



Daily Report

Friday, 24 February 2017

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 24 February 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:15 P.M., 24 February 2017). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

CONTENTS

ANSWERS	4	■ Petroleum Revenue Tax: Tax Allowances	13
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	4	■ Save As You Earn: Tax Allowances	13
■ Employment: Environment Protection	4	■ Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme: Tax Allowances	13
CABINET OFFICE	4	■ Self-employed: Hemsworth	14
■ Cabinet Office: Cost Effectiveness	4	■ Self-employed: Tax Allowances	14
■ Cabinet Office: Equality	5	■ Stamp Duty Land Tax	14
■ Cabinet Office: Pay	5	■ Taxation: Rebates	15
■ Cabinet Office: Recruitment	6	COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	15
■ Cabinet Office: Security	6	■ Right to Buy Scheme	15
■ Cabinet Office: Uber	7	CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	16
■ Government Departments: Digital Technology	7	■ BBC	16
TREASURY	8	■ BBC: Advertising	16
■ Day Care: Tax Allowances	8	■ BBC: Social Mobility	16
■ Employee Ownership: Tax Allowances	9	■ S4C: Reviews	16
■ Equitable Life Assurance Society: Compensation	9	■ Young People	17
■ Fraud	9	■ Youth Services	17
■ Fraud: Taxation	11	DEFENCE	18
■ Inheritance Tax	11	■ Armed Forces: Deployment	18
■ Pensions: Tax Allowances	12	■ Army: Housing	18
■ Petroleum Revenue Tax	12	■ Defence Equipment: Procurement	19

■ Defence: Expenditure	19	■ Foreign and Commonwealth	
■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft	20	Office: Security	30
■ Libya: United States Africa		■ Juhel Miah	30
Command	21	■ Philippines: Emergency	
■ Maritime Patrol Aircraft	21	Powers	31
■ Nuclear Submarines	22	■ Ukraine: Armed Conflict	31
■ Trafalgar Class Submarines	22	HEALTH	32
■ United States Africa Command	23	■ Alzheimer's Disease: Medical	
■ Warships: Shipbuilding	23	Treatments	32
DUCHY OF LANCASTER	23	■ Breast Cancer: Radiotherapy	33
■ Chancellor of the Duchy of		■ Cancer	33
Lancaster: Pay	23	■ Care Homes: Nurses	34
■ Chancellor of the Duchy of		■ Clinical Commissioning	
Lancaster: Security	24	Groups: Buildings	34
■ Duchy of Lancaster		■ Community Health Services:	
Benevolent Fund	24	Liverpool	34
■ Duchy of Lancaster: Senior		■ Department of Health: Brexit	35
Civil Servants	25	■ Eltham Community Hospital:	
EDUCATION	25	Hospital Beds	35
■ Pre-school Education	25	■ Health Insurance: Foreign	
■ Pre-school Education:		Nationals	35
Apprentices	26	■ Health Services	37
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND		■ Health Visitors	38
RURAL AFFAIRS	27	■ Hospitals: Construction	38
■ Dog Fighting	27	■ Hospitals: Warrington	38
■ Non-native Species: Crayfish	27	■ Medical Treatments	39
EXITING THE EUROPEAN		■ Mental Health Services: Acute	
UNION	28	Beds	39
■ Members: Correspondence	28	■ Mental Health Services:	
FOREIGN AND		Expenditure	39
COMMONWEALTH OFFICE	28	■ NHS Property Services and	
■ Afghanistan: Security	28	Community Health	
■ China: Christianity	29	Partnerships	39
■ China: Human Rights	29	■ NHS: Buildings	40
■ Climate Change	30	■ NHS: Location	41
		■ Phil Morley	41

■ Strokes: Health Services	42	■ Taxis: Licensing	51
HOME OFFICE	43	WORK AND PENSIONS	51
■ Asylum: Northern Ireland	43	■ ASW: Pensions	51
■ Members: Correspondence	43	■ Employment and Support Allowance: Work Capability Assessments	52
■ Sexting: Young People	43	■ Housing Benefit: Veterans	52
INTERNATIONAL TRADE	44	■ Jobcentres: Liverpool	52
■ Department for International Trade: Brexit	44	■ Occupational Pensions	53
■ Department for International Trade: Pay	44	■ Pensions: Females	54
■ Department for International Trade: Uber	45	■ Social Security Benefits	55
■ UK Export Finance: Contracts	45	■ Universal Credit	55
JUSTICE	45	WRITTEN STATEMENTS	56
■ Coroners	45	BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	56
■ Ministry of Justice: Brexit	46	■ EU ENERGY COUNCIL, BRUSSELS, 27 FEBRUARY	56
■ Prisoners' Release: Females	46	ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	57
■ Prisons: Buildings	46	■ Avian Influenza update	57
■ Prisons: Dogs	46	■ EU Environment Council	58
■ Reoffenders: Greater London	47	FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE	59
TRANSPORT	47	■ Hong Kong (Sino/British Joint Declaration)	59
■ Airports: Security	47	HOME OFFICE	59
■ Department for Transport: Security	47	■ Report on the Review of the Use and Retention of Custody Images	59
■ Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	48	JUSTICE	60
■ Heathrow Airport	48	■ Justice update	60
■ Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties	48	■ Youth justice	61
■ Parking: Pedestrian Areas	50		
■ Railways: Electrification	50		
■ Road Traffic: Exeter	50		

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

■ Employment: Environment Protection

Mr Mark Williams: [64897]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate he has made of the number of jobs in the green economy.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) carry out an annual survey to report on economic activity in the low carbon and renewable energy sector in the UK.

The latest release provides first estimates for 2015 and shows that an estimated 233,000 full-time equivalent employees were working directly in low carbon and renewable energy activities.

The ONS has not yet published estimates for 2015 of the additional employees supported in the supply chain to the sector. However, estimates for 2014 indicate that this activity could amount to around a further 200,000 full-time equivalent employees. Further information on the ONS releases can be found at the links below.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/finalestimates/2015>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/ukenvironmentalaccounts/lowcarbonandrenewableenergyeconomytotalactivity2014>

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Office: Cost Effectiveness

John McDonnell: [63949]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Written Statement of 6 February 2017, HCWS458, whether his Department will publish a social economic distributional analysis of the cost savings from the Cabinet Office in the last financial year.

John McDonnell: [63950]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Written Statement of 6 February 2017, HCWS458, whether his Department will publish a gender impact assessment of the cost savings from the Cabinet Office in the last financial year.

Ben Gummer:

The Government, announced savings and benefits totalling £3.3 billion in 2015/16 on 3rd February 2017, building on total savings of £52billion during the last parliament. A detailed breakdown of these savings and benefits was published alongside a technical note, including the individual methodologies from each of the savings workstreams featured in this announcement. Independent analysis of the savings and benefits by the Government Internal Audit Agency is provided in the Savings Validation Report, also published at the same time as the announcement.

These savings and benefits were realised in government Departments, with support, expertise and assurance from Cabinet Office Functions; Commercial, Property, Digital, and Fraud, Error, Debt and Grants.

This announcement is part of the Government's continued drive to embed greater efficiency in the way the government does business. The announcement includes £1.2billion of operational savings from commercial activities and optimising the government's property portfolio.

■ Cabinet Office: Equality

Chris Stephens:

[R] [\[64440\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many equality impact assessments have been carried out in the last three years on public service reforms which impact on (a) departmental staff and (b) members of the public; and if he will make a statement.

Ben Gummer:

Over the last three years the Cabinet Office has had and continues to have due regard, as necessary, to the public sector quality duty in exercising its functions. The Equality Act does not require this due regard to take the form of an equality impact assessment, nor does it define an equality impact assessment, and the Cabinet Office does not maintain a record of such assessments.

■ Cabinet Office: Pay

Philip Davies:

[\[64159\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

Philip Davies:

[\[64175\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in 10 Downing Street who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

Ben Gummer:

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

The Office for National Statistics publish much of this information each year by Civil Service organization as part of their annual release of Civil Service statistics. The latest data set from 2016 can be found on the ONS website, available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/bulletins/civilservicestatistics/2016>

Departmental breakdowns of the ethnicity and disability pay gaps are not published through the ONS and are not publicly available.

The Civil Service is committed to being a place where everyone can thrive, regardless of background- with the aim of becoming the most inclusive employer in the UK

Whilst it is encouraging to see a positive trajectory in terms of diversity representation in the Civil Service, we recognise that there is more to do. That is why in March 2016 the Government published its refreshed Talent Action Plan for the Civil Service, identifying actions to support our staff, increase diversity in the Civil Service and deliver the best possible public services.

■ Cabinet Office: Recruitment

Andrew Selous: [\[64465\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his Department operates a ban the box employment policy in respect of ex-offender job applicants with unspent convictions; and how many employees of his Department have unspent convictions.

Ben Gummer:

As part of the Cabinet Office recruitment process there is no requirement for applicants to declare unspent criminal convictions at the initial recruitment stage. Applicants are asked to declare unspent criminal convictions as part of basic employment checks when a provisional offer of employment has been made. Decisions concerning appointment to a post where an individual has a conviction history are made on a case-by-case basis. If a post requires National Security Vetting then both spent and unspent convictions are considered on a case by case basis under a national security exemption to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

We would not release the information on numbers or individuals for security reasons.

■ Cabinet Office: Security

Jon Trickett: [\[63866\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 6 February 2017 to Question 62529, what the number of security passes issued by his Department to people not employed by his Department is; what business needs suffice for such a security pass to be granted; and what the number of passes issued to people who work for private

companies which have currently or previously been awarded government contracts or which are bidding for such contracts is.

Ben Gummer:

As at the 31st December 2016, the number of Building Access (security) passes issued by the Cabinet Office to people (a) not directly employed by and (b) who are not civil servants and who work or regularly visit the Cabinet Office was 39. In addition 345 passes have been issued to staff of external contractors who are employed full time working for the Cabinet Office.

The numbers of such passes will fluctuate significantly over the course of a year.

Such passes are issued to contractors, secondees, other public sector workers or Crown Servants (such as the police or military forces) as well as to civil servants where it is necessary and appropriate to do so. The business needs for determining the issuing of such passes will vary. They are always considered on a case by case basis and dependent upon a range of factors, such as the regularity/purpose/frequency of the person attending and any specific security issues and against a backdrop of ensuring that both business efficiency and the security of all our assets is maintained at all times.

All such passes are cancelled immediately when they are no longer required. Their use and provision is underpinned by a strong physical security focus, access control procedures and technologies, clear processes and assurance mechanisms that enable an integrated workforce to operate in a secure manner.

■ Cabinet Office: Uber

Mr Iain Wright: [\[64368\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much his Department has spent on (a) Uber for Business and (b) other Uber transactions since 28 October 2016.

Mr Iain Wright: [\[64381\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much 10 Downing Street has spent on (a) Uber for Business and (b) other Uber transactions since 28 October 2016.

Ben Gummer:

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

Following a check of Cabinet Office records, information on spend on (a) Uber for Business and (b) other Uber transactions since October 2016 is not held centrally.

■ Government Departments: Digital Technology

Andrew Gwynne: [\[63985\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his Department has conducted a security audit of the digital infrastructure within government buildings.

Ben Gummer:

Responsibility for security audit rests with the departments contracting the infrastructure. These include a range of system penetration tests, the annual Cabinet Office security compliance review and exercises to test response to incidents.

In addition, the Cabinet Office has responsibility for an annual programme of audits of systems which form part of the Critical National Infrastructure. My officials work with departments and specialist organisations to provide exercise assurance on the security of the Government's key assets.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[64010\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Government Transformation Strategy, published on 9 February 2017, what the definition is of exploring component, platform and capability reuse beyond central government.

Ben Gummer:

The Government Transformation Strategy sets out the definition of components, platforms and capabilities on p53 and p54. "Beyond central government" means use by public or private organisations that are not Ministerial departments, non-Ministerial departments or their associated arm's-length bodies. This strategy also sets out our ambition to make certain platforms available to local authorities and non-crown public sector bodies, and that we would further consider how the private sector can best reuse these services. [GOV.UK](#) Verify will be the first platform to pilot use by local authorities and to consider private sector reuse.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[64011\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Government Transformation Strategy, published on 9 February 2017, what the barriers are that his Department is seeking to remove to allow for component, platform and capability reuse.

Ben Gummer:

As p56 of the Government Transformation Strategy sets out, the Government seeks to address the following barriers: lack of a common understanding of the value of component, platform and capability reuse; the right technical support not always being in place; no central list of common components, platforms and capabilities (and where they may be found); and, existing procurement frameworks not always providing the right way to source the skills and technologies needed.

TREASURY

■ Day Care: Tax Allowances

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[63620\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses received national insurance contributions relief for employer supported childcare including workplace nurseries in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Jane Ellison:

It is estimated that, during 2013-14, an average of 680,000 employees received National Insurance relief for the three forms of employer-supported childcare. The corresponding estimate for 2014-15 is 740,000.

Estimates for the corresponding number of businesses are not available.

■ Employee Ownership: Tax Allowances

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[63587\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses received national insurance contributions relief for approved company share option plans in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Jane Ellison:

The number of people that received National Insurance contributions relief through approved Company Share Option Plans (CSOP) in 2013-14 was estimated to be 35,000.

The number of businesses that received National Insurance contributions relief through approved CSOP in 2013-14 was estimated to be 450.

Data for 2014-15 is not currently available.

National Statistics are published for approved employee share schemes. The latest statistics for CSOP can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/company-share-option-plans>.

■ Equitable Life Assurance Society: Compensation

Owen Smith: [\[64869\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make further payments to people affected by regulatory failings at Equitable Life.

Simon Kirby:

After making payments of over £1.1 billion to more than 900,000 policyholders, the Payment Scheme has now closed. There are no plans to reopen the Payment Scheme.

■ Fraud

John McDonnell: [\[63945\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the value is of (a) fraudulent tax credit claims, (b) benefit fraud and (c) tax avoidance in each of the last three years; and what the evidential basis is for those estimates.

Jane Ellison:

Overall levels of tax credit error and fraud and the evidential basis for those results are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/search?q=tax+credit+error+and+fraud+statistics>.

The United Kingdom has one of the lowest tax gaps in the world. The most recent 'Measuring tax gaps' publication indicates that the estimated tax gaps attributable to avoidance behaviour for the last three years for which data is available were as follows:

2014-15 - £2.2 billion

2013-14 - £2.4 billion

2012-13 - £2.2 billion

The publication is available to view in full at:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/measuring-tax-gaps.

The information requested on the estimated value of benefit fraud is available via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fraud-and-error-in-the-benefit-system>.

John McDonnell: [63946]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many cases (a) HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and (b) other bodies working on behalf of HMRC have pursued on (i) fraudulent tax credit claims, (ii) benefit fraud, (iii) tax avoidance and (iv) breaches of minimum wage legislation in each year since 2010.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) carries out a range of activities in relation to tax credits, tax avoidance and the enforcement of the National Minimum Wage.

The Government does not hold information in the format requested, and so this could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

The Department for Work and Pensions is responsible for benefit fraud prosecutions.

John McDonnell: [63948]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much (a) HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and (b) other bodies working on behalf of HMRC have spent from the public purse on tackling (i) fraudulent tax credit claims, (ii) benefit fraud, (iii) tax avoidance and (iv) breaches of minimum wage legislation in each year since 2010.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) carries out a range of activities in these areas.

The costs specifically of tackling fraudulent tax credit claims, tax avoidance and breaches of the National Minimum Wage are not held in that format and this information could only be gathered at disproportionate cost. HMRC does not have an enforcement role in respect of benefit fraud.

■ Fraud: Taxation

John McDonnell: [63947]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the correlation is between the amount HM Revenue and Customs has spent and recouped on tackling fraudulent (a) tax credit and (b) benefit claims.

Jane Ellison:

The requested information is not available. [HM Revenue and Customs' data covers all error and fraud activity. It cannot be broken down to subsequently show those cases which were found to contain error and those containing fraud.]

■ Inheritance Tax

Rebecca Long Bailey: [63622]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses received inheritance tax relief for interest-free instalments in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [63623]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received inheritance tax relief for transfers to political parties on death in (a) 2013-14 and (b) 2014-15.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [63624]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received inheritance woodlands relief for inheritance tax in (a) 2013-14 and (b) 2014-15.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [63625]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received double taxation relief for inheritance tax in (a) 2013-14 and (b) 2014-15.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [63626]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received inheritance tax taper relief on transfers between three to seven years before death in (a) 2013-14 and (b) 2014-15.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [63627]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received inheritance tax successive charges relief in (a) 2013-14 and (b) 2014-15.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [63628]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received inheritance tax exemption of certain expenses of hon. Members, government ministers etc. in (a) 2013-14 and (b) 2014-15; and what categories of expenses are exempt.

Jane Ellison:

The latest statistics on inheritance tax exemptions and reliefs claimed by estates in 2013-14 can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/inheritance-tax->

[statistics-table-122-exemptions-and-reliefs](#). Information for 2014-15 is not currently available.

The number of estates claiming woodland relief, double taxation relief, taper relief and quick succession relief are not provided separately in this table due to the small numbers involved. The number of estates claiming these reliefs are therefore grouped together under, 'other reliefs and exemptions' and 'reliefs against tax' in order to maintain taxpayer confidentiality.

Information on people or businesses benefitting from inheritance tax relief for interest-free instalments is not available.

Information on inheritance tax relief for transfers to political parties on death is not available.

There are no specific exemptions from inheritance tax for expenses incurred by Members of Parliament or government ministers.

■ Pensions: Tax Allowances

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[63619\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses received national insurance contributions relief for employer contributions to registered pensions schemes in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Jane Ellison:

The estimated cost to the Exchequer from employer pension contributions not being subject to employee and employer National Insurance is included in HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC's) National Statistics publication, and is available to view here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/registered-pension-schemes-cost-of-tax-relief>.

The requested information is not reported to HMRC.

Information on private pension membership is published by the Office for National Statistics here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/pensionssavingsandinvestments>.

■ Petroleum Revenue Tax

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[63966\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses received the cross field allowance for petroleum revenue tax relief in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Jane Ellison:

Only companies are able to claim cross field allowance for petroleum revenue tax relief. Fewer than ten companies claimed the relief in each of 2013-14 and 2014-15.

■ Petroleum Revenue Tax: Tax Allowances

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[63615\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses received petroleum revenue tax relief for exploration and appraisal expenditure in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Jane Ellison:

Only companies are able to claim petroleum revenue tax relief for exploration and appraisal expenditure. Fewer than ten companies claimed the relief in each of 2013-14 and 2014-15.

■ Save As You Earn: Tax Allowances

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[63621\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses received national insurance contributions relief for Save As You Earn in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Jane Ellison:

The number of people receiving national insurance contributions relief through approved Save As You Earn (SAYE) share option schemes in 2013-14 was estimated to be 170,000.

The number of businesses receiving national insurance contributions relief through SAYE share option schemes in 2013-14 was estimated to be 310.

Data for 2014-15 is not currently available.

National Statistics are published for approved employee share schemes. The latest statistics for SAYE share option schemes can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/save-as-you-earn-share-option-schemes>.

■ Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme: Tax Allowances

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[63616\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses received capital gains tax relief for the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[63617\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses received capital gains tax relief for the Venture Capital Trusts in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not hold information on the number of people receiving capital gains tax (CGT) relief for Venture Capital Trusts and the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme.

Estimates of the cost of the CGT relief element are published annually within the Principal and Minor tax reliefs statistics publications. The latest publications are available to view at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/tax-relief-statistics>.

■ Self-employed: Hemsworth

Jon Trickett: [63815]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people in each year from 2010 have been in false self-employment in Hemsworth constituency.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not routinely record compliance activity on a geographical basis.

However, the Government is aware of the risks presented by false self-employment. HMRC's Employment Status and Intermediaries Team focuses its resources on addressing these risks.

Where companies are believed to have misclassified individuals as self-employed, HMRC establishes the facts of the case and will take steps to ensure that all of the appropriate tax, National Insurance contributions, interest and penalties are paid.

■ Self-employed: Tax Allowances

Rebecca Long Bailey: [63618]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses claimed lower profits limit on national insurance contributions in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Jane Ellison:

The lower profits limit on National Insurance is automatically applied to an individual's self-employment profits. The number of individuals benefiting from this 0% National Insurance contributions band is estimated to be around 3.9 million people in 2013-14 and it is projected to be 4 million people in 2014-15. The lower profits limit is applied to an individual's total self-employment profits and therefore an estimate of the number of businesses benefitting is not available.

These estimates are based on the 2013-14 Survey of Personal Incomes, projected to 2014-15 using economic assumptions consistent with the Office for Budget Responsibility's November 2016 economic and fiscal outlook.

■ Stamp Duty Land Tax

Rebecca Long Bailey: [63967]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses received the acquisition relief from stamp duty land tax in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Jane Ellison:

Information on the number of people and businesses that received acquisition relief in 2013-14 and 2014-15 cannot be provided due to the small numbers involved.

Providing this information would risk breaching HM Revenue and Customs' taxpayer confidentiality principles.

■ Taxation: Rebates

Mr Christopher Chope: [\[64856\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, for what reason HM Revenue and Customs experienced difficulties with the 2015-16 tax calculation producing correct repayments due for that year; and when those difficulties are likely to be resolved.

Jane Ellison:

While significant numbers of customers are not affected, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) had identified some issues with the self-assessment tax calculation. These related to Class 2 National Insurance contributions and the Marriage Allowance.

HMRC has either fixed these issues directly or has adopted processes to deal with them effectively.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Right to Buy Scheme

Tom Brake: [\[63920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many social houses have been sold under the Right to Buy scheme in each of the last three years; and how many of those houses sold have been replaced with new social housing.

Gavin Barwell:

In 2012, the Coalition Government reinvigorated the Right to Buy scheme, increasing maximum discounts to realistic levels and for the first time ever, introduced a requirement to replace every additional sale nationally with a replacement property.

Councils have three years to replace the additional homes sold. In the first eighteen months following the reinvigoration of Right to Buy, there were 6,389 additional homes sold. By the end of Q2 2016/17 there were 9,460 new starts and acquisitions.

Right to Buy sales by Local Authority (Table 691) and Local Authority starts and acquisitions (Table 693) can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales>

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ BBC

Gavin Robinson: [\[64866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate she has made of the value of BBC revenue streams excluding the licence fee in each of the last five years.

Matt Hancock:

The BBC are required to lay their Annual Account and Report in front of Parliament each year, and this information is available within those accounts and here on the BBC's website (http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/our_work/strategy/annualreport/2015_2016.html).

■ BBC: Advertising

Gavin Robinson: [\[64868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate she has made of the revenue accrued by the BBC from online advertisements outside the UK in each of the last five years.

Matt Hancock:

BBC Worldwide sells advertising for BBC.com, the BBC's main international website. As a commercial subsidiary of the BBC, Worldwide does generate profits which are returned to the BBC, but we have not made any estimates on the revenue from online advertisements - this is a matter for the BBC as editorially and operationally independent.

■ BBC: Social Mobility

Justin Madders: [\[64749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with the BBC on social mobility.

Matt Hancock:

The Government welcomed the publication of the BBC's Diversity Strategy in Spring 2016. As the nation's broadcaster, the BBC should be at the forefront of representing diversity both on and off screen. We will follow with interest how the BBC achieves the targets it has set itself.

■ S4C: Reviews

Kevin Brennan: [\[64898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when she plans to announce the terms of reference for the independent review of S4C.

Matt Hancock:

As the Secretary of State set out in February 2016, (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-government-protects-funding-for-welsh-broadcaster-s4c--2>) the independent review of S4C will look at the funding, governance and remit of S4C. The full scope of the review will be set out in the terms of reference in due course.

■ Young People

Cat Smith: [\[63558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether she plans to announce the Government's new youth policy statement before the 2017 Spring Budget.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The Government has no plans to announce the new youth policy statement before the 2017 Spring Budget.

Cat Smith: [\[63559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, which organisations she has consulted on the Government's proposed new youth policy statement.

Mr Rob Wilson:

My Department has been speaking to a range of national youth sector organisations to test our consultation plans for the development of the new Youth Policy Statement.

Following this feedback, a formal consultation will be launched. This consultation will be accompanied by a series of events to which national and local youth organisations, as well as local authorities, other statutory commissioners, funders, businesses and young people will be invited. In addition, any organisation or individual will be able to access and respond to an online call for evidence and a young people's project will support young people to gather key messages and case studies.

■ Youth Services

Cat Smith: [\[63640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to ensure that the new youth policy statement (a) takes account of changes in and (b) increases funding for youth services.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The Youth Policy Statement will highlight innovative approaches to delivery, showcase examples of existing good practice by local authorities and the youth sector and - through the consultation process - help government understand how we can help create the conditions for successful local delivery.

Government is already investing significant amounts in youth provision including the National Citizen Service, the £40m #iwill Fund and the £40m Youth Investment Fund.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces: Deployment

Kirsten Oswald: [\[64013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Attorney General's speech at the International Institute for Strategic Studies on 11 January 2017, whether UK armed forces have been engaged in military action on the basis of self-defence since 21 August 2015.

Mike Penning:

UK armed forces have not engaged in military action on the legal basis of self-defence of the UK since 21 August 2015.

■ Army: Housing

Stephen Doughty: [\[64783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many army leavers aged under 25 have received (a) financial and (b) other assistance with housing resettlement in each of the last three years.

Mark Lancaster:

This information related to Under 25s is not held in the format requested.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has a robust and effective resettlement system in place which utilises the highly successful Career Transition Partnership (CTP). All personnel are eligible for the CTP resettlement provision including those medically discharged, or leaving the Armed Forces due to redundancy. These free resettlement services are offered to all ranks and ages of Service personnel and offers flexible support which can be accessed two years before discharge, through to two years post discharge in order to ensure that making the transition to civilian life is as smooth as possible.

The resettlement process includes the provision of housing advice via the Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO). The past three years JSHAO statistics are given below:

	FINANCIAL YEAR 2013-14	FINANCIAL YEAR 2014-15	FINANCIAL YEAR 2015-16
Housing Advice Briefs Delivered	55	56	54
Number of Army Attendees	No figures available	547	442
Army Enquiries	No figures available	258	214

Please note that it is not possible to determine the age of those who attended these briefs. Figures were not broken down by Service prior to Financial Year 2014-15.

The JSHAO provides specific housing information and advice to encourage Service personnel and their families to consider their civilian housing options at any point in their career. This is to ensure that those leaving the Services have an understanding of the civilian housing options available to them and the differing financial implications when occupying civilian housing compared to Service accommodation.

The MOD also works closely with the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Devolved Administrations to ensure Service personnel do not experience disadvantage as a result of their military service when applying for social housing.

■ Defence Equipment: Procurement

Wayne David:

[\[64755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the finding of the National Audit Office in its report, entitled The Equipment Plan 2016-2026, published in January 2017, that his Department must generate £5.8 billion of new savings from projects within the Equipment Plan to meet its new commitments; and how his Department plans to make such savings.

Harriett Baldwin:

The £5.8 billion savings target within the Equipment Plan over the next 10 years was agreed with the Cabinet Office and Her Majesty's Treasury during the 2015 Spending Review. It was built into our policies and assumptions, including those relating to the Equipment Plan, at the time.

As laid out in the National Audit Office's report, the savings will be found from the following areas:

£1.7 billion from reviews of contracts under the Single Source Contract Regulations;

£3.3 billion from transformation activities within Defence Equipment and Support;

£0.8 billion from a number of other sources, including continuing reviews of support projects and test and evaluation expenditure.

■ Defence: Expenditure

Wayne David:

[\[64762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, in which financial year (a) war pensions, (b) contributions to UN peacekeeping missions, (c) the Single Intelligence Account and (d) pensions for retired personnel were first included in his Department's reporting to NATO on defence expenditure.

Sir Michael Fallon:

As with other NATO allies, from time to time we update our approach to ensure we are categorising defence spending fully in accordance with NATO guidelines, seeking to capture all spending contributing to the defence of the United Kingdom.

Military pensions were included in the then NATO Government's return of defence spending for the first time in 2005-06.

War pensions, parts of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund relating to peacekeeping, and pension payments to retired Ministry of Defence civil servants were first included in 2015-16.

As announced in the July 2015 Budget, elements of the Single Intelligence Account that relate to defence were first included in 2016-17.

NATO sets the criteria for defence spending, and like all NATO members we abide by those criteria.

NATO has confirmed that the UK continues to spend over 2 per cent of GDP on defence.

■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[64493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the value to UK national gross domestic product of the Global F-35 Lightning II programme.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK is a major partner in the F-35 Lightning II programme, resulting in significant contracts and supporting UK jobs. UK industry will provide approximately 15% by value of every F-35 Lightning to be built.

Additionally, the UK was recently chosen to be a global hub for maintenance, repair, overhaul and upgrade services for F-35 avionics and aircraft components. Although, these activities will contribute to UK gross domestic product (GDP), the Ministry of Defence does not routinely calculate the GDP impact of specific defence activities and therefore no assessment has been undertaken for the F-35 programme.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[64606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his Department's Major Projects Portfolio data 2015, published in July 2016, whether the increasing risk to Initial Capability of the F-35 Lightning II programme as a result of manning issues is extant.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[64607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his Department's Major Projects Portfolio data 2015, published in July 2016, whether the number of Royal Navy and Royal Air Force specialists required to support the F-35 Lightning II programme capability has been increased.

Harriett Baldwin:

The overall manning situation has improved. However, the lack of manpower - particularly in the Defence Equipment and Support area - remains an extant risk and is kept under review. Since the Department's Major Projects Portfolio data for 2015 was published, the number of specialist personnel to support the programme from both the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy has been increased and these additional people have now started to be posted into roles supporting the Lightning Programme.

■ Libya: United States Africa Command

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[64014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether (a) the armed forces and (b) his Department provided support or assistance to US Operation Odyssey Lightning in Libya in 2016.

Mike Penning:

The Ministry of Defence works closely with our international partners, including the US, on counter-Daesh operations. In 2016, US air-to-air refuelling aircraft provided support to Operation Odyssey Lightning from RAF Mildenhall. The operation was conducted with the consent of the Libyan Government and in accordance with the law of armed conflict.

■ Maritime Patrol Aircraft

Wayne David:

[\[64763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he expects the nine Boeing P8 Poseidon aircraft to (a) be delivered and (b) come into service.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence is procuring nine P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft via a Foreign Military Sale arrangement from the US Government. Under the agreed schedule, the first UK aircraft is due to be delivered in 2019, and the final one is expected in 2021. It is anticipated that the first aircraft will begin to operate from RAF Lossiemouth in 2020.

Wayne David:

[\[64764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's most recent estimate is of the total cost of developing and delivering the UK's maritime patrol capability to 2026; and how much of that cost relates to (a) P8 Poseidon aircraft, (b) wages and training, (c) infrastructure and (d) support at RAF Lossiemouth.

Harriett Baldwin:

Contractual negotiations are still ongoing with a range of commercial companies and the overall costs of the project have yet to be fully finalised.

■ Nuclear Submarines

Brendan O'Hara: [\[64063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether any of the four Trafalgar Class submarines is currently undergoing refit and maintenance.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[64064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether HMS (a) Triumph, (b) Torbay, (c) Artful, (d) Talent, (e) Trenchant, (f) Ambush and (g) Astute is currently operational.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[64066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether an Astute Class submarine is undergoing a refit or maintenance.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[64103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether there is currently an operational attack submarine in service at sea.

Harriett Baldwin:

There are four Trafalgar Class and three Astute Class submarines currently in service at various stages of their operating cycle. Attack submarines are operationally capable and ready, and our submarines are meeting their operational taskings.

It is UK policy that we do not comment on matters relating to submarine activity or operations.

The normal operating cycle of every submarine includes periods at reduced levels of readiness to enable maintenance and training programmes, and to allow Service personnel to have time with their families.

HMS Ambush is undergoing repairs at Her Majesty's Naval Base Clyde.

■ Trafalgar Class Submarines

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[64489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the scheduled end-of-service date is for each Trafalgar class submarine.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[64490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the timescales for the in-service delivery of Astute class boats are.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK's attack submarines are meeting their operational tasking and will continue to do so over the coming years as the current Trafalgar Class are replaced with the new Astute Class. I am withholding information on their respective planned out-of-service and in-service dates as disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ United States Africa Command

Kirsten Oswald: [\[64012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether UK personnel have been assigned to US Africa Command in the last three years.

Mike Penning:

Yes. A small number of UK personnel are assigned to US Africa Command (AFRICOM) in order to improve our strategic and operational alignment with US Forces in Africa.

■ Warships: Shipbuilding

Wayne David: [\[64890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on what date his Department plan to publish the National Shipbuilding Strategy.

Harriett Baldwin:

The National Shipbuilding Strategy will be published in spring 2017.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

■ Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster: Pay

Jon Trickett: [\[62073\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, what the (a) level of earnings is of the (i) highest and (ii) lowest-paid employee and (b) median earnings are of employees of his Department.

Sir Patrick McLoughlin:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given by My Rt. Hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet office on 2 February 2017 to PQ62060.

Please note that the answer to this question is late on account of an administrative error in the Table Office.

Jon Trickett: [\[63088\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, what the total pay bill for (a) male and (b) female employees in his Department was in 2015-16; and what the per capita spend from that pay bill for each man and woman was in that year.

Sir Patrick McLoughlin:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given by My Rt. Hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet office on 2 February 2017 to PQ63064.

Please note that the answer to this question is late on account of an administrative error in the Table Office.

■ Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster: Security

Jon Trickett: [\[63293\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, how many security passes into his Department are issued to people (a) not directly employed by and (b) who are not civil servants who work in his Department.

Sir Patrick McLoughlin:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given by My Rt. Hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet office on 14 February 2017 to PQ [63256](#).

Please note that the answer to this question is late on account of an administrative error in the Table Office.

■ Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund

Mr Mark Hendrick: [\[50664\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, how much has been donated by the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund in each of the last five years and in 2016; how much of that was donated to organisations and projects in Lancashire during each such year; and what use was made of those donations.

Sir Patrick McLoughlin:

The donations by the Benevolent Fund in each of the last five years are set out in the table below:

YEAR	TOTAL AMOUNT
2015/16*	£401,639
2014/15	£543,331
2013/14	£388,315
2012/12	£370,611
2011/12	£354,530

The annual donations to organisations and projects in Lancashire are set out in the table below:

YEAR	DONATIONS RECEIVED BY PANEL GRANTS MADE BY THE PANEL	
2015/16*	£100,000	£118,714
2014/15	£100,000	£98,015
2013/14	£105,000	£92,706
2012/12	£90,000	£95,538

YEAR	DONATIONS RECEIVED BY PANEL GRANTS MADE BY THE PANEL	
2011/12	£90,000	£109,525

Where grants are higher than donations received in a calendar year, this is accounted for by previous years' unspent income being carried forward to the following year.

A considerable number of charities benefit from the fund, a full list will be provided by my private office.

Please note that the answer to this question is late on account of an administrative error in the Table Office.

*as of 31st March 2016

■ Duchy of Lancaster: Senior Civil Servants

Jon Trickett:

[62900]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, what the (a) ethnicity, (b) gender, (c) disability status, (d) educational background and (e) socio-economic status is of the three most senior officials of his Department.

Sir Patrick McLoughlin:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given by My Rt. Hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet office on 8 February 2017 to PQ62876.

Please note that the answer to this question is late on account of an administrative error in the Table Office.

EDUCATION

■ Pre-school Education

Lucy Powell:

[64778]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 16 January 2017 to Question 59691, of the 30.7 per cent of children who did not achieve a good level of development in 2016, how many and what proportion attended a childminder.

Caroline Dinenage:

On 20th October, the Department for Education published the early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP) results for the 2015 to 2016 academic year, at national and local authority level. The EYFSP results are available at:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-results-2015-to-2016.

In 2016, 69.3% of children achieved a good level of development. Of the 30.7% of children who did not achieve a good level of development in 2016, 0.015% (30 children) attended a childminder when their EYFSP was undertaken.

Lucy Powell: [64779]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 16 January 2017 to Question 59691, of the 30.7 per cent of children who did not achieve a good level of development in 2016, how many and what proportion did not attend any funded hours of child care.

Caroline Dinenage:

On 20 October, the department published the early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP) results for the 2015 to 2016 academic year, at national and local authority level. The EYFSP results are available at: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-results-2015-to-2016.

In 2016, 69.3% of children achieved a good level of development. Of the 30.7% of children who did not achieve a good level of development in 2016, the information to determine the number and proportion of those children who did not attend any funded hours of childcare, is not readily available and could only be compiled at a disproportionate cost.

■ Pre-school Education: Apprentices

Louise Haigh: [63745]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment she made of the effectiveness of the Early Years Apprenticeship Trailblazer Group.

Louise Haigh: [63746]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to change the membership of the Early Years Apprenticeship Trailblazer Group.

Louise Haigh: [63747]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress has been made by the Early Years Apprenticeship Trailblazer Group.

Robert Halfon:

All nine standards that the Early Years Trailblazer was approved to develop in March 2014 remain in the development stage. We are committed to ensuring that all standards and assessment plans are developed in a timely manner so that they can be available to employers and apprentices to use. We have therefore notified the Trailblazer that we have withdrawn their right to develop these standards.

We remain committed to supporting employers wishing to develop standards for use in the Early Years sector.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Dog Fighting

Steve McCabe: [\[63940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals for more punitive sentences for people involved in the practice of dog fighting.

Steve McCabe: [\[63941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will provide additional financial and other resources to the police to assist them in tackling the practice of dog fighting.

Steve McCabe: [\[63955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent steps her Department has taken to end the practice of dog fighting.

George Eustice:

The Government has provided the police with a range of powers to tackle dog fighting effectively. Offences cover organising, advertising and taking monies relating to animal fights as well as the possession of equipment used to train dogs for dog fighting.

In addition, the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 makes it an offence to possess certain types of dog that have been identified as bred for fighting or that are similar to types bred for fighting. The police work with the Special Operations Unit of the RSPCA to target illegal dog fighting rings by gathering intelligence and prosecuting those that are involved in dog fighting.

The police have not asked for additional funding to tackle dog fighting. The maximum penalties for animal welfare offences are kept under regular review. The Sentencing Council has very recently published revised magistrates' court sentencing guidelines, including those in relation to dog fighting, with the aim of ensuring that the most serious cases of animal cruelty receive appropriately severe penalties within the available maximum penalty.

■ Non-native Species: Crayfish

Mims Davies: [\[64067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the damage from non-native crayfish to fish populations in chalk streams.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Environment Agency's ecological monitoring programmes have demonstrated a broad range of impacts caused by non-native crayfish on various river types. Most

harm is attributed to the North American signal crayfish, which is now widespread in England. Studies have shown that signal crayfish can affect river quality in a number of ways, such as by direct predation of fish, invertebrates and plants, damaging our native crayfish populations and leading to increased siltation from bankside burrowing. Research on Yorkshire limestone headwater streams also indicates serious impacts on native trout populations.

The Environment Agency has supported a number of research programmes seeking ways to manage crayfish and is looking to prevent the further spread of non-native crayfish, wherever possible, through good biosecurity.

In 2010 we launched the Check,Clean,Dry campaign which promotes good biosecurity by users of water bodies to reduce the risk of spreading non-native species.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Members: Correspondence

Rosie Cooper: [\[64789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, when he plans to respond to the letter of 7 June 2016 relating to the EU referendum that was previously transferred to the Department for Exiting the European Union following that Department's refusal to reply to the correspondence.

Mr David Jones:

I refer the honourable Member to the letter sent to her office on 24 February, and reiterate the apologies in that letter for the delay related to the changes in Ministry of Government.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Afghanistan: Security

Catherine West: [\[63943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Afghan counterpart on the (a) security situation in the province of Jowzjan and (b) killing of International Committee of the Red Cross workers on 8 February 2017.

Alok Sharma:

I discussed the security situation in Afghanistan when I met the Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister, Hekmat Karzai, on 8 February. I reassured Mr Karzai of the UK's continued commitment to Afghanistan.

The Government strongly condemns the attack on members of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Jowzjan Province. Our thoughts are with the victims and their families. We call for the safe release of the two members of the

team who were abducted in the attack. The Secretary of State for International Development, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Witham (Priti Patel), has written to the President of the ICRC to offer our condolences.

Catherine West:

[\[63954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the security situation in the Jowzjan province of Afghanistan.

Alok Sharma:

The security situation in Afghanistan remains challenging. Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice already advises against all travel to Jowzjan Province.

We commend the resilience of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) over recent weeks in combating a series of determined insurgent assaults. The Taliban continue to expand their influence in some rural areas and threaten some provincial capitals. However, with US assistance, ANDSF forces have repelled assaults on significant population centres.

■ China: Christianity

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[64800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the Chinese Government on the recent expulsion of missionaries from the Chinese border region with North Korea.

Alok Sharma:

We are aware of reports of the expulsion of 32 South Korean missionaries from the Yanji region of China by the Chinese authorities.

We have no plans to raise these specific cases with the Chinese Government, as this is a matter for the South Korean Government.

■ China: Human Rights

Dr Paul Monaghan:

[\[63917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Chinese counterpart on the treatment of human rights activists in that country.

Alok Sharma:

Ministers regularly raise the treatment of human rights activists directly with the Chinese authorities.

I discussed human rights, including our concerns about human rights lawyers and activists, with the Chinese Assistant Minister for Europe, Liu Haixing on 16 February during my visit to China. The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), also raised human rights issues with Chinese State Councillor Yang Jiechi at the UK/China Strategic dialogue on 20

December 2016. We discussed the full range of our human rights concerns and individual cases directly with the Chinese authorities at the latest round of the UK/China Human Rights Dialogue, which I opened on 27 October 2016.

■ Climate Change

Richard Graham: [\[63939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many of his Department's overseas-based staff work on climate change.

Alok Sharma:

As of January 2017, a full-time equivalent of 112 staff based overseas work on climate change and energy. 52 members of staff devote 100% of their time to these issues. These figures are based on activity recording data for all staff. Foreign and Commonwealth Office allocation of resource is kept under regular review as priorities and staff change, so there is often evolution in precise numbers and locations.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Security

Jon Trickett: [\[63871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 3 February 2017 to Question 62602, what the number of security passes issued by his Department to people not employed by his Department is; what business needs suffice for such a security pass to be granted; and what the number of passes issued to people who work for private companies which have currently or previously been awarded government contracts or which are bidding for such contracts is.

Alok Sharma:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) ensure that any contractual employees granted with a security pass hold the correct level of vetting. Security passes are issued to contractors from private companies on a case by case basis. As a matter of policy, the FCO does not publish the number of active security passes issued by the Department and we cannot provide a statistical breakdown of the passes issued. The FCO does not keep records of awards of all government contracts to private companies.

■ Juhel Miah

Catherine West: [\[64824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has discussed the case of Mr Juhel Miah, a British National who was removed from a flight from Reykjavik to New York on 16 February 2017, with his (a) Icelandic and (b) American counterparts.

Catherine West: [\[64825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, for what reason Mr Juhel Miah was removed from a flight from Reykjavik to New York on 16 February 2017.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The US Embassy has confirmed that all international travellers must obtain an appropriate visa for the purpose of travel unless they qualify for entry under the Visa Waiver Program.

The US authorities do not comment on individual cases but have confirmed that the incident is not related to President Trump's 27th January Executive Order, which has been suspended. We will continue to offer assistance to any British nationals that require it, but we cannot influence US immigration decisions.

■ Philippines: Emergency Powers

Claire Perry: [\[63561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to promote stability and support the Philippines during its state of national emergency.

Alok Sharma:

We have a strong and growing bilateral relationship with the Philippines, which covers a range of issues including peace and security, counter terrorism, counter extremism, and human rights. We remain actively involved in efforts to promote stability, particularly in the southern Philippines. During my visit to Manila last December, I met senior members of the Philippine Administration and discussed how we can strengthen our cooperation. We will continue to offer support, drawing in particular on UK expertise in these areas.

■ Ukraine: Armed Conflict

Emily Thornberry: [\[63634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the capacity of the Ukrainian authorities to provide government services to civilians living in districts under separatist control; and what representations he has made to his Ukrainian counterpart on the provision of services to such civilians.

Boris Johnson:

The Ukrainian authorities estimate that there are up to 3500 Russian nationals fighting in eastern Ukraine. We are also aware of reports of a relatively small number of other nationals present in eastern Ukraine. The presence of Russian fighters in Ukraine remains a key obstacle to progress in implementing the Minsk peace agreement, which requires the withdrawal of all foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine.

Emily Thornberry: [\[63635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Government of (a) Ukraine and (b) Russia on the presence of military equipment and troops in civilian-populated areas of eastern Ukraine.

Boris Johnson:

The conflict in eastern Ukraine continues to have a devastating effect on millions of civilians living on both sides of the Line of Contact. Reports by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) that all sides have used civilian areas for military purposes are very concerning. We welcome recent efforts by the Ukrainian Government to repair civilian infrastructure in Avdiivka damaged by fighting, and condemn the fact that civilian repair teams came under fire while carrying out this vital work. We regularly raise these issues with the Governments of both Russia and Ukraine, emphasising the need for all sides to abide by the Minsk agreements, which call for heavy weaponry to be withdrawn from the Line of Contact. But we are clear that the fundamental cause of this conflict remains Russia's continuing attempts to destabilise Ukraine through its support for separatist forces, including through the provision of military equipment and troops.

Emily Thornberry: [\[63636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent estimate he has made of the number of foreign fighters in eastern Ukraine.

Boris Johnson:

The Ukrainian authorities estimate that there are up to 3500 Russian nationals fighting in eastern Ukraine. We are also aware of reports of a relatively small number of other nationals present in eastern Ukraine. The presence of Russian fighters in Ukraine remains a key obstacle to progress in implementing the Minsk peace agreement, which requires the withdrawal of all foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine.

Emily Thornberry: [\[63637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent estimate he has made of the number of Ukrainian civilians living along the line of separation between the breakaway districts of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and the rest of Ukraine; and the number of civilians living in combat zones on either side of that line.

Boris Johnson:

The UN estimate that up to 0.8 million people reside in areas near the line of contact which have the potential to be affected by fighting, and that 2.3 million people are resident in areas under the control of Russian-backed separatists.

HEALTH

■ Alzheimer's Disease: Medical Treatments

Jim Shannon: [\[64835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment the NHS has made of the potential merits of using laser technology to treat Alzheimer's disease in its early stages.

David Mowat:

We have made no such assessment.

■ Breast Cancer: Radiotherapy

Jim Shannon:

[64559]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans to make intraoperative radiotherapy for breast cancer available on the NHS.

Jim Shannon:

[64569]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to make (a) single injection cancer treatments and (b) intra-beam radiotherapy available on the NHS.

David Mowat:

Immunotherapy is a rapidly emerging field which encompasses a wide number of different treatment technologies, including the use of vaccines. The use of vaccines as a treatment for cancer is already established within routine clinical practice. An example of this is the use of the Bacillus Calmette-Guérin vaccine to treat bladder cancer. NHS England has a well-established process for considering new treatments and would welcome new proposals. Details of the policy process can be found at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/spec-services/key-docs/>

The use of Intraoperative Radiotherapy is currently being considered by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) for the treatment of early breast cancer through a Multi-Technology Appraisal (MTA). NICE recently commenced public consultation on its draft findings which can be found at:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/indevelopment/GID-TAG353/consultation/html-content>

The consultation is due to be completed on 1 March 2017, with a committee hearing scheduled to take place on 9 March 2017. All commissioners are mandated to implement published final MTA findings.

■ Cancer

Daniel Kawczynski:

[64058]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the Government is taking to promote awareness and early diagnosis of (a) bowel cancer and (b) other cancers.

David Mowat:

The Be Clear on Cancer bowel cancer campaign has run twice at a national level, in January – April 2012 and August – September 2012. Public Health England (PHE) has no plans to run this specific bowel cancer campaign in 2017, instead the aim is to cover this cancer area with a new generic approach that is currently being piloted in the East and West Midlands.

This regional pilot campaign, which aims to raise awareness of a range of abdominal symptoms that can indicate a wider number of cancers, including bowel, and the

need to visit the doctor promptly with these symptoms launched on 9 February and will run until 31 March 2017. This work has been developed with the help of a number of experts, including clinicians and charities.

PHE is also working in partnership with Cancer Research UK to run a regional test of a Be Clear on Cancer branded campaign promoting uptake of bowel screening.

Both pilot campaigns will be thoroughly evaluated and, if successful, will be considered for wider rollout.

■ Care Homes: Nurses

Helen Hayes: [\[64135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he plans to announce the rate for NHS-funded nursing care for residents of care homes for 2017-18.

David Mowat:

The National Health Service-funded Nursing Care rate for 2017/18 will be applicable from 1 April 2017. The rate amount will be announced shortly.

■ Clinical Commissioning Groups: Buildings

Karin Smyth: [\[63650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to continue to provide additional funding to cover increases in market rents in buildings from which clinical commissioning groups commission services.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department has provided an additional £127 million to the NHS England Mandate to fund the increased costs within the National Health Service of this policy change. Where the occupier delivers services that are commissioned by a clinical commissioning group or NHS England they are expected to be reimbursed the impact of the application of the market rents policy with effect from 2016/17 financial year by the relevant commissioning body.

■ Community Health Services: Liverpool

Rosie Cooper: [\[64786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what duty of care he has for residents and NHS patients in Liverpool following the Capsticks report and while the Kirkup Review is taking place before allowing local community services to be taken over by Bridgewater NHS Trust whose Care Quality Commission inspection report released on 6 February 2017 rates that Trust as requiring improvement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The National Health Service is committed to providing high quality care and will always put the interests of patients first when decisions are made about service transfers.

Following the publication of the Care Quality Commission's report of Bridgewater Community Healthcare Foundation Trust, NHS Improvement took the decision to pause temporarily the ongoing transaction of services from Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust to Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust. This pause was deemed appropriate as it has allowed time to seek assurance that the proposals are the best option for local patients and residents. An overall rating of 'requires improvement' would not, in itself, prevent a transaction taking place.

■ Department of Health: Brexit

Paul Blomfield:

[\[64545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the contents of the White Paper entitled The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union, Cm 9417, published in February 2017.

David Mowat:

We, and other Departments, are working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union on all aspects of exiting the European Union.

■ Eltham Community Hospital: Hospital Beds

Clive Efford:

[\[64360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost to the NHS is of maintaining an empty ward at Eltham Community Hospital; and if he will make a statement.

David Mowat:

[Holding answer 23 February 2017]: The ward at Eltham Community Hospital has only recently become vacant and it is not yet possible to provide a figure for the annual cost to the National Health Service. The clinical commissioning group (CCG) will be undertaking a full bed review in April which will look at bed distribution across the sites where they commission services. The CCG is also continuing to work through models of care that would be suitable for the empty ward at Eltham Community Hospital.

■ Health Insurance: Foreign Nationals

Gareth Johnson:

[\[63573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will estimate the number and proportion of visitors to the UK in possession of valid travel medical insurance in the last 12 months.

Gareth Johnson:

[\[63574\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will estimate the number of non-EU nationals using NHS services who had valid travel medical insurance in the last 12 months.

Gareth Johnson: [\[63579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost to the NHS was of care provided to non-EU nationals in (a) accident and emergency, (b) non-urgent care and surgery and (c) urgent care and surgery in each of the last five years.

Gareth Johnson: [\[63580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much was recovered from medical travel insurance for care provided to non-EU nationals in (a) accident and emergency, (b) non-urgent care and surgery and (c) urgent care and surgery in each of the last five years.

Gareth Johnson: [\[63581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the total amount recovered was from non-EU nationals in respect of (a) accident and emergency admissions, (b) non-urgent care and surgery and (c) urgent care and surgery in each of the last five years.

Gareth Johnson: [\[63582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the viability of making valid travel medical insurance a requirement for all persons applying for a UK visit visa.

Gareth Johnson: [\[63613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect of the Schengen area travel visa insurance scheme on the level of health tourism in the UK.

Mr Philip Dunne:

In 2015/16 income identified from overseas visitors and migrants using the National Health Service was £289 million of which £69 million was from directly chargeable patients, many of whom are non-European Union nationals. Non-EU nationals who have left the country with NHS debts of more than £500 outstanding for two months can be refused permission to re-enter the country unless they repay the debt.

We do not collect data from NHS trusts or foundation trusts at a clinical specialty level about the cost to the NHS of providing care to non-EU nationals.

Since April 2015 almost all individuals who require a visa to remain in the United Kingdom for more than six months are required to pay a health surcharge. Those who visit the UK for less than six months are usually directly chargeable for any NHS hospital treatment they access and are advised to have travel insurance to cover any charges.

The Government has no current plans to make valid travel medical insurance a requirement for all persons applying for a UK visit visa. As such, we have not estimated the number of people and proportion of visitors to the UK who may be in possession of valid travel insurance in the last 12 months, nor the numbers of visitors who may have used their insurance to pay for NHS services, nor the amounts recovered by NHS trusts or foundation trusts from insurance companies for services provided to visitors.

The Department has not made an assessment of the effect of the Schengen area travel visa insurance scheme on the level of health tourism in the UK.

■ Health Services

Kevin Barron:

[64912]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what data (a) Clinical Reference Groups and (b) the Prescribed Specialised Services Advisory Group are required to collect and consider in the course of making their decisions.

David Mowat:

When making decisions the Prescribed Specialised Services Advisory Group (PSSAG) must consider four factors:

- the number of individuals who require the provision of the service or facility;
- the cost of providing the service or facility;
- the number of persons able to provide the service or facility; and
- the financial implications for clinical commissioning groups if they were required to arrange for the provision of the service or facility.

PSSAG therefore requests that any proposals put forward for its consideration include data which supports informed decision making in these areas. If the group does not feel that there is sufficient data to reach a decision, it may request further information to enable it to do so at a later date. More information can be found at the following address:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/prescribed-specialised-services-advisory-group-pssag>

Clinical Reference Groups (CRGs) are not decision making groups.

However CRGs collate a large amount of data to consider when providing their clinical advice and utilise when making recommendations relating to commissioning.

From a clinical commissioning policy perspective, CRGs gather and analyse data and intelligence that is relevant to the treatment proposal they are considering, such as Individual Funding Request activity, a summary of clinical evidence and related trial statistics. They would consider prevalence and incidence data sources, search clinical databases and registries for relevant data and collect data on clinical outcomes and clinical quality aspects. The CRG would also take account of patient experience information and relevant financial information.

Similar data sources would also be used to support the development of service specifications and to inform the work on service reviews.

■ Health Visitors

Lucy Powell: [\[63586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many full time equivalent health visitors there were in (a) England, (b) each region and (c) each local authority in (i) May 2015 and (ii) the most recent period for which figures are available.

Nicola Blackwood:

Health visitors are employed by a range of organisations, including National Health Service trusts, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), local authorities and private providers. Current data collections do not cover the complete range of these organisations. As a result, it is not possible to provide accurate data on the total size of the health visitor workforce.

NHS Digital's NHS Hospital and Community Health Service workforce statistics capture the total number of health visitors directly employed in NHS trusts and CCGs in England and by Health Education England region.

NHS Digital used to collect data on health visitors employed by local authorities and other organisations through the Health Visitors National Minimum Dataset however this collection ceased at the end of September 2015.

■ Hospitals: Construction

Helen Jones: [\[64910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what factors are taken into account when deciding on the location of proposed new hospitals; and what weighting is given to each of those factors.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Commissioners take into account a range of factors when deciding where services should be placed. These include population need, geographical factors, other available services and service sustainability.

■ Hospitals: Warrington

Helen Jones: [\[64909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with health providers in Warrington on proposals for a new hospital for Warrington; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not had any such discussions. NHS England leads on the commissioning of services and related discussions with health providers in local areas.

■ Medical Treatments

Nic Dakin: [\[63973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of NICE's methodologies to appraise treatments for small patient populations.

David Mowat:

Whilst the Government has overall responsibility for the health and care system and regularly reviews the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's (NICE) delivery against its objectives, it is important that NICE has the autonomy to act on the best available evidence, free from political intervention. NICE's recommendations are based on careful consideration of the available evidence and are developed through consultation with stakeholders, including clinicians and patients.

NICE guidance and technology appraisal methods, including for small patient populations, have been developed through extensive engagement and are reviewed to ensure that they remain appropriate.

■ Mental Health Services: Acute Beds

Luciana Berger: [\[64887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many acute mental health beds there were, and what the occupancy rate of such beds was, in Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust in each year since 2010.

Nicola Blackwood:

The information requested is not collected centrally.

■ Mental Health Services: Expenditure

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[64732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much the NHS and its agencies spent on mental health services in each year since 2010 by region.

Nicola Blackwood:

National Health Service mental health expenditure is not collected by region.

■ NHS Property Services and Community Health Partnerships

Karin Smyth: [\[63649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proposals he has received on the organisational form of the new body to be created from the merger of NHS Property Services and Community Health Partnerships; and what role sustainability and transformation plans will play in determining that organisational form.

Karin Smyth:

[\[63652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish the business case for the creation of a new organisation from NHS Property Services and Community Health Partnerships.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department is developing plans to establish a new National Health Service property organisation, in response to early recommendations made by Sir Robert Naylor's ongoing review of the NHS estate. A key function of the new organisation will be to provide a single strengthened source of strategic estates planning expertise for the NHS. This will build on the support that existing teams in NHS Property Services and Community Health Partnerships have been providing to the NHS locally, including in the development of estates proposals as part of sustainability and transformation plans.

Further details on the proposed new organisation, including its organisational form, will be set out in due course. We are committed to ensuring that the new organisation fully supports and reflects the needs and priorities of the NHS.

■ NHS: Buildings

Dr Poulter:

[R] [\[64731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 9 February 2017 to Question 63167, what proportion of the 217 vacant properties are (a) freehold, (b) leasehold, (c) other formal tenure agreements and (d) other.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The tenure of the 217 vacant properties held by NHS Property Services is as follows:

TENURE	NUMBER OF PROPERTIES	PROPORTION (%)
Freehold and long leasehold	146	67
Leasehold	69	32
Other formal tenure arrangements	1	0.5
Other	1	0.5

The 217 properties constitute 6.9% of the total number in the NHS Property Services portfolio and in calculating 217 as the number of vacant properties, the following assumptions were made:

- 'Property' refers to a physical building or structure rather than a site or legal holding (i.e. some facilities sit on several land-holdings); and
- Vacant Properties are defined as those properties where at least 90% of the Net Internal Area is classed as vacant.

■ NHS: Location

Chi Onwurah: [\[64936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on patient care of moving Newcastle's Child and Adult Heart Surgery Unit from the Freeman Hospital to the Royal Victoria Infirmary.

Chi Onwurah: [\[64937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the Government takes to ensure minimal disruption to quality of service when NHS services are moved from one site to another.

Chi Onwurah: [\[64940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent representations he has received on the public consultation process for moving NHS services between two locations.

Mr Philip Dunne:

We would expect providers and commissioners to ensure that any service change is in the interests of high quality patient care. During transition periods local commissioners and providers should ensure that high standards of patient care are maintained for patients affected by the changes.

NHS England has assessed the Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust against its standards for congenital heart disease services and concluded that it does not meet the 2019 paediatric co-location requirements or currently have a realistic plan to do so by April 2019.

NHS England has asked the Trust to give due consideration as to how this standard could be achieved.

The Trust has stated that it is committed to undertaking an option appraisal with regard to the co-location of Paediatric Heart Services with other children's services. The full range of options is not yet determined, but the appraisal will take full consideration of any impact on patient care.

These considerations are at a very early stage and do not form part of the proposals recently set out by NHS England in its consultation on implementing Congenital Heart Disease standards.

■ Phil Morley

Diana Johnson: [\[63667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the timescale is for NHS Protect's investigation into the conduct of Phil Morley while he was Chief Executive of the Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Protect's investigation into this matter is ongoing and it is not possible to provide a timescale for its conclusion whilst lines of enquiry continue to be pursued.

■ Strokes: Health Services

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[64864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 23 November 2016 to Question 53721, what estimate he has made of the number of sustainable transformation plan areas with stroke service reconfiguration in their plans.

David Mowat:

Receiving rapid diagnoses and medical treatment is vital for the survival and recovery of stroke patients. Across England there is a variation in the level of care for survivors, and there is strong evidence that more specialist stroke units providing high quality care 24 hours a day, seven days a week will save more lives and support recovery. Data from the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme has shown that there is a strong relationship between the number of patients and the quality of care from the greater experience these more practiced clinicians have, access to costly specialised facilities and equipment available.

In 2014 NHS England published the NHS Five Year Forward View. This is being implemented through 44 local Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs). These plans are partnerships between local National Health Service organisations, councils and others who are now working more closely together than ever.

Plans are at various stages of development for stroke services. NHS England's National Clinical Director for stroke continues to support partners within each of the 44 areas to develop their plans to achieve the best outcomes for stroke care. The arrangement of stroke services is a matter for local decision makers using the best clinical evidence available. This may include the creation of specialist stroke services, where clinically appropriate and supported by decision makers, staff, residents and transport infrastructure. NHS and local government partners are currently engaging communities on their draft plans, and no change to services people currently receive will be made without consultation where it is required. Each organisation collaborating on an STP retains its usual duties to engage local people on any new proposals.

There are longstanding assurance processes in place to make sure this happens.

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[64867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 23 November 2016 to Question 53721, what guidance his Department has given to clinical commissioning groups on the commissioning of stroke-specific services.

David Mowat:

The Department does not issue guidance to clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) on the commissioning of stroke-specific services. NHS England is responsible for issuing guidance to CCGs on commissioning services.

HOME OFFICE

■ Asylum: Northern Ireland

Ms Margaret Ritchie:

[64756]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the Northern Ireland Executive on the potential to increase the number of unaccompanied child refugees received by Northern Ireland.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Building upon Northern Ireland's positive contribution to the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme the Home Office continues to be in contact with the Northern Ireland Executive at ministerial and official level including discussions regarding unaccompanied asylum seeking children

■ Members: Correspondence

Mr David Winnick:

[64777]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Walsall North of 16 January 2017 on behalf of a constituent, on asylum claims from people fleeing torture and repressive regimes.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Minister of State for Immigration replied on 23 February 2017.

■ Sexting: Young People

Rosie Cooper:

[64787]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of reports that young people are receiving criminal records for sending indecent images without having been charged with an offence.

Rosie Cooper:

[64788]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will reconsider the requirement to record as a crime the sending of indecent images by young people while not charging them formally.

Brandon Lewis:

A criminal record for the offence of sending an indecent image will only result where the offender, child or adult, is charged to court (and found guilty) or cautioned by the police. Where the police resolve such cases by other means no criminal record is established.

The Government is clear that where a crime has been committed it should be recorded as such. This is critical to understand the extent of this issue, to identify any pattern of repeat or high-risk behaviour, and providing transparency and accountability.

However, the police have wide discretion as to how to address such behaviour. Working with the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Department for Education new guidance has been issued to police and schools in relation to children sending indecent images and which has a focus on safeguarding. We have introduced a new outcome for police to apply in cases where they consider it appropriate to undertake no criminal investigation and which will highlight that any subsequent disclosure should only be in the most exceptional cases.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Department for International Trade: Brexit

Paul Blomfield: [\[64548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what discussions he has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the contents of the White Paper entitled The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union, Cm 9417, published in February 2017.

Greg Hands:

The Department for International Trade is working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union on all aspects of exiting the European Union.

We have contributed, and will continue to contribute our trade policy expertise to the Department for Exiting the European Union's preparations and negotiations for exiting the European Union. We are working together to ensure that the UK secures the right deal, which enables the freest possible trade with the EU, while enabling us to negotiate our own trade agreements with the rest of the world.

■ Department for International Trade: Pay

Philip Davies: [\[64171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

Greg Hands:

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes much of this information each year, broken down by Civil Service organization, as part of their annual release of Civil Service Statistics. The latest data set from 2016 can be found on the ONS website: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/bulletins/civilservicestatistics/2016>.

As the Department for International Trade (DIT) is newly formed, we have not had the opportunity to contribute to the most recent ONS publication. DIT's statistics will be included in the next release, due for publication in March 2017.

DIT does not hold information on the breakdowns of ethnicity and disability pay gaps.

■ Department for International Trade: Uber

Mr Iain Wright:

[\[64379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how much his Department has spent on (a) Uber for Business and (b) other Uber transactions since 28 October 2016.

Greg Hands:

Our records show that DIT have not made any direct payments to Uber for Business since October 2016. However, our records indicate that DIT have claimed £396.53 in expense claims related to Uber journeys since October 2016.

■ UK Export Finance: Contracts

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[64624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many overseas contracts UK Export Finance has supported in which the applicant declared that an agent had provided facilitation services in each year since 2010.

Greg Hands:

UK Export Finance (UKEF) has reviewed applications including agents, from 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015 and is in the process of reviewing applications from 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2014. All applications reviewed indicate that UKEF has not provided support to any overseas contract where the application declared that an agent provided facilitation services.

The majority of UKEF's historic application forms were received prior to the introduction of an electronic management system. An answer extending to 2010 could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

JUSTICE

■ Coroners

Jon Trickett:

[\[64333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of changes in the level of funding for coroners' offices on (a) the backlog of coroners' cases and (b) the incidence of the delayed release of the bodies of the deceased.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The Ministry of Justice does not have operational responsibility for coroner services. They are funded and run by local authorities which are independent of central government and are responsible for managing their budgets in line with local priorities.

■ Ministry of Justice: Brexit

Paul Blomfield: [64549]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions she has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the contents of the White Paper entitled The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union, Cm 9417, published in February 2017.

Sir Oliver Heald:

We, and other Departments, are working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union on all aspects of exiting the European Union.

■ Prisoners' Release: Females

Mr David Hanson: [64438]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the number of women released and subsequently returned to custody following a technical breach of a supervision condition, excluding those returned for the commission of a further offence, was in each of the last four years.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Data on releases and reasons for recall are currently published, broken down by gender, for the period 1 January 2015 to 30 September 2016 in Offender Management Statistics Quarterly

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>).

Before 2015, only one reason could be recorded against each recall. Therefore, to provide the data requested, we would have manually to check each record to identify if there were further charges; this would incur disproportionate costs.

■ Prisons: Buildings

Luciana Berger: [64889]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many buildings within the prison estate have exceeded their intended life cycle.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The life cycle of prisons currently in planning or under construction is, for the purposes of business case development, 60 years. The performance of buildings within the existing prison estate is not measured according to life cycle, which is a more recent component of business case development. We keep the entire prison estate under review to make sure that it remains fit for purpose.

■ Prisons: Dogs

Luciana Berger: [64886]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many dog patrol officers have been employed in prisons in each year since 2010.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ Reoffenders: Greater London

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

[64502]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what trends there have been in reoffending rates in London since the reform of the probation service and the introduction of community rehabilitation companies.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

One year proven reoffending rates for the first cohort managed under our probation reforms will be published in the quarterly proven reoffending statistics bulletin in October 2017, which will be available on gov.uk.

Interim Payment by Results figures, based on a shorter reoffending period than the final results, were published on 27 October 2016 and 26 January 2017. These can be found on GOV.uk.

TRANSPORT

■ Airports: Security

Tim Farron:

[64761]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much the fast-track security clearance charge has raised at each airport in each year since that charge's implementation.

Mr John Hayes:

My Department does not hold this information. This is a matter for individual airports.

■ Department for Transport: Security

Jon Trickett:

[63875]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 8 February 2017 to Question 62544, what the number of security passes issued by his Department to people not employed by his Department is; what business needs suffice for such a security pass to be granted; and what the number of passes issued to people who work for private companies which have currently or previously been awarded government contracts or which are bidding for such contracts is.

Mr John Hayes:

My Department does not separate the information between these categories. All are tested with the same rigour. The issuing of all passes is controlled by the Departmental and Agency security teams who robustly manage the life cycle ensuring that strict processes are followed before a pass is authorised and ultimately revoked.

Passes are issued to contractors, secondees, public sector workers (e.g. from Non Departmental Public Bodies) or Crown Servants such as Police or Military forces as well as to Civil Servants where it is necessary and appropriate to do so.

■ Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

Charlotte Leslie: [\[64008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on local authority payments to the DVLA.

Andrew Jones:

Local authorities cover the administrative cost for dealing with requests for vehicle keeper and driver licensing information held by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

In the financial year 2015-16, the DVLA received £157,329 directly from local authorities. This includes £4,316 for vehicle related requests, £102,261 for driver related requests and £50,752 for the initial set up costs to enable local authorities to make driver licensing checks electronically.

■ Heathrow Airport

Adam Afriyie: [\[64105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the final National Policy Statement on Aviation will include an estimate of the cost of clearing landfill necessary for a third runway at Heathrow; and whether that cost will be borne by the public purse.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government is currently consulting on a draft Airports National Policy Statement, with the consultation closing on 25 May 2017. Following consultation and Parliamentary scrutiny, the Government will consider all the responses received and, if it chooses to proceed, could then lay a proposed final Airports National Policy Statement before Parliament. It would be inappropriate for the Government to speculate on the content of any final Airports National Policy Statement before all of the relevant procedural steps have been taken. I would encourage the Hon Member to set out his views on the issue of landfill clearing costs in his response to the consultation.

■ Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties

Philip Davies: [\[64138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many penalty notices the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency has issued in respect of vehicle tax where the tax due was £0.00 in the last 12 months.

Andrew Jones:

There are currently around 37 million licensed vehicles recorded on the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) database with a further three million vehicles subject to a Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN).

In 2016 the DVLA issued 15,656 late licensing penalties to keepers of vehicles that attract a nil rate of vehicle excise duty who did not renew their vehicle licence.

There are a number of reasons why a vehicle may attract a nil rate of vehicle excise duty. These include vehicles where the registered keeper is in receipt of, or is acting on behalf of an individual in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment or where vehicles are in a Historic, Crown or Emergency tax class.

All vehicle licences must be renewed on an annual or six-monthly basis whether vehicle excise duty is payable or not. This helps to ensure that the keeper information held on the DVLA's record is accurate and that the details relating to the nil rate of vehicle excise duty remain correct. For example, a nil rate of vehicle excise duty may no longer be applicable if the registered keeper changes or the current keeper's circumstances change.

Philip Davies:

[\[64140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many demands for £0.00 have been issued by the Driver and Vehicle and Licensing Agency for vehicle tax; and how many of those demands were deemed to have been paid in the last 12 months.

Andrew Jones:

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is unable to identify the number of reminders issued specifically to keepers of vehicles that attract a nil rate of vehicle excise duty and how many of those keepers re-licensed or declared a Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN) as a result.

Tim Farron:

[\[64734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the abolition of vehicle tax discs on the number of drivers avoiding paying road tax.

Andrew Jones:

Every two years the Department for Transport conducts a roadside survey to evaluate the level of vehicle excise duty compliance. The last survey took place in June 2015, eight months after the paper tax disc was abolished and the results were announced in November 2015. The survey estimated that 98.6% of vehicles were licensed, a drop of 0.8% from the previous survey in 2013. The next survey is due to take place in June of this year.

The DVLA operates a comprehensive package of measures to tackle vehicle excise duty evasion. These measures range from reminder letters, penalties and court prosecutions through to the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras, wheel-clamping and the removal of unlicensed vehicles. The DVLA aims to make

vehicle excise duty easy to pay but hard to avoid, regularly reviewing and refining processes to encourage compliance and deliver a robust enforcement regime.

In the third quarter of 2014 before the tax disc was abolished, there were 36,922,049 licensed vehicles. In the third quarter of 2016 there were 38,440,125 licensed vehicles.

■ Parking: Pedestrian Areas

Derek Thomas: [\[64875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans his Department has to introduce legislative proposals to prevent vehicles parking on pavements.

Andrew Jones:

The Government believes that pavement parking is better addressed on a local basis and powers are already available to local authorities to do so. The Department for Transport is looking at ways of improving and simplifying the process for local authorities to use these powers.

■ Railways: Electrification

Tom Brake: [\[63930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many miles of track have been electrified since June 2015.

Paul Maynard:

The Government remains fully committed to delivering the biggest modernisation of the railways since Victorian times. We are spending over £40bn on our railways including around £15bn on enhancements. In autumn 2016, we turned on the electrified infrastructure on the first section of our rolling programme of electrification on the Great Western Main Line, which by the end of Control Period 5 will deliver a 151 mile electrified route between London and Cardiff. This Government remains committed to delivering hundreds of route miles of electrification across the country over the next few years but it is important to understand that turning on the electric wires to allow electric trains to run is the very end of the construction process - various substantial enabling works such as site clearance, foundations and mast installation need to take place beforehand, and these have been continuing at various sites across the country since June 2015. For example, on the Great Western mainline, Network Rail needs to alter about 170 bridges, lower parts of the track bed and install 14,000 masts of overhead line equipment.

■ Road Traffic: Exeter

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [\[64198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of Exeter City Council's strategy to make Exeter congestion free by 2025; and what measures the Government is taking to reduce traffic in urban areas.

Andrew Jones:

The Department for Transport (DfT) has not made any assessment of Exeter City Council's proposal to make Exeter congestion free by 2025.

The DfT is committed to an integrated transport policy which addresses the important issues of traffic congestion and environmental pollution. Transport matters, it brings real change to people's lives and that is why it is at the heart of the Government's infrastructure agenda.

The Chancellor's Autumn Statement showed this commitment by giving new funding for the local roads network, specifically £1.1bn over 4 years to relieve congestion to increase the quality, performance and safety of the roads we use every day.

The Government recognises the role that new technology can play. On 21 February 2017, the Department announced that nineteen councils across England will receive £50,000 to £300,000 each for their ideas to improve journeys through digital innovation. These projects will feature cutting edge technology such as apps and sensors which can be used to cut congestion, improve parking in city centres and alert drivers when electric car charging points become available.

■ Taxis: Licensing

Stephen Doughty:

[64785]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many (a) Hackney Carriage and (b) private hire licences are currently issued in each local authority in England and Wales.

Andrew Jones:

The Department produces statistics every 2 years on the number of taxi and private hire vehicle licences issued. The latest statistics show the position as at 31 March 2015 in England and Wales and can be found in table TAXI0104 at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicles-statistics-england-2015>

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ ASW: Pensions

Stephen Doughty:

[64781]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when (a) he and (b) Ministers of his Department last met representatives of Allied Steel and Wire pension scheme members.

Richard Harrington:

No meetings have taken place in this parliament between the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, or his Ministers and representatives of Allied Steel and Wire pension scheme members.

■ Employment and Support Allowance: Work Capability Assessments

Mr Clive Betts: [\[64797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he plans to introduce new rules which will not require reassessments for employment and support allowance for people with severe life-long conditions; and if he will publish the criteria by which severe life-long conditions are defined as such for the purposes of exemption from those assessments.

Penny Mordaunt:

This change will come into effect in Autumn 2017 and will apply to those placed in Employment and Support Allowance's Support Group and the Universal Credit equivalent.

We are currently working with stakeholders to develop the new criteria and, when finalised, the amended guidance will be incorporated in to the next update to the Work Capability Assessment Handbook published on GOV.UK.

■ Housing Benefit: Veterans

Stephen Doughty: [\[64784\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what special provision is made for veterans aged under the age of 25 related to housing benefit eligibility, and how many veterans have benefited from such provision in each of the last three years.

Caroline Nokes:

Housing Benefit provisions permit local authorities to disregard beyond the standard disregard of £10 a week the whole or part of any war disablement pensions, war widow's pensions, war widower's pensions and guaranteed income payments under the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme.

Most local authorities operate a disregard scheme, but as they meet the costs it is a matter for each authority to decide the extent of the disregards they operate.

There are no special provisions in Housing Benefit specifically for veterans under the age of 25, therefore the information requested is not available.

■ Jobcentres: Liverpool

Luciana Berger: [\[64888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Proposal for the future of Liverpool Edge Hill and Liverpool Wavertree jobcentres, published in January 2017, (a) how many work coaches will be available to serve claimants who previously used the jobcentres in Wavertree and Edge Hill and (b) for how many hours a week such coaches will be available.

Damian Hinds:

Detailed site level information on anticipated work coach levels is not yet available, but we are recruiting and expect to have more work coaches in 2018 than we have today.

Our services will continue to be available from Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm and the face to face support our work coaches offer at Jobcentres will remain a core part of the service we deliver.

■ Occupational Pensions

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[64795]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to increase the amount which people individually save through auto-enrolment into pension schemes.

Richard Harrington:

Automatic enrolment into workplace pensions was introduced to enable more people to save for their retirement. At the end of January 2017, more than 7.3 million people had already been automatically enrolled.

Minimum contributions are currently a total of 2 per cent (with at least 1 per cent from the employer). The amount people save through automatic enrolment is already set to increase to 5 per cent (with at least 2 per cent from the employer) in April 2018 and 8 per cent (with at least 3 per cent from the employer) in April 2019.

Automatic enrolment has reversed the decline in private pension saving since the last decade. As part of the review of the policy we have embarked on this year, we will look at how we can build on this success. In addition to considering those not currently benefitting from the policy, we will also look at strengthening the evidence base concerning future contributions, and how we can maximise engagement with work place pension saving.

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[64799]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what information his Department holds on the ratio of men to women who have applied for auto-enrolment pensions.

Richard Harrington:

Automatic enrolment works by requiring employers to enrol all eligible jobholders in to a workplace pension and make a contribution into it. Eligible jobholders do not need to apply to be automatically enrolled. However, those who are not eligible can ask to join their employer's pension, known as 'opting-in', if they choose. Eligible employees are those who are aged 22 to State Pension age; earn £10,000 per year or more; are not already in a qualifying pension scheme and; who ordinarily work in the UK.

Automatic enrolment has been a great success with 7.3 million people enrolled at the end of January 2017. Automatic enrolment is being rolled-out gradually from October 2012 – February 2018 starting with the largest employers down to the smallest. We do not have the data that would show the ratio of men to women within the cohort of

people who have already been automatically enrolled. However, there is data available that shows the increases in participation since automatic enrolment began in 2012.

In 2012, overall participation of female eligible employees was 58 per cent, compared to male participation at 52 per cent. In 2015, the participation of female eligible employees was 78 per cent with overall male participation at 73 per cent.

■ Pensions: Females

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[64798\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps are being taken to ensure that more women participate in pension schemes and company share ownerships.

Richard Harrington:

Automatic enrolment was designed to help more people save for their retirement, including groups who historically have been less likely to save, such as women and lower earners. The policy is working, with over 7.3 million people enrolled by the end of January 2017. Around two thirds of women are in the eligible target population for automatic enrolment and 10 million workers are estimated to be newly saving or saving more as a result of Automatic Enrolment by 2018, of which 3.6 million are women.

Since the introduction of automatic enrolment, the private sector has seen the largest increases in participation in workplace pensions and by 2014 there was no gender gap in participation. As of 2015 female participation in the private sector had actually risen to a slightly higher level of 70 per cent compared to 69 per cent for male eligible employees. This represents a 30 percentage point increase for women from 2012 (whilst participation for men has increased by 26 percentage points) continuing the upward trend since the introduction of automatic enrolment.

In addition, the Government's decision to freeze the value of the automatic enrolment earnings trigger at £10,000 in 2017/18 is estimated to result in around 70,000 extra people being brought into automatic enrolment of whom around 50,000 (75 per cent) are women.

As part of my Department's review of automatic enrolment, which we have embarked on this year, we will look at how we can build on its success so that it continues to meet the needs of individual savers, including women. In addition to considering those not currently benefitting from the policy, this review will look at strengthening the evidence base concerning future contributions, and how we can maximise engagement with work place pension saving.

The government believes that employee share ownership in its various forms can help drive productivity and increase employee engagement. To support employee share ownership the government provides four tax-advantaged employee share schemes, which provide certain tax benefits for individuals acquiring shares in the company they work for.

■ Social Security Benefits

Lucy Powell:

[63741]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2017 to Question 58104, if he will estimate the number of (a) parents and (b) lone parents with a youngest child aged three are expected to look for work if they want to claim universal credit or tax credits from April 2017.

Damian Hinds:

We estimate that (a) 5,000 claimants, of which (b) 3,000 are lone parents, with youngest child aged three will be on Universal Credit, in the Intensive work search regime and eligible for support in looking for work as at April 2017. There is no requirement to look for work in order to claim child tax credits.

■ Universal Credit

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[63706]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Government plans to carry out an assessment or reconsideration of the six-week waiting period for universal credit claimants to receive payments.

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[63708]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the number of universal credit claimants who have been threatened with eviction because of the six-week waiting period to receive a payment.

Damian Hinds:

The information requested is not available.

The Universal Credit assessment period and payment structure is a fundamental part of the design; it helps reduce welfare dependency by mirroring the world of work, where 75% of people are paid monthly. We have a number of safeguards in place to help claimants transition to Universal Credit including Advances and Budgeting Support.

We continue to work closely with landlords, Local Authorities and other organisations to ensure claimants are supported.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ EU ENERGY COUNCIL, BRUSSELS, 27 FEBRUARY

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Industry and Energy (Jesse Norman): [\[HCWS498\]](#)

There will be a meeting of the Energy Council in Brussels on 27 February.

The Council will begin with an initial exchange of views on the Commission's "Clean Energy for all Europeans" package published on 30 November 2016. This will include discussion of the electricity market design proposals consisting of the recast of the regulation on the internal electricity market, the recast of the directive on common rules for the internal electricity market, a regulation on risk preparedness in the electricity sector and the recast of the regulation establishing a European Union Agency for the Co-operation of Energy Regulators (ACER). The discussion will also cover the proposals for the recasts of the directives on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, energy efficiency and energy performance of buildings, and the new proposal for a regulation on governance of the Energy Union.

The Commission will then present the second State of the Energy Union report which was published on 1 February. The report highlights progress in 2016 taking forward the aims and objectives of the Energy Union and considers trends since the first State of the Energy Union Report was published in 2015.

The Presidency will provide an update on the 'state of play' on a number of legislative dossiers currently under negotiation. Both the regulation concerning measures to safeguard the security of gas supply and the regulation setting a framework for energy efficiency labelling are currently the subject of trilogues with the Commission and European Parliament. Negotiation has recently commenced on the proposed legislation to amend the energy efficiency directive and that to amend the energy performance of buildings directive.

The Commission will also make a presentation on the Ocean Energy Forum, which in November 2016 published a Strategic Roadmap building on European leadership in ocean energy, and the development of technologies that could meet a significant amount of Europe's future power demand.

Finally, the Czech delegation will look ahead to the European Nuclear Energy Forum in May 2017, an annual event hosted alternately by the Czech Republic and Slovakia bringing together all relevant stakeholders in the nuclear field, to discuss issues of mutual interest.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Avian Influenza update

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Andrea Leadsom):
[\[HCWS496\]](#)

High Pathogenicity H5N8 Avian Influenza has been circulating in Europe since the autumn. There have been 9 confirmed cases in poultry in the UK and several findings in wild birds across England. Public Health England advises that the risk to public health from H5N8 is very low and the Food Standards Agency has said there is no food safety risk for UK consumers.

In response to the threat from H5N8 to poultry, my Department has taken robust precautionary action. This has included an indefinite ban on poultry gatherings, enhanced wild birds surveillance and an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone across England. The zone was put in place on 6th December and amongst other things requires the compulsory housing of poultry and captive birds or where this is not possible, their separation from wild birds.

Where H5N8 has been detected in poultry or captive birds, this has been dealt with effectively by the Animal and Plant Health Agency, and I am grateful for all involved in this considerable effort to control and stamp out this disease.

On 28th February, the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone will have been in place for 12 weeks. This is the maximum allowable period that poultry can be housed for disease control purposes and retain Free Range marketing status.

The risk of H5N8 in wild birds across the UK remains high. As a result, from 28th February, my Department will put in place a new Avian Influenza Prevention Zone. This will continue to require that all keepers of poultry and captive birds observe heightened biosecurity requirements regardless of their location. Subject to these measures being put in place, housing will no longer be required for the vast majority of keepers.

Within England, there are some areas that are at higher risk of H5N8 due to their proximity to substantial inland or coastal bodies of water where wild waterfowl collect. In these Higher Risk Areas, which will cover around 25 per cent of poultry premises, mandatory housing or fully netting outside areas will be required. This may temporarily result in the loss of Free Range status for keepers in these areas unless they apply netting of range, rather than housing.

The higher risk areas are based on expert advice on the latest veterinary and ornithological data and have been reviewed by leading experts.

I am very mindful of the impact that temporary loss of Free Range status will have on affected businesses. During this unprecedented period of high risk, I have taken this decision based on the best scientific and veterinary advice in order to control disease and protect our poultry industry. Effective disease control will always be our priority: disease outbreaks cause birds to suffer, damage businesses and cost the UK taxpayer millions.

We do not anticipate any significant disruption to the supply of free range eggs after 28 February.

These measures will be put in place in the first instance until the end of April, but will be kept under constant review with the aim of lifting the targeted measures within Higher Risk Areas as soon as risk levels allow it.

■ EU Environment Council

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment and Rural Life Opportunities (Dr Thérèse Coffey): [\[HCWS497\]](#)

I will attend the Environment Council that takes place on 28 February in Brussels alongside my Hon. Friend the Minister of State for Climate Change and Industry, Nick Hurd MP.

Following the adoption of the agenda, the list of “A” items will be approved.

Under legislative deliberations, Council will debate a proposal to amend the Directive on cost-effective emission reductions and low-carbon investments (that is, the EU Emissions Trading System) with a view to reaching an agreed Council position or ‘General Approach’.

Under non-legislative activities, Council will exchange views on implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and the links between Greening the European Semester and the recently-published EU Environment Implementation Review.

The following items will be discussed under ‘Any Other Business’:

- a) Emissions Trading System (ETS) – Aviation.
- b) EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy.
- c) Natura 2000 in the European Solidarity Corps.
- d) Scientific Conference on "Sustainable development and climate changes in the light of the encyclical letter of Holy Father Francis, entitled Laudato Si" (Warsaw, 15 October 2016)
- e) Luxembourg Circular Economy Hotspot (Luxembourg, 20–22 June 2017).
- f) Paris Agreement: International developments.
- g) Environmental concerns regarding a Belarus nuclear power plant.

On 23 June, the EU referendum took place and the people of the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. During this period the Government will continue to negotiate, implement and apply EU legislation. The outcome of these negotiations will determine what arrangements apply in relation to EU legislation in future once the UK has left the EU.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Hong Kong (Sino/British Joint Declaration)

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson):
[[HCWS499](#)]

The latest six-monthly report on the implementation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong was published today, and is attached. It covers the period from 1 July to 31 December 2016. The report has been placed in the Library of the House. A copy is also available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website (www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office). I commend the report to the House.

Attachments:

1. Six-monthly report on Hong Kong [170224 - THE SIX MONTHLY REPORT ON HONG KONG - 1 JULY TO 31 DEC 2016.pdf]

HOME OFFICE

■ Report on the Review of the Use and Retention of Custody Images

Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd): [[HCWS500](#)]

I am pleased to announce that today I am publishing the *Report on the Review of the Use and Retention of Custody Images*, copies of which are available in the House Library and online at [.gov.uk](http://gov.uk). These are the images taken when people are arrested.

This review has found that the police make extensive use of custody images and that they are a standard feature of everyday policing. It sets out the Government's view of the framework for the use and retention of custody images by the police.

The review acknowledges the important role that custody images and facial searching plays in the detection and prevention of crime. However, it recognises the need to strike a careful balance between protecting individual privacy and giving the police the tools they need to keep us safe.

Accordingly, following consultation with key partners, the principal recommendation is to allow 'unconvicted persons' to apply for deletion of their custody image, with a presumption that this will be deleted unless retention is necessary for a policing purpose, and there is an exceptional reason to retain it. In practice, this will mean that people could apply to chief officers for their image to be deleted where they have not been convicted of the offence in relation to which their image was taken.

Further, the review recommends that there should be an even stronger presumption of deletion upon application for unconvicted persons whose image was taken when they were under 18 years old and that such images should be retained only where there are exceptional reasons to do so.

Where the image of an unconvicted person is not deleted, or where no application is received, the review recommends that it should be reviewed in accordance with the

periods set out in the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice Guidance ('the APP'), with a presumption of deletion at the next review unless there is an exceptional reason to retain the image (a strong presumption of deletion and highly exceptional reasons in the case of a person whose image was taken when they were under 18).

The review also recommends that persons who are convicted of the offence in relation to which their image was taken should have a limited right to apply for deletion of their image. Forces would only be required to consider such applications for deletion six or ten years after conviction or release from custody where the person was sentenced to a term of imprisonment or detention for the offence in question or another offence, depending on the APP group that the offence falls into. There would be no presumption of deletion at the point of review, other than where the image was taken when the individual was under 18. In all cases the police will be able to retain the image if this is necessary for a policing purpose and proportionate to the level and type of risk the individual poses.

Where the image of a person convicted of a recordable offence is not deleted, or where no application is received, the review recommends that its retention should be reviewed in accordance with the periods set out in the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice Guidance ('the APP'), with no presumption in favour unless it relates to an image taken when they were under 18.

A person convicted for a 'non-recordable' offence (which are broadly less serious than recordable offences), would be able to apply for deletion of their image six years after conviction. If the image was taken when the person was an adult, there would be a presumption in favour of deletion; if the image was taken when the person was under 18, there would be a strong presumption in favour of deletion.

Where the image of a person convicted of a non-recordable offence is not deleted, or where no application is received, the review recommends that its retention should be reviewed six years from conviction (or release from custody) and every five years thereafter, with a presumption in favour of deletion and a strong presumption if it relates to an image taken when they were under 18.

The core recommendations will be implemented through changes to the APP.

JUSTICE

■ Justice update

The Minister of State for Courts and Justice (Sir Oliver Heald): [\[HCWS501\]](#)

Today the Government has published its response to the consultation on proposals to reform fees for grants of probate. The consultation opened on 18 February and closed on 1 April 2016.

The Government is committed to providing a modern, world-leading justice system which is proportionate and accessible. In 2015/16, the courts and tribunals system cost £1.9 billion to run and we recovered only £700m of that through fees and other income.

The best way to protect access to justice in the long term is with a properly funded justice system. The income fees generate is necessary for an effective courts and tribunals system that supports victims and vulnerable people, and is easy for people to use.

The Government will therefore, subject to approval from Parliament:

- implement the fee structure as consulted on;
- raise the threshold under which no probate fee is payable from £5,000 to £50,000; and
- remove the grant of probate fee from the fee remissions scheme. We will retain the Lord Chancellor's power to remit fees in exceptional circumstances.

This means we are abolishing flat fees and replacing them with a banded structure, related to the value of the estate. This includes raising the fee threshold from £5,000 to £50,000 and lifting 25,000 estates out of fees altogether. Overall, 58% of estates will pay no fee at all and 92% will pay £1,000 or less for this service.

We are confident through our engagement with organisations like the British Banking Association and Building Societies' Association that executors will have a range of options to finance the payment.

The new fee structure will generate around £300m per year in additional fee income, which will all be reinvested back into Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service.

Full details of how the Government intends to take forward these proposals is set out in the consultation response document which has been published on the gov.uk website.

■ Youth justice

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Elizabeth Truss):

[\[HCWS502\]](#)

In December 2016, we set out our plans to reform our approach to youth justice which will help drive forward improved outcomes for young offenders both in custody and in the community.

We are today announcing the next steps of our reforms with a package of measures which will create stronger, clearer governance for the youth justice system.

I have appointed Charlie Taylor as the new Chair of the Youth Justice Board. He is uniquely well placed to take on this role: he has led changes in government policy on the education of children who have been excluded from school, is a former head teacher of an outstanding school for children with complex behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, and his youth justice review set out a compelling vision for reform. As the Chair of the Board, it is this vision that he will work with my department to drive forward.

We will create a new Youth Custody Service as a distinct arm of HM Prison and Probation Service, with a dedicated Director accountable directly to the Chief Executive and working closely with the Chair of the Youth Justice Board. The Director will have operational responsibility for the day-to-day running of the youth estate, will keep a firm grip on performance, and will be a board-level member of HM Prison and Probation

Service. The Youth Custody Service will have its own workforce separately recruited and trained to work in the youth estate, and we will create distinct career pathways for those wanting to work with children and young people in the secure estate, including a new Youth Justice Specialist Worker role.

We will bring responsibility and accountability for commissioning youth custody services into the Ministry of Justice. Working closely with the Chair of the Youth Justice Board, the Department will be responsible for setting clear standards for the provision of youth justice and will be responsible for intervening decisively to address poor performance.

These changes will enable the Youth Justice Board to build on its strong track-record and focus on its statutory function of providing vital independent advice on, and scrutiny of, the whole system, advising the government on what standards to set for the youth justice system and monitoring delivery of those standards. It will continue to work closely with Youth Offending Teams to promote early intervention in the community and share best practice across the system.

The youth justice system covers England and Wales and the majority of services for children and young people in Wales are devolved. We will continue our collaborative approach with the Youth Justice Board Cymru and the Welsh Government under these new arrangements.

We are very grateful to Lord McNally, whose term as Chair ends shortly, for his dedicated leadership of the Youth Justice Board over the past three years, and thank him for the drive and passion he has shown.

Charlie Taylor will become the new Chair of the Youth Justice Board when Lord McNally's term ends. Under the Governance Code on Public Appointments, which came into effect on 1 January this year, ministers can, in exceptional circumstances, make an appointment without a competition. I have decided to appoint Charlie Taylor as the new Chair of the Youth Justice Board on these terms and, in accordance with the Code, have consulted the Commissioner for Public Appointments who has accepted the decision.

We are also publishing today the findings and recommendations of the Youth Custody Improvement Board. The Board was set up to explore and report on the current state of the youth custodial estate and recommend how the system could be improved, particularly focusing on any current risks to safety and well-being. We are very grateful to its members for their work. The Board's report underlines the importance of reforming the youth custody system. Many of their recommendations are reflected in our plans, and we will consider all their recommendations as we implement our reforms.