many days of holiday, on average, were awarded to departmental employees living and working overseas in 2015-16.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID employees living and working overseas may utilise up to 30 days annual leave, with exception of those at A band (Grade 7 and above) who are eligible for 31.5 days, plus agreed local public holidays.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Arms Trade

**Dr Tania Mathias:** [44223]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, to which countries of concern on human rights the Government has authorised arms sales in the last year.

**Mark Garnier:**

*[Holding answer 8 September 2016]:* From January 2015 – March 2016 licences have been granted for military goods to the following countries of human rights concern:

Afghanistan; Bahrain; Bangladesh; Burundi; Central African Republic; China; Colombia; Democratic Republic of Congo; Egypt; Iraq; Israel and The Occupied Palestinian

Territories; Maldives; Pakistan; Russia; Saudi Arabia; Somalia; South Sudan; Sri Lanka; Sudan; Syria; Turkmenistan; Venezuela; Yemen and Zimbabwe.

Further details on all licences granted for export are publically available as Official Statistics at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

All export licences are issued in strict accordance with the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria and any sanctions or embargoes that may be in place at the time an application is submitted for consideration.

## ■ Foreign Investment in UK

**Andy Slaughter:** [44584]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking in response to the outcome of the EU referendum to boost the UK's inward investment promotion and delivery effort.

**Greg Hands:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* DIT Ministers and I have been clear that Britain remains open for business. On 5 th September 2016, the Directorate General within DIT responsible for inward investment moved to a new, more focussed operating model to deliver inward investment. This focuses on attracting high-value FDI that maximises wealth creation within the UK in the sectors, places and markets that provide the greatest opportunity.

**Andy Slaughter:** [44721]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to retain current inward investors in the UK after the UK leaves the EU.

**Greg Hands:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* The UK remains the most attractive place in Europe to invest in. As well as attracting new projects, this Department already focuses substantial effort on retention of our existing investors and supporting them to grow and remain in the UK to maximise wealth creation. On 5 th September 2016, the Directorate General within DIT responsible for inward investment moved to a new, more focussed operating model to deliver inward investment, which will push this agenda and provide more focussed support than ever before to retain our inward investors.

## ■ Motor Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [906166]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, when he plans to meet with UK automotive sector representatives to discuss that sector's role in future trade deals.

**Mark Garnier:**

The UK has a highly successful automotive industry. I and the government are determined to ensure that success continues.

Ministers will be seeking input on future trade deals from the UK automotive sector through regular dialogue with individual companies and the Automotive Council.

The Government will engage fully with a wide range of stakeholders over the coming weeks and months as we prepare for the negotiation with the EU and beyond.

#### ■ Research: Israel

**Graham Evans:**

[\[906168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to ensure that the UK retains its research and development relationship with Israel after the UK leaves the EU.

**Mark Garnier:**

We have a strong research and development relationship with Israel, and that will continue.

We have established a UK-Israel Tech Hub, which creates partnerships between British companies and world class Israeli innovators.

We also have a thriving science and innovation relationship, for example the UK-Israel Science Council whose core mandate is to improve science collaboration between the UK and Israel.

#### ■ Trade Agreements: Israel

**Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:**

[\[906162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to secure a trade agreement with Israel after the UK ceases to be party to the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

**Greg Hands:**

In due course, Britain will be leaving the EU. This offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world: to negotiate, in time, our own trade agreements and to be a positive and powerful force for free trade.

Whilst it would be wrong to set out unilateral positions at this stage, the UK will want to continue our strong trade and investment relationship with Israel.

#### ■ Trade Promotion: Exports

**Adam Afriyie:**

[\[906167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment his Department has made of the potential role of the Prime Minister's Trade Envoys in increasing future levels of UK exports.

**Dr Liam Fox:**

The Trade Envoy programme has been in operation since 2012 and continues to go from strength to strength.

There are currently 21 Trade Envoys covering around 50 markets. Trade Envoys support the drive for economic growth by building on the UK's existing relations with these markets and maximising bilateral trade.

It is crucial that we use all tools at our disposal to promote British trade across the world and Trade Envoys will be a key part of our Departmental strategy.

## ■ UK Trade and Investment

**Craig Tracey:** [\[906161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what plans he has to reform UK Trade and Investment.

**Greg Hands:**

UKTI's functions have been elevated and integrated into the Department for International Trade. In line with the Secretary of State's ambitious plans, we will focus resource on 191 priority global high-value export campaigns, and 250 campaigns for Foreign Direct Investment. We are also creating new, targeted digital support services and working closely with an increasing breadth of commercial partners to drive both export value, and the number of UK companies exporting.

## ■ UK Trade with EU

**Patricia Gibson:** [\[906164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will estimate the potential cost to the economy of trade barriers between the UK and EU countries after the UK has left the EU.

**Greg Hands:**

We are going to make a success of Brexit. As my Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister made clear ahead of the G20 summit, the UK will continue to be a powerful advocate for free and fair trade.

## JUSTICE

### ■ Dangerous Driving

**Mr Charles Walker:** [\[44964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when the Government intends to publish its consultation relating to death by dangerous driving and driving without due care and attention.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

My department is looking at driving offences and penalties for those who kill or cause serious injury and the best way to take this work forward.

## ■ Employment Tribunals Service: Fees and Charges

Chris Stephens: [\[44963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average length of time was for fee remission in employment tribunal claims between receipt of such claims and final processing in the latest period for which figures are available; and what proportion of fee remission applications were successful in that period.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

This information is available on gov.uk within the published Tribunals and Gender Recognition Statistics Quarterly.

## ■ Missing Persons

Ann Coffey: [\[44982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will bring forward legislative proposals to create a new legal status of guardian of the property and affairs of a missing person by 1 December 2016.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

We will bring forward legislation as soon as Parliamentary time allows.

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Scotland

Chris Stephens: [\[44896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of appeals to the tribunal service from appellants in (a) Glasgow South West constituency, (b) Glasgow and (c) Scotland regarding (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.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

Information about the volumes and outcomes of appeals to the Tribunal is published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/tribunals-statistics>.

The information provided below is a further breakdown of this data.

### PROPORTION OF APPEALS DECIDED IN FAVOUR OF THE APPELLANT BETWEEN APRIL 2015 AND MARCH 2016

	PIP <sup>1</sup>	ESA <sup>2</sup>	IS	JSA	Tax Credits <sup>3</sup>
<b>Glasgow</b> <sup>4</sup>	58%	58%	42%	49%	53%
<b>Scotland</b>	53%	57%	37%	48%	49%

Tribunal figures are presented on a financial year basis (April 2015 – March 2016).

Social Security and Child Support data are normally registered to the venue nearest to the appellant's home address. We cannot retrieve data based on the appellant's actual address, but can produce reports detailing the numbers of cases that were dealt with at one of our Regional centres

<sup>1</sup> Personal Independence Payment (PIP) (New Claim Appeals) which replaces Disability Living Allowance was introduced on 8 April 2013, also includes Personal Independence Clams (Reassessments)

<sup>2</sup> Includes Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Employment Support Allowance (Reassessments)

<sup>3</sup> Includes Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit.

<sup>4</sup> Glasgow includes the venues: Glasgow Wellington House and Glasgow Eagle Building

Cleared at hearing includes cases cleared at both oral and paper hearings. It may also include some withdrawals. It excludes cases cleared prior to hearing.

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 is the best data that is available.

The data may differ slightly to that of the published stats as this data was run on a different date.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### ■ Northern Ireland Office: Consultants

**Margaret Hodge:** [\[44336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, if he will publish a list of all secondees to his Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

**Kris Hopkins:**

The Northern Ireland Office has not had any secondees from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years.

**Margaret Hodge:** [\[44356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many times his Department has used the services of (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what (i) work was undertaken and (ii) the cost to the public purse was on each such occasion.

**Kris Hopkins:**

The Department has used the services of (a) PwC, once in the last three financial years. This was for the provision of VAT advice. The cost to the public purse was £1,350. My

department has not used the services of any other consultant firms in the last three financial years.

## SCOTLAND

### ■ Scotland Office: Consultants

**Margaret Hodge:** [\[44338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will publish a list of all secondees to his Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

**David Mundell:**

In the last three financial years, there have been no secondees at the Scotland Office from PwC, Deloitte, Ernst and Young, KPMG or any other consulting firms.

**Margaret Hodge:** [\[44358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many times his Department has used the services of (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what (i) work was undertaken and (ii) the cost to the public purse was on each such occasion.

**David Mundell:**

The Scotland Office has not used the services of (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years.

### ■ Scotland Office: UK Withdrawal from EU

**Karl McCartney:** [\[44253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what steps his Department has taken to prepare for the UK to leave the EU since 23 June 2016; and what further such steps his Department plans to take in the remainder of 2016.

**David Mundell:**

The Department for Exiting the European Union has responsibility for overseeing preparations for the withdrawal of the UK from the EU and conducting these withdrawal negotiations in support of the Prime Minister.

In doing this, it is working very closely with other government departments, including the Scotland Office, the devolved administrations and a wide range of other interested parties.

**TRANSPORT**■ **Aviation: Compensation**

**Diana Johnson:** [\[43541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to ensure that British citizens continue to benefit from the rules on flight delays covered by EU Regulation 261/2004.

**Mr John Hayes:**

While we remain a full member of the EU, we retain the same rights and obligations as all other Members, including those covered by the existing directives and regulations, such as rules on flight delays under EU Regulation 261/2004.

The future application of this legislation will depend on the outcome of negotiating a new relationship with the EU.

■ **Blue Badge Scheme: Parents**

**Mary Robinson:** [\[44292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if his Department plans to take steps to extend eligibility for the Blue Badge scheme to the parents of children with autism.

**Mary Robinson:** [\[44293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what provisions are available to local authorities for extending the eligibility criteria for the Blue Badge scheme to people with severe physical disabilities who are not automatically eligible.

**Andrew Jones:**

Local authorities do not have powers to independently extend eligibility. The criteria are set by statutory instrument. The Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) contain a number of criteria covering those who do not qualify automatically, including a provision for **any** permanent and substantial disability that causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking. It is the responsibility of local authorities to assess whether applicants meet any of the criteria.

People with autism are not excluded from being issued a badge. Any permanent and substantial disability that causes very considerable difficulty walking falls within the criteria. It is the responsibility of local authorities to assess the degree of difficulty and to issue badges accordingly. We have no plans to provide badges to carers.

■ **Heathrow Airport**

**Bob Blackman:** [\[43919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate the Government has made of the cost to the public purse of constructing a third runway at Heathrow Airport over the course of the construction period.



**Mr John Hayes:**

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December 2015 and is considering all of the evidence very carefully before reaching a view on its preferred scheme. The Government is not providing a running commentary on this work and nor would it be appropriate to outline specific pieces of evidence before a decision is announced on its preference. Any work to inform an announcement will be set out in subsequent publications and associated consultation.

**■ High Speed 2 Railway Line: Coventry****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[44979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential economic effect of High Speed 2 on the local economy in Coventry; and if he will make a statement.

**Andrew Jones:**

Much of the research on the impacts of HS2 on specific areas of the UK so far has focussed on the HS2 named cities such as Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and London. However, to build an understanding of the potential for HS2 to contribute to balanced economic growth in the UK, *The HS2 Phase 2 West Midlands to Crewe Economic Case*, published in 2015, apportioned the estimated social benefits of the project to different regions. The West Midlands was estimated to receive 14% of the benefit of the full 'Y' network in 2037. Coventry, located close to the planned HS2 Birmingham Interchange station, can be expected to benefit from faster journey times through the high speed network as well as released capacity on the classic network.

Early research published in the *HS2 Regional Economic Impacts* report in 2013 attempted to estimate the gross GVA effects of HS2 on the West Midlands economy in 2037 and produced an illustrative estimate of between £1.5bn and £3.1bn of additional output per annum (in 2013 prices). We continue to refine the methodology of how we assess regional economic impacts and build evidence on the contribution which HS2 could make to creating sustainable and balanced economic growth.

**■ High Speed 2 Railway Line: Euston Station****Keir Starmer:**[\[44619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 5 July 2016 to Question 41593, when the additional works on passenger train impacts from any transportation of excavated and construction materials at Euston is planned to be completed.

**Andrew Jones:**

The detailed timetable for this work is being developed with Network Rail. However, we would hope that it would be complete in early 2017. This work will be undertaken in close dialogue with the Greater London Authority, London Borough of Camden and Transport for London.

**Keir Starmer:**

[\[44620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 5 July 2016 to Question 41593, for what reason HS2 Ltd is supporting a two rather than three railhead option at Euston for the transportation of excavated and construction materials.

**Andrew Jones:**

The decision to pursue a two railhead solution was based on a detailed consideration of the environmental, socio-economic and value for money benefits of that option as compared to the value for money disbenefits of the option that included a third railhead. HS2 will, however, continue to seek ways to mitigate the construction programme impacts and to respond to feedback, which will include exploring, during the detailed design phase, additional and/or alternative opportunities to move material by rail including, but not limited to, the third railhead option.

## ■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Licensing

**Richard Burden:**

[\[45012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the DVLA on waiting times for HGV driving licence renewal; what the (a) rate of renewals, (b) number of new applications, (c) total number of renewals outstanding, (d) average waiting time from application to renewal and (e) number of staff processing renewals was for HGV driving licence renewals; and if he will make a statement.

**Andrew Jones:**

The table below shows the average waiting time for straightforward vocational licence renewals and the time taken to process the transaction from the day it is received at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). The figures are the latest available and are for the period September 2015 to August 2016 and include applications and renewals of HGV and PSV (bus driving) entitlements.

a) Rate of renewals:

11,675 on average per month

b) Number of new applications:

5,126 on average per month

c) Total number of renewal outstanding:

Approximately 8,000 on 5 September 2016

d) Average waiting time from application to renewal:

The average waiting time from application to renewal is 1.5 working days. September 2015 – August 2016, 99% of straightforward applications were processed within three days of receipt. Applications that are more complex or where there is a medical condition involved take longer to investigate before a licensing decision can be made.

e) Number of staff processing HGV driving licence renewals:

120 staff members work on all types of vocational transactions. This includes both HGV and bus driving licence renewals.

## ■ London Airports

**Bob Blackman:**

[43920]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if the Government will make it its policy not to take a decision on the location of an additional runway until its reviews of UK airspace and the Aviation Policy Framework have been completed.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Government remains fully committed to delivering the important infrastructure projects it has set out, including delivering runway capacity on the timetable set out by Sir Howard Davies.

In the coming weeks the Government will carefully consider all of the evidence before reaching a view on its preferred scheme.

## ■ London Airports: Environment Protection

**Lilian Greenwood:**

[43553]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the environmental assurance work his Department undertook in December 2015 in connection with runway expansion has been completed; and what the estimated cost of that work was to the public purse on the latest date for which figures are available.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Department is undertaking work to understand the environmental impacts of additional airport capacity. Further details on procurement undertaken to support the Department on environmental impacts can be found here:

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/17ffaddc-3c19-4462-91ae-bf30029c08d9>.

## ■ Stechford Station

**Jess Phillips:**

[43982]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 15 October 2015 to Question 10706, and to the letter sent by Network Rail to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Yardley on 14 July 2016, what the expected timescale is for accessibility alterations for Stechford railway station.

**Paul Maynard:**

Network Rail have completed the option selection process for the Access for All scheme at Stechford and are working on a detailed design for the project. The Network Rail sponsor for the project would be happy to meet the hon Member to discuss plans for improving access at the station.

**■ Taxis: Licensing**

**Gill Furniss:** [\[45094\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to launch his Department's public consultation on new Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Practice Guidance.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Department is currently updating the existing guidance on local authority licensing functions for taxi and private hire vehicles. We will consult on a draft once the Policing and Crime Bill, which provides a new power for statutory guidance, has received Royal Assent.

**■ Taxis: Regulation**

**Craig Whittaker:** [\[44444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to review the regulations and guidance governing taxi and private hire vehicles working outside their primary licensing authority area.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Department for Transport's Best Practice Guidance on taxi and private hire licensing was issued in 2010. It is expected that a consultation on revised guidance will be launched early next year. Subject to Royal Assent to the Policing and Crime Bill, this will be accompanied by draft Statutory Guidance in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

The Government is currently considering all the recommendations in the Law Commission's report on taxi and private hire regulation in England and Wales and will formally respond to the Law Commission and announce its intentions once this scrutiny is completed.

**■ Taxis: Training**

**Rebecca Long Bailey:** [\[43879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what training taxi and private hire drivers are required to complete to support blind and partially sighted passengers.

**Andrew Jones:**

Whilst no national mandatory requirements exist to provide training, we strongly encourage licensing authorities to consider requiring their taxi and private hire drivers to undergo training, ensuring that every passenger can be provided with a first class service.

Well-designed disability awareness training, provided by the local authority, can help drivers to understand their legal duties and to equip them with the knowledge and skills to assist a range of passengers, including those who are visually impaired.

## ■ Transport: North of England

**Graham Jones:**

[\[44832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to make any changes to the budget it has allocated to the Northern Powerhouse initiative for investing in transport.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Government remains committed to the plans it set out at the Spending Review for transport investment in support of the Northern Powerhouse initiative.

## WALES

## ■ Wales Office: Consultants

**Margaret Hodge:**

[\[44340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, if he will publish a list of all secondees to his Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what the role was of each of those secondees.

**Guto Bebb:**

The Wales Office had no secondees from PwC, Deloitte, Ernst & Young and KPMG or other consulting firms in the last three financial years.

**Margaret Hodge:**

[\[44360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how many times his Department has used the services of (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what (i) work was undertaken and (ii) the cost to the public purse was on each such occasion.

**Guto Bebb:**

The Wales Office has not used the services of PwC, Deloitte, Ernst and Young, KPMG or other consulting firms in the last three financial years.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

## ■ Attendance Allowance

**Mr Jamie Reed:**

[\[44898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much his Department spent on administration costs related to attendance allowance in 2015-16.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The total administrative cost of Attendance Allowance for 2015/16 is not available.

**Mr Jamie Reed:** [44901]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much was spent on advertising the attendance allowance scheme in 2015-16.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

2015/16 advertising costs for the Attendance Allowance scheme are not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

#### ■ Attendance Allowance: Terminal Illnesses

**Mr Jamie Reed:** [44899]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people applied for attendance allowance under the special rules for people with terminal illness in each of the last five years.

**Mr Jamie Reed:** [44900]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with cancer applied for attendance allowance under the special rules for people with terminal illness in each of the last five years.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. Information on claims awarded under the special rules for people with terminal illness is available from the DWP Tabulation Tool: <http://tabulation-tool.dwp.gov.uk/100pc/tabtool.html>.

#### ■ Department for Work and Pensions: Communication

**Deidre Brock:** [43591]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the cost to his Department was of its communications team in each year since 2007; and what the projected cost is of that team in 2016.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The table below shows the details of actual and forecast expenditure for the staff cost of the Department's Strategic Communications Directorate.

The staff costs include the costs of salaries, employer national insurance contribution, employer pension contribution, performance related awards, overtime, travelling time, temporary duty allowance, secondments, contractors and staff substitutions. Also, associated IT costs and communications directorate external contracts are included.

FINANCIAL YEAR	STAFF COSTS £M
2013-14	17.543
2014/15	15.277
2015/16	15.109

FINANCIAL YEAR	STAFF COSTS £M
2016/17*	15.134

*\*forecast as at July 2016*

Following a significant organisational design review (ODR) which resulted in fundamental structural changes within the Corporate Centre of DWP, expenditure prior to 2013/14 is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ **Domestic Violence: Refuges**

**Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:** [\[44731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the number of domestic violence refuges that will be potentially close as a result of changes to housing benefit.

**Caroline Nokes:**

*[Holding answer 7 September 2016]:* The Secretary of State has confirmed that the Government expects to make an announcement on the way forward for supported housing in early autumn. Full impact and equality impact assessments will be undertaken in due course.

■ **Employment and Support Allowance**

**Dr Eilidh Whiteford:** [\[44465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average number of days was from the posting of a medical certificate by a claimant in support of an employment and support allowance claim to the day his Department acknowledged receipt of that certificate in the last 12 months.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ **Funeral Payments: Scotland**

**Chris Stephens:** [\[44895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many applications for funeral payments were (a) made and (b) granted in Scotland in 2015-16; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Stephens:** [\[44897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the total expenditure from the public purse was for the social fund funeral payments scheme in 2015-16; and if he will make a statement.

**Caroline Nokes:**

During 2015-16 in Scotland there were around 5500 applications for Funeral Expenses Payments and around 3700 awards granted.

In 2015-16 across Great Britain £40,025,000 was paid out in Funeral Expenses Payments and repayments totalled £183,000. These figures are given on page 12 of the Social Fund Account 2015-16 (linked to below)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/535981/social-fund-account-2015-16.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535981/social-fund-account-2015-16.pdf)

■ **Housing Benefit****Caroline Lucas:**[\[44004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what (a) discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health on plans to cap housing benefit and (b) assessment he has made of the potential effect of the proposed cap on housing benefit on people who live in supported housing and have mental illness; and if he will make a statement.

**Caroline Nokes:**

Ministers have held various discussions during the development of the policy to introduce Local Housing Allowance rates into the social rented sector.

Full impact and equality impact assessments will be undertaken in due course.

The Secretary of State has confirmed that the Government expects to make an announcement on the way forward for supported housing in early autumn.

■ **Housing Benefit: Private Rented Housing****Jim McMahon:**[\[44097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much in housing benefit has been paid (a) to tenants in private-rented sector accommodation and (b) directly to private landlords in each year since 2011.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The available information is in the table below.

HOUSING BENEFIT PAID FOR PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR ACCOMMODATION SPLIT BY PAYMENT DESTINATION  
(£MILLIONS, REAL TERMS 2016/2017 PRICES)

Financial Year	(a) Paid to Tenants	(b) Paid directly to Landlords	Total
2013/2014	6,630	2,970	9,600
2014/2015	6,390	2,870	9,260
2015/2016	6,220	2,770	8,990



Source: DWP Stat-x-plore and Benefit Expenditure tables

Notes:

1. Payment destination was unknown in around 1% of cases. This expenditure was assumed to be split between landlords and their tenants in the same proportion as the rest.
2. Payment destination statistics for financial years before 2013/2014 are not available.
3. Figures have been rounded to the nearest £10m and may not sum to totals due to rounding.
4. Expenditure for 2015/16 is based on statistical data for the full year but the financial total is a forecast.

#### ■ Housing Benefit: Supported Housing

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[44604]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether housing benefit recipients living in supported housing due to mental health problems will be subject to the benefit cap.

**Caroline Nokes:**

People receiving a range of disability benefits including Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment or who receive the support component of Employment and Support Allowance, are exempt from the benefit cap. The benefit cap does apply to claimants living in specified accommodation if they do not meet the criteria for an exemption but any Housing Benefit they receive will not be taken into account when determining whether the cap should be applied.

#### ■ Industrial Health and Safety: Electric Vehicles

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[44673]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to ensure the safety of technicians working with electric vehicle technology.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Health and Safety Executive, in February this year published guidance (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/mvr/topics/electric-hybrid.htm>) for both people servicing and repairing these vehicles and those involved in roadside recovery, including the emergency services.

#### ■ Jobcentre Plus: Staff

**Dr Eilidh Whiteford:**

[44462]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many disability employment advisers are employed by Jobcentre Plus.

**Damian Hinds:**

The number of Disability Employment Advisers employed by the Department for Work and Pensions is 263 at July 2016.

## ■ Mining: Industrial Health and Safety

**Tom Blenkinsop:** [44374]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to help prevent accidents in the mining industry.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Mines Regulations 2014 replaced all previous legislation relating to health and safety in mines. They provide a comprehensive and simple goal-setting legal framework to ensure that mine operators provide all the necessary protection for mineworkers and others from the inherent hazards in mining.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) targets interventions with the underground mining dutyholders and a mine's past safety and health performance is taken into account when deciding on the detail of specific interventions.

HSE investigates reported accidents in mines in line with the criteria set out in its Incident Selection Criteria. Investigations focus on determining both the immediate and underlying causes in order to prevent recurrence. HSE also make recommendations for improved methods of work and systems for the wider industry if necessary and holds dutyholders to account through proportional enforcement where appropriate.

**Tom Blenkinsop:** [44375]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make financial support available to improve health and safety (a) at Boulby Potash mine and (b) in the mining industry.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Government does not provide individual businesses or the mining industry with financial support to help them meet their health and safety duties. Protection of employees, or others who may be affected by work activities, is the responsibility of those who create the health and safety risks. The Health and Safety Executive's programme of work for the mines industry is described further on its website (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/mining/programme.htm>).

## ■ Personal Independence Payment

**Philip Davies:** [44704]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the current processing time from application to award for personal independence payments.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The current processing times represent a stable position for both DWP and our Assessment Providers and reflect the significant progress made to improve the claims

process by both parties over the preceding months. We continue to look at all of our processes and activities to identify any further areas for improvement, or to drive out even greater efficiency.

**Philip Davies:**

[44841]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average end-to-end processing time of personal independence payment claims was in April (a) 2016 and (b) 2015; and what steps he is taking to speed up the processing of such claims.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The latest available data on personal independence payment (PIP) processing times, for Great Britain, for both new claims and reassessed claims, can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-independence-payment-april-2013-to-april-2016> .

The current processing times represent a stable position for both DWP and our Assessment Providers and reflect the significant progress made to improve the claims process by both parties over the preceding months. We continue to look at all of our processes and activities to identify any further areas for improvement, or to drive out even greater efficiency.

## ■ Social Security Benefits

**Dr Eilidh Whiteford:**

[44466]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average time taken was to process hardship payments between the day the application was made and the day the claimant received the payment for sanctioned (a) jobseeker's allowance and (b) employment and support allowance claimants before reviews, reconsiderations or appeals for the period between 1 July and 31 December 2015.

**Damian Hinds:**

The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Fife

**Roger Mullin:**

[44871]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average time taken is for the transition from one employment and support allowance entitlement to jobseeker's allowance in Fife.

**Damian Hinds:**

The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Fraud

**Charlotte Leslie:**

[\[45323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 18 April 2016 to Question 32920, where the allegations of fraudulent benefit claims are collected.

**Caroline Nokes:**

There are a variety of ways that allegations of Benefit Fraud are received by the DWP including telephone calls to the National Benefit Fraud Hotline (NBFH), online and letter. Once an allegation has been received and, if it meets the required criteria containing enough information, a Fraud Referral Form (FRF) is completed which is then entered into the internal Fraud Referral and Information Management System (FRAIMS).

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

**Julian Sturdy:**

[\[44378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the impact of protocols on touching disability benefit assessment centre attendees on the accessibility of these sites to those who struggle to stand unaided.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

If a physical assessment of the musculoskeletal system is required, it is largely non-touch and based on observing 'active movements' – i.e. movements carried out under the direction of, but without the physical intervention of, the Healthcare Professional.

The impact on a claimant undergoing this type of assessment should therefore be negligible.

## ■ State Retirement Pensions: Widowed People

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[43761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment the Government has made of the potential effect of the single-tier state pension on the level of income of widows.

**Richard Harrington:**

Under the new State Pension over three million women stand to receive an average of £11 a week more State Pension by 2030.

Around four percent of women reaching State Pension age in the first ten years following implementation will be affected by ending access to a derived basic pension while still married and/or when widowed. The proportion falls to two percent or less for succeeding cohorts. We are not able to provide an impact specifically on widows as the analysis does not separately identify the proportion of those who are affected only while married because they predecease their spouse.

## ■ Universal Credit

**Rebecca Long Bailey:**

[44284]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have transferred to universal credit since its implementation; and how many of those people have challenged the payment accredited to them.

**Damian Hinds:**

No existing legacy benefit claimant has yet been moved onto Universal Credit. The managed migration of existing legacy benefit claimants will commence in July 2019 and be completed in March 2022.

## ■ Universal Credit: Disqualification

**Dr Eilidh Whiteford:**

[44460]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when his Department plans to publish data on the number of (a) low, (b) medium and (c) high level sanctions applied to universal credit claimants (i) before and (ii) after challenges.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Department updated its strategy for releasing official statistics on Universal Credit (UC) in February 2016. As outlined in the strategy, officials are currently assessing the data for UC and will only release information once the necessary quality assurance work has taken place. These statistics will be published in accordance with the relevant protocols in the Code of Practice for official statistics.

Universal Credit official statistics and the Departments release strategy can be found at:

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

## ■ Work Capability Assessment

**Julian Sturdy:**

[44490]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of accessibility of assessment centres for work capability assessment and personal independence payments consultations for people using larger or bariatric wheelchairs.

**Julian Sturdy:**

[44491]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to ensure assessment centres for work capability assessment and personal independence payment consultations are fully accessible to people using different kinds of mobility assistance devices.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

All assessment centres meet accessibility standards under the Equality Act 2010.

Before attending an assessment, claimants are given the opportunity to alert the assessment provider to any additional requirements they may have and the providers will endeavour to meet any such reasonable requests.

If a claimant is unable to travel to, or access an assessment centre as a result of their health condition or impairment, a home visit may be offered.

## MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

### BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

#### ■ Minimum Wage

Caroline Lucas:

[38139]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, with reference to the Answer of 10 May 2016 to Question 36447, how much of the £10.3 million of minimum wage arrears recovered in 2015-16 was recovered from the 145 employers who were not issued with a Notice of Underpayment and who did not have to pay a penalty.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 1 June 2016. The correct answer should have been:**

~~Nick Boles~~

**Margot James:**

60 employers responded to the National Minimum Wage campaign announced by HM Revenue and Customs on 29 July 2015. Between them, these employers voluntarily disclosed arrears of £786,038 owed to 4869 workers.

**In 2015/16 819 employers were issued with a Notice of Underpayment (NoU), and of this number, 814 were issued with a penalty. The combined penalties issued to these employers totalled £1,780,367.**

**5 employers were issued with an NoU but no penalty because they had either gone into liquidation or had otherwise ceased trading, or because an Employment Tribunal had issued a judgment that no financial penalty should be imposed. Collectively these employers owed £57,603 to 30 workers.**

**A further 145 employers found to have underpaid their workers were not issued with a NoU or a penalty. Collectively these employers owed £2,065,874 to 14,055 workers.**

Caroline Lucas:

[38140]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, with reference to the Answer of 14 September 2015 to Question 8859, how many employers took advantage of the National Minimum Wage campaign announced on 30 July 2015 to self-report their non-compliance with the National Minimum Wage; how many workers were identified as having been underpaid by those employers; and what the total sum was of arrears recovered for those workers.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 1 June 2016. The correct answer should have been:**

~~Nick Boles~~

**Margot James:**

**In total** 60 employers responded to the National Minimum Wage campaign announced by HM Revenue and Customs on 29 July 2015. Between them, these employers voluntarily disclosed arrears of £786,038 owed to 4869 workers.

56 employers voluntarily disclosed arrears of £742,587 owed to 4875 workers. A further 4 employers voluntarily also disclosed arrears of £43,451 owed to 36 workers, but since these latter cases were closed after 1 April 2016, these arrears are not included in 2015/16 year end totals.



## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### TREASURY

#### ■ ECOFIN: 9-10 September 2016

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Philip Hammond):

[\[HCWS138\]](#)

An informal meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council will be held in Bratislava on 9 – 10 September 2016. The Government is committed to leaving the European Union; in the interim, it continues to participate fully in ECOFIN meetings. EU Finance Ministers are due to discuss the following items:

#### **Future economic policies in the EU**

Ministers will discuss the EU's current economic policy framework and whether further systemic reforms are needed. This discussion will be supported by presentations from former Italian Prime Minister and Finance Minister Mario Monti and former Swedish Finance Minister Anders Borg.

#### **Deepening Economic Monetary Union (EMU) – fiscal pillar**

An orientation discussion will be held on proposals for a euro area fiscal capacity, assisted by Guntram Wolff of Bruegel, Vítor Gaspar of the IMF, and Danial Gros of the Centre for European Policy Studies.

#### **Taxation – current issues: improving tax certainty and fighting BEPS, tax crime and terrorism**

Ministers will exchange views on measures to address tax avoidance, tax evasion and tax crime and counter-terrorist financing. The discussion will be framed by a presentations from OECD Secretary General Ángel Gurría and State Secretary of the Slovak Finance Ministry Dana Meager.

#### **Investment plan for Europe**

The Council will discuss the progress of the first two pillars of the Investment Plan for Europe; the European Fund for Strategic investment (EFSI) and European Investment and Advisory Hub. EIB President Werner Hoyer and EFSI Managing Director Wilhelm Molterer will report on the first year's functioning of EFSI and the Hub.

### ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

#### ■ National Flood Resilience Review

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Andrea Leadsom):  
[\[HCWS135\]](#)

My Rt Hon Friend, the Minister for the Cabinet Office (Ben Gummer) and I would like to update the house on our progress with the National Flood Resilience Review

Last year the UK was hit by a number of extreme flood events, including in Cumbria, Yorkshire and Lancashire. Record rainfall and river levels have led to widespread floods severely affecting cities, communities and businesses.

The magnitude of these events means that we need to fully understand the scale of risk that the country is currently facing from river and coastal flooding. We need to take immediate steps to improve our resilience to this flooding.

As a result, the Government set up the National Flood Resilience Review, chaired by my Rt Hon Friend the then Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Oliver Letwin) and overseen by a cross-government National Flood Resilience Review Group. That review is being published today, setting out the actions to improve the nation's resilience.

By using new plausible extreme rainfall scenarios developed by the Met Office in the Environment Agency's flood modelling, we are now confident that the Extreme Flood Outlines can be used as a robust planning tool for assessing flood risk.

As part of the review we completed a preliminary assessment of the resilience of key local infrastructure, such as energy, water, health, transport and telecommunications to flooding from rivers and seas. These are services our communities and businesses depend on.

The results showed around 530 facilities vulnerable to river and coastal flooding which could impact significant local communities. Working with the relevant utilities, regulators and government departments, a number of areas have been identified to improve resilience planning for this infrastructure. By Christmas 2016, the water and telecoms sectors will develop and implement plans for where temporary improvements can be made to the flood resilience of their infrastructure. These plans will ensure that the utilities obtain stock-piles of temporary defences in advance and have site-specific plans ready to deploy where they can be used. This is in line with current practice in the electricity supply industry.

In addition to these temporary defences all sectors with infrastructure at risk have agreed to develop and implement plans (where not already in place) to make medium term permanent improvements to the flood resilience of their services to significant local communities.

Whilst better understanding the risk helps us better prepare and protect infrastructure, effective response when flooding occurs is essential to minimise impact and protect lives. The review sets out actions that the Government and others will be taking to improve the response to flooding incidents by delivering a long-term rolling programme of improvements to our modelling, improving working across services and with local communities to strengthen our response, and improving our communication of flood risks.

The Government has prioritised investment in maintaining and improving flood defences in England with a record £2.3bn six-year commitment to 1,500 schemes. This is set to better protect 300,000 homes and provide £30 billion in economic benefits by 2021.

On top of that, in this year's budget, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a £700 million increase in flood defence and resilience spending, including a further £150m for new flood defence schemes in Cumbria and Yorkshire. He also signalled that part of this funding would be used to respond to this review.

The findings published today commit an investment of £12.5 million to increase the Environment Agency's stock of temporary flood defences and other incident response equipment.

The work identified in the review is continuing, including with local resilience forums. Additional funding support will be considered as further findings emerge.

Copies of the review have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

## HOME OFFICE

### ■ Publication of the Review of the Forensic Archive Ltd.

**The Minister of State for Fire and Policing (Brandon Lewis):**

[\[HCWS137\]](#)

I am pleased to announce that I am today publishing the Review of the Forensic Archive Limited (FAL). FAL was established in October 2012 to manage and maintain material previously held by the Forensic Science Service.

The Review makes ten recommendations, most crucially that the functions of FAL should continue to be carried out and that FAL is the best organisation to do so. It also recommends that the Home Office continue to fund FAL. I agree with these recommendations.

I will place a copy of the Review in the Library of the House.

## JUSTICE

### ■ Cremation regulations

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice, Minister for Victims, Youth and Family Justice (Dr Phillip Lee):**

[\[HCWS139\]](#)

I am today announcing that new regulations regarding cremation in England and Wales have been laid before Parliament. The Cremation (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 will come into effect on 1 October 2016.

We are making these changes following our recent response to our consultation on cremation, published on 7 July 2016, in which we committed to make a number of changes to infant cremation regulations and practice. The regulations laid today introduce a statutory definition of ashes. They also remove the current requirement that cremation authorities must keep original paper records for two years, even though they have also made electronic copies of those records. These changes will provide clarity for bereaved parents at a difficult time in their lives, and modernise processes for crematoria.

In addition I would like to announce that, as also promised in the consultation response, we have now set up a National Cremation Working Group. The group is made up of representatives from the cremation and funeral industries, voluntary organisations who support bereaved parents, medical professionals and other government departments with an interest in cremation. In the coming months it will provide expert input into our work to further improve cremation legislation and practice. The group's first priority will be amending

statutory application forms regarding options for disposal of ashes, and bringing the cremation of fetuses of less than 24 weeks' gestation into the remit of the cremation regulations.

## PRIME MINISTER

### ■ Annual Reports of the Intelligence Services Commissioner and the Interception of Communications Commissioner

Prime Minister (Mrs Theresa May):

[\[HCWS136\]](#)

I have today laid before both Houses a copy of the latest annual reports from the Intelligence Services Commissioner and the Interception of Communications Commissioner. Both reports show the rigour and strength of our intelligence oversight system, a system that will be further strengthened with the introduction of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner provisions set out in the Investigatory Powers Bill. I welcome the unprecedented level of transparency about the authorisation and oversight regimes that both reports contain.

I am pleased that both reports recognise the diligence and rigour of those who use investigatory powers. These are important powers that are used, when necessary, to keep our country safe. Both reports contain details of the recommendations that the Commissioners have made to continue to improve the way that these powers are used. The public authorities who have received these recommendations will be giving careful consideration to them and how to further improve their processes.

I would like to thank both Commissioners, and the staff that work for them, for their continued diligence and the rigour with which they undertake their oversight roles. In particular, I would like to thank Sir Mark Waller for all of the work that he has undertaken as Intelligence Services Commissioner since this is the last full year of inspections that he will undertake.