



Daily Report

Monday, 5 September 2016

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 5 September 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:43 P.M., 05 September 2016). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Hate Crime: Disability

Justin Tomlinson: [43668]

To ask the Attorney General, what progress he has made on increasing the number of prosecutions for disability hate crime.

Robert Buckland:

In 2015/16, the CPS completed 941 prosecutions for disability hate crime, an increase of 41.3% on the previous year when it completed 666 prosecutions.

The number of convictions rose from 503 in 2014/15 to 707 in 2015/16, an increase of 40.6%.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Business: Electricity

Rosie Cooper: [43903]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether electricity companies are required to provide financial compensation to business customers who are affected financially by delays in connection to the electricity network.

Jesse Norman:

Electricity network companies are required, under specified circumstances, to make a payment to business customers where agreed connection dates are missed. For distribution connections these arrangements are covered by the Guaranteed Standards of Performance.[1] For transmission connections any payment to the customer for late delivery of a connection would be set out in the customer's bilateral connection agreement.

[1] <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/698/contents/made>

■ Carbon Sequestration

Barry Gardiner: [43817]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which (a) groups and (b) individuals his Department has invited to work with the Government on developing a strategy for carbon capture and storage in the UK.

Jesse Norman:

The Department continues to engage with the carbon capture and storage (CCS) industry, including with individual developers and the CCS Association as well as others such as the Committee on Climate Change, on the next steps on CCS in the UK. The

Department also continues to host the CCS Development Forum, which brings government and the CCS industry together.

In addition, BEIS officials are providing support to Lord Oxburgh's CCS Advisory Group which will report to Government on their findings and recommendations on the future of CCS in the UK.

■ Carbon Sequestration: EU Grants and Loans

Diana Johnson: [\[43539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of when the UK will lose EU funding previously allocated to the UK for carbon capture and storage programmes.

Jesse Norman:

Two UK carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects have been allocated funding by the European Commission (Don Valley and White Rose); the status of this funding is subject to further discussions with the European Commission. The UK is also participating in a European Research Area Network (ERA-NET) on CCS under the Horizon 2020 programme. On 13 August 2016, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) confirmed that the Government will underwrite certain EU funding, including approved Horizon 2020 research and development and innovation projects, regardless of the UK's relationship with the EU.

■ Climate Change

Diana Johnson: [\[43540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government plans to continue its participation in the negotiations towards the 2030 EU Climate Framework; and whether the UK plans to commit to meeting the requirements of that framework after the UK leaves the EU.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The UK's commitment to tackling global climate change remains firm. We are committed to the UK Climate Change Act and the Paris Agreement, and have accepted the recommendation of the Committee on Climate Change on the fifth carbon budget.

Until we leave the EU, the UK remains a Member State, with all of the rights and obligations this entails. We will therefore continue to participate in EU negotiations, including those on the EU's climate framework up to 2030.

It is not appropriate at this point to speculate about arrangements for after the UK ceases to be a Member State.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[43621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to set new climate targets as a result of the outcome of the EU referendum; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Government remains committed to meeting its commitments under its existing domestic climate framework, the Climate Change Act (CCA). Climate change remains one of the most serious long-term risks to our economic and national security.

Under the CCA, the Government has now set the fifth carbon budget (2028-2032) at an equivalent 57% reduction on a 1990 baseline. This is in line with the recommendations of our independent Committee on Climate Change. The referendum does not affect this domestic decision, or our commitment to meet our emission targets cost effectively.

■ Climate Change Convention

Barry Gardiner:

[\[43575\]](#)

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

Mr Nick Hurd:

The UK remains firmly committed to the Paris Agreement and to ratifying the Agreement as soon as possible. Until we leave the EU, the UK will remain a full member, with all of the rights and obligations this entails.

Barry Gardiner:

[\[43576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the ratification of the Paris Agreement on climate change in the UK will follow the procedure for an EU external treaty.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The UK remains firmly committed to the Paris Agreement and to ratifying the Agreement as soon as possible. Until we leave, the UK will remain a full member of the EU, with all of the rights and obligations this entails.

Barry Gardiner:

[\[43578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of whether it will be necessary to bring forward new (a) primary or (b) secondary legislation to implement the UK's obligations under the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Mr Nick Hurd:

No immediate changes are needed to the UK's legislation on climate change in order to implement our obligations under the Paris Agreement. The UK is already playing its part in delivering the Agreement through its Climate Change Act 2008. The Committee on Climate Change has said that it will report in the Autumn on the future implications of Paris for the UK. We shall want to consider carefully the CCC's recommendations.

■ Climate Change: Conferences

Barry Gardiner: [43574]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which (a) minister and (b) Government officials attended the Petersberg Climate Dialogue on 4 and 5 July 2016; and what the outcomes of that meeting were.

Jesse Norman:

The UK was represented by Peter Betts, Director, International Climate Change at what was formerly DECC, now BEIS, and another government official.

The full conclusions of the meeting are published by the German government at:

http://www.bmub.bund.de/fileadmin/Daten_BMU/Download_PDF/Klimaschutz/petersberg7_conclusions_bf.pdf and included as an annex here to be published in the House Libraries.

■ Climate Change: EU Action

Mr Jim Cunningham: [43620]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it remains his Department's policy to meet EU climate targets; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The UK's commitment to tackling global climate change is firm. Until we leave the EU, the UK will remain a full member, with all of the rights and obligations this entails.

■ Digital Technology: EU Internal Trade

Calum Kerr: [43457]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of the outcome of the EU referendum on the UK's participation in the Digital Single Market.

Margot James:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has not made such an assessment. The UK remains a member of the EU and will continue to play an active role in the development of the Digital Single Market until the formal and legal process of leaving the European Union has been finalised.

■ Employment

Conor McGinn: [43622]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to protect employment levels in (a) St Helens North constituency, (b) Merseyside and (c) the UK.

Margot James:

This Government is committed to regional development and supporting growth up and down the country as we build an economy that works for everyone. We are focused on

developing an industrial strategy that will boost productivity, create good jobs, and ensure sustainable economic growth. The employment rate in the UK is now at a record high of 74.5% and the unemployment rate is at its lowest level in over 10 years at 4.9%.

We will continue to put power in the hands of local communities to drive economic growth. For Liverpool City Region, this includes implementing the devolution deal agreed with the Government in November 2015, which includes commitments around skills funding and co-designing future employment support for harder-to-help claimants. We will also work with Liverpool to deliver the city region's Growth Deal which encompasses key projects across the city region and, for St Helens, includes improvements to Newton-le-Willows station and upgrades to the A570 to support growth in employment sites in the area.

■ Energy Supply

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[43964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to address the downgrading of the UK's rating for energy security in the World Energy Council's 2015 Energy Trilemma Index, published in November 2015.

Jesse Norman:

The Government takes energy security very seriously, and our energy security has not been downgraded. According to the World Energy Council's Energy Trilemma index, the UK scored an 'A' for the energy security element and increased its country ranking for energy security from 9th in 2014 to 4th in 2015 after there was a downgrade on a point of Energy Equity.

■ Environment Protection: Taxation

Barry Gardiner:

[\[43816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions Ministers in (a) his Department and (b) the Department for Energy and Climate Change before its merger with his Department have had with industry representatives on the future trajectory of the carbon price floor in 2016.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Department has a wide number of conversations with industry representatives on a number of issues surrounding wholesale electricity, markets and decarbonisation, which includes the carbon price floor. However, policy responsibility for its future trajectory lies with HM Treasury.

■ Fracking

Mark Menzies:

[\[43477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what responsibilities his Department has for (a) formulating and (b) overseeing regulation of the shale gas industry; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

Responsibility for formulating and overseeing regulation of the shale gas industry has been transferred to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The Department will fulfil the same role previously undertaken by the Department of Energy and Climate Energy.

The Government has been clear that shale development must be safe and environmentally sound. The Royal Society and Royal Academy of Engineering concluded that risks can be managed if industry follows best practice enforced by regulation **[1]**. We already have one of the most robust regulatory regimes in the world for shale gas and we will look to continuously improve it as the industry develops.

[1] *The Royal Society and The Royal Academy of Engineers, Shale gas extraction in the UK: a review of hydraulic fracturing, 2012*

■ Manufacturing Industries: Energy

Tom Blenkinsop:

[\[43849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that energy costs are competitive to support manufacturing industries.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Government is working hard to ensure energy costs are not a barrier to growth and investment in the UK.

We have put in place a package of measures to alleviate the impact of electricity policy costs passed through in energy intensive businesses electricity bills. Due to this action, by 2020, this Government will have reduced the impacts of energy and climate change policies passed through in energy bills for the most energy intensive businesses by 80%.

To date, we have paid 105 companies including nine steel companies a total of £294m to address these costs. A number of energy intensive sectors are also exempted from the costs of the Climate Change Levy.

Additionally the Government is working closely with eight key energy intensive sectors to support energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures to help reduce energy costs, improve their competitiveness and cut emissions.

■ Marks and Spencer: Conditions of Employment

Helen Jones:

[\[43402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will discuss with Marks and Spencer PLC its plans to introduce changes to pay and conditions for staff working at nights and weekends associated with the introduction of the new national minimum wage.

Margot James:

Provided that they obey the law and pay their workers at least the National Living Wage where it applies, it is for employers to decide how they manage increases in their wage bill.

But it is my clear view that all employers look to implement the National Living Wage in the spirit in which it was introduced. The Government believes that it is essential for employers to ensure that their reward packages are competitive, in order to retain and develop the staff who are fundamental to their success.

■ Nuclear Power

Caroline Lucas:

[43602]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's costings for nuclear power of the findings of the National Audit Office in its report published in July 2016 on Nuclear power in the UK, HC 511, paragraph 2.11, on the effect on running costs of nuclear power facilities of increased terrorist threats.

Jesse Norman:

The Government considers safety and security at nuclear power plants to be of paramount importance. The operator bears most of the security costs for nuclear power plants. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy seeks independent costs estimates for new nuclear power, which incorporate security costs – the Department's most recent cost estimates are available in the Electricity Generation Costs report, available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269888/131217_Electricity_Generation_costs_report_December_2013_Final.pdf

■ Private Rented Housing: Energy

Judith Cummins:

[43896]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to increase the energy efficiency of private rented sector dwellings.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property)(England and Wales) Regulations 2015 requires that all landlords of domestic (and non-domestic) privately rented property in England and Wales ensure that, from 1 April 2018, their properties reach at least an energy performance rating of E before granting a tenancy to new or existing tenants, unless a prescribed exemption applies.

The Department is currently developing guidance documents to assist landlords in complying with their obligations under the regulations, and to support enforcement authorities in fulfilling their duties.

CABINET OFFICE■ **Business Appointments Advisory Committee: Correspondence**

Tom Watson: [43485]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, when his Department plans to respond to the letter sent to it by the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments in November 2015.

Ben Gummer:

As part of my introduction to the Cabinet Office, I plan to meet the Chairmen of the Cabinet Office sponsored NDPBs to discuss the workings of their respective Bodies and this will include the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments following which I will reply to the Chairman's letter.

■ **Cabinet Office: Correspondence**

Tom Watson: [43759]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how each unit in his Department performed on handling correspondence from hon. Members and Peers during 2015.

Ben Gummer:

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

Tom Watson: [43864]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he plans to take to improve performance in his Department of handling correspondence from hon. Members and Peers.

Ben Gummer:

The prompt response to correspondence from both Members of Parliament/Peers and the public is of high importance to the Department, and is a personal priority for me. We aim to respond to all correspondence within 15 working days.

Our last published statistics for the calendar year 2015 were at 70%, far below our preferred level of 90%. We are trialling new reforms to improve our response rate, such as more comprehensive statistics per unit within the Department, and board-level scrutiny of monthly statistics.

The Guidance on handling correspondence from Members of Parliament, Peers, MEPs and Members of devolved Administrations was updated in March 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handling-government-correspondence-guidance>

■ **Cabinet Office: Freedom of Information**

Tom Watson: [43760]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 21 July 2016 to Question 43014, how individual units record their legal costs.

Ben Gummer:

Within the Cabinet Office, business units are allocated budgets at the commencement of each year following development of the department's objectives for that year and taking into account the department's overall funding settlement. Business unit budgets are prepared and held at a summary level of aggregation.

Through the year all expenditure, including legal costs, is posted to appropriate codes following advice from individual units on the nature of the spend.

■ Cabinet Office: Living Wage**Frank Field:**[\[43501\]](#)

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

Ben Gummer:

Cabinet Office has no one paid less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

The Crown Commercial Service, which is an agency of the Cabinet Office, has seven staff who are paid less than the national living wage and one person paid less than the London living wage but none are on zero-hours contracts. One agency staff member working in the Cabinet Office is paid less than the national living wage but none are on zero-hours contracts.

In line with the practice of previous Administrations we do not require companies contracted to the Department to pay the living wage to the staff they employ. There are currently 63 individuals working in the Cabinet Office for companies contracted to the Department that are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation, and 14 are on zero hours contracts.

■ Cabinet Office: Offices**Tom Watson:**[\[43797\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many Directors General in his Department have a private office.

Ben Gummer:

Cabinet Office employs 14 Director Generals to deliver a wide range of policy, delivery, legal and national security objectives. Of these, seven have a private office to support them. The size and the responsibilities of the private office depend on the nature of work undertaken within that group.

■ **Cabinet Office: Public Expenditure**

Tom Watson: [\[43794\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how individual units within his Department manage and record their budgets.

Ben Gummer:

Within the Cabinet Office, business units are allocated budgets at the commencement of each year following development of the department's objectives for that year and taking into account the department's overall funding settlement. Business unit budgets are prepared and held at a summary level of aggregation.

During the year, business units complete forecast estimates of their spend, including risks and pressures against their allocated budget. These forecasts are reviewed and challenged by the department's Executive Committee and Board as part of its regular management of performance.

■ **Cabinet Office: Staff**

Tom Watson: [\[43965\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the current workstream priorities are of the Policy Innovation Policy Lab team.

Tom Watson: [\[43966\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many members of staff currently work in the Policy Innovation Policy Lab team.

Ben Gummer:

The Policy Lab is currently collaborating with departmental policy teams on homelessness, work and health (including the Work & Health Innovation Fund) and the future of rail. Policy Lab's work is determined by departments, which approach them for support in employing the latest digital, design and data techniques to help address specific policy challenges.

There are six full time staff in the Policy Lab.

■ **Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster**

Tom Watson: [\[43473\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which ministerial responsibilities are held by the Office of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Ben Gummer:

The List of Ministerial Responsibilities will be published in due course.

■ Civil Servants: Recruitment

Greg Mulholland: [\[43658\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2016 to Question 41528, with which Government departments Rupert McNeil, the Chief People Officer, has met to discuss future skills and staff planning.

Ben Gummer:

The Civil Service constantly reviews its capabilities in order to deliver the Government's agenda. Following the decision to exit the European Union, Rupert McNeil, the Chief People Officer, is working closely with departments and functions across government to understand the capabilities required, and is in the process of meeting all Departmental Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Function to further inform this work.

Work is also on-going to establish the new Department for Exiting the European Union and the new Department for International Trade and all departments are currently reviewing their own structures and resources to ensure we get the best deal for the whole of Britain.

Greg Mulholland: [\[43818\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2016 to Question 41528, which government departments the Civil Service Chief People Officer, Rupert McNeil, has met in order to discuss future plans for those departments' skills and staff planning.

Greg Mulholland: [\[43819\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2016 to Question 41528, what discussions the Civil Service Chief People Officer, Rupert McNeil, has had with permanent secretaries of other government departments on meeting external organisations to discuss meeting temporary or permanent skills and staff needs.

Greg Mulholland: [\[43820\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2016 to Question 41528, what meetings his Department has had with external organisations on meeting temporary or permanent skills and staff needs across all government departments; and what formal contracts have been agreed for which job roles to bring in external staff since the EU referendum result.

Ben Gummer:

The Civil Service constantly reviews its capabilities in order to deliver the Government's agenda. Civil Servants regularly meet with external organisations and stakeholders to discuss how best to deliver that agenda, including seeking advice and assistance where appropriate. Following the decision to exit the European Union, Rupert McNeil, the Chief People Officer, is working closely with departments and functions across government to understand the capabilities required, including considering what new skills the Civil Service may require. To do that, he is in the process of meeting all Departmental Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Function.

Work is on-going to establish the new Department for Exiting the European Union and the new Department for International Trade and all departments are currently reviewing their own structures and resources to ensure we get the best deal for the whole of Britain.

■ Corruption

Jonathan Ashworth: [43563]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether it is still planned that the International Anti-Corruption Co-ordination Centre will be based in London.

Jonathan Ashworth: [43564]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the establishment of an Anti-Corruption Innovation Hub is still planned to proceed.

Jonathan Ashworth: [43565]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether he plans that the new Anti-Corruption Strategy announced by the Government earlier this year will still be completed by the end of 2016.

Jonathan Ashworth: [43579]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Inter-Ministerial Group on Anti-Corruption will continue to exist.

Jonathan Ashworth: [43580]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which Minister is responsible for the constitutional relationship with the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.

Ben Gummer:

Departments are working to progress the anti-corruption agenda, including work that was set out at the London Anti-Corruption Summit on May 12. However, the new government will wish to consider its approach to specific anti corruption policies, and the governance structures that will oversee this work.

■ Ministers: Codes of Practice

Tom Watson: [43484]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether he plans to amend the Ministerial Code to include the full text of the rules on business appointments.

Ben Gummer:

An updated Ministerial Code will be published in due course.

The business appointment rules already apply to former Ministers taking up any new or unpaid appointment within two years of leaving Ministerial office. The guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-business-appointments-for-senior-public-servants>

■ Private Members' Bills

Mr Charles Walker:

[\[43403\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, in respect of which private members bills presented on 29 June 2016 the Office of Parliamentary Counsel has been authorised to offer drafting support to the sponsor; and which bills (a) have received such support and (b) he expects to receive such support in the current session.

Ben Gummer:

To date none of the Members successful in the ballot, and who introduced their bills on 29 June, have handed in the text of their bill. Departments are in discussions with several Members at this time and where a bill aligns with Government policy Parliamentary Counsel will be providing support.

■ Young People: Leeds

Hilary Benn:

[\[43607\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many (a) 16, (b) 17 and (c) 18 year olds there were in Leeds in the most recent year for which information is available; and what estimate he has made of how many people there will be in each of those age groups in that city in each of the next five years.

Chris Skidmore:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Letter to Member - 16, 17, 18 Year Olds Leeds [Hilary Benn (43607) final.pdf]

TREASURY

■ Financial Conduct Authority and Financial Ombudsman Service

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[43983\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the findings of the National Audit Office in its report on Financial services mis-selling: regulation and redress, HC 851, published in February 2016, what recent assessment he has made of the transparency of the working relationship between the Financial Conduct Authority and the Financial Ombudsman Service; and whether he plans to take steps to encourage those bodies to work more closely together.

Simon Kirby:

The Financial Services Act 2012 made provision to improve co-operation between the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) and enhance transparency about their working relationship. These measures include:

- a statutory duty on the FCA and FOS to cooperate and to publish a memorandum describing how they intend to comply with that duty. The memorandum of

understanding is available at: <https://www.fca.org.uk/static/fca/documents/mou/mou-fos.pdf>

- a duty on the FOS to pass to the FCA any information relevant to its operational objectives and requiring the FCA, in fulfilling its consumer protection objective, to consider and act appropriately on information it receives from the FOS.
- A power for the FOS or the firms concerned to refer issues of mass detriment to the FCA.

As operationally independent bodies, it is a matter for the FCA and FOS to consider the findings of the National Audit Office (NAO) report regarding their day-to-day co-operation. The questions have been passed on to the FCA and FOS. The FCA and FOS will reply directly to the Honorable Member by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

■ Individual Savings Accounts

Rosie Cooper: [\[43996\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what (a) consultation, (b) decision-making process and (c) timetable he plans for deciding the final rules for the Government's Lifetime Individual Savings Accounts (ISA) scheme; and whether he plans to conduct a consultation on what life events in addition to the purchase of a first home will be eligible for penalty-free withdrawal of such investments before the age of 60.

Jane Ellison:

Following the Budget, the Government has engaged with industry on the detailed design of the Lifetime ISA, including on penalty-free withdrawals.

The Queen's Speech for the 2016-17 session announced the Government's intention to legislate for the Lifetime ISA. The legislation which will enact this measure will be introduced to Parliament in due course.

The Government will continue to talk to industry and interested parties about the Lifetime ISA while the Bill is being considered by the House, leading up to its planned launch.

■ Regional Planning and Development: North of England

Mark Menzies: [\[43493\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to further develop the Northern Powerhouse agenda.

Mr David Gauke:

We have made huge progress in building a Northern Powerhouse, from investment in transport, enterprise and culture to agreeing five landmark devolution deals across the North. We remain fully committed to doing everything we can to strengthen the Northern Powerhouse, including investing £13bn in transport over the course of this parliament, further improving skills through the Northern Powerhouse Schools Strategy and encouraging even more foreign investment into the towns and cities of the North.

Next year, 55% of the North's population will vote for a mayor to oversee economic decision making in their local area.

■ River Mersey: Bridges

Maria Eagle: [\[43666\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will extend the local discount scheme to residents across Merseyside to allow them to travel toll-free across the Mersey Gateway and Silver Jubilee bridges when they open in 2017.

Mr David Gauke:

My officials continue to work with the Department for Transport on the financial and contractual implications of any further extension of user discounts. A decision will be made on this in due course.

Maria Eagle: [\[43726\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether funding will be made available to Knowsley Council to enable residents who live in close proximity to the Mersey Gateway Bridge and Silver Jubilee Bridge to travel toll-free when those bridges open.

Mr David Gauke:

My officials continue to work with the Department for Transport on the financial and contractual implications of any further extension of user discounts. A decision will be made on this in due course.

■ Transport: EU Grants and Loans

Lilian Greenwood: [\[43562\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on (a) signed European Investment Bank (EIB) loans for transport projects in the UK and (b) EIB loan applications that are under appraisal for transport projects in the UK.

Mr David Gauke:

The UK is and continues to be a shareholder of the European Investment Bank and the EIB has publically stated that its engagement in the UK is unchanged.

All existing loan contracts signed between UK promoters and the EIB remain in force, and the EIB has continued to sign and approve new projects since the referendum.

■ Treasury: Living Wage

Frank Field: [\[43512\]](#)

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

Simon Kirby:

No direct employees of HM Treasury, Office of Budget Responsibility, Government Internal Audit Agency and Debt Management Office are paid less than the rate defined by the Living Wage Foundation as a living wage. No direct employees are employed on zero hours contracts.

The Government supports businesses that choose to pay the Living Wage however our prime policy is the National Minimum Wage for the low paid. This is independently set by the Low Pay Commission at a level that maximises their wages without reducing employment prospect. It is for workers and employers to decide the level of wages above the minimum wage based on current circumstances. This includes the Government as a procurer and an employer. Over 95%, around 20 million employees earn above the minimum wage and the majority of public sector workers currently earn above the Living Wage. Government will always award contracts on the basis of the best value for money for the taxpayers – which includes the low paid.

HM Treasury does not hold information on wages paid by our suppliers.

■ UK Withdrawal from EU**Caroline Flint:**[\[43935\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on his policies on pursuing country-by-country reporting through the EU of the UK voting to leave the EU.

Jane Ellison:

The Government supports international efforts on public country-by-country reporting to enhance transparency. This will allow for a comprehensive, multilateral approach that applies consistently across UK multinationals and foreign multinationals.

The UK will continue to engage in the EU negotiations on the Commission's public country-by-country reporting proposal, as well as discussions at the G20 and other international fora.

■ Welfare Tax Credits: Terminal Illnesses**Tommy Sheppard:**[\[43603\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to process tax credits claims for terminally ill people; and if he will consider introducing a fast track system as applied to claims for other allowances.

Mr David Gauke:

HMRC provide a tailored support service for vulnerable customers. If a customer who is terminally ill advises HMRC that they require extra help, HMRC's 'Needs Enhanced Support' team will help the customer throughout the claims procedure, accelerating the process where appropriate.

There are no current plans for HMRC to introduce a specific fast track service for tax credit customers who are terminally ill.

■ Women in Finance Charter

Chi Onwurah:

[43940]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will encourage technology companies to sign up to the Women in Finance Charter.

Simon Kirby:

The government launched the HM Treasury Women in Finance Charter to take forward Jayne-Anne Gadhia's recommendations following her review into the representation of senior women in financial services.

Firms that have signed the Charter are committed to implementing four key industry actions to improve gender diversity in financial services. On 11 July the government announced that 72 firms have signed the Charter, including a number of financial technology (fintech) firms. Together these firms employ over 530,000 people in the UK, with headquarters across the UK, USA, Europe and Asia.

Harnessing the talents of women in financial services is one of the government's key priorities and we are committed to ensuring that as many financial services firms as possible, including fintechs, sign the Women in Finance Charter.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

■ Children in Care: Kent

Mr Graham Allen:

[43938]

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, whether the Church of England plans to respond to the report by Professor Sue Proctor on abuse at Kendall House, Gravesend, published in July 2016.

Mrs Caroline Spelman:

In July 2016 the Rt Revd Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham and then lead bishop for safeguarding, apologised unreservedly to all former residents who continue to be affected by their experiences at Kendall House. The statement can be seen at <https://www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2016/07/statement-on-kendall-house-review.aspx>

The Church of England accepted the review and welcomed its recommendations. The Church's National Safeguarding Team will include those recommendations in their autumn review and plan to publish an annual review in 2017, which will report on progress made against them. Every diocese within the Church of England has received the report and in line with the review's findings are considering the implications of this for their own diocesan safeguarding arrangements, past and present.

■ Churches: Blackburn

Mr Mark Hendrick: [\[43489\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, which churches and personnel in Preston and the rest of the Diocese of Blackburn have participated in the English Churches and Cathedrals Sustainability Review.

Mrs Caroline Spelman:

The Cathedral and Church Buildings Division of the Church of England is engaging with the 'English Churches and Cathedrals Sustainability Review' centrally on behalf of all the Anglican Cathedrals and Parish Churches in England. Engagement is currently at an early stage. Four workshops are being held in churches this month (September) to help inform a document that will then be widely consulted upon.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Combined Authorities: Expenditure

Richard Burden: [\[43514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much central government funding has been provided to each combined authority in each year since those combined authorities have been established.

Andrew Percy:

The funding provided to combined authorities is agreed through Devolution Deals and City Deals (where applicable). These deals are individually negotiated agreements that include funding as well as the devolution of additional powers and flexibilities. The funding shown below has been provided directly by the government to each combined authority since they were established.

COMBINED AUTHORITY	FINANCIAL YEAR	OVERALL TOTAL (£M)
	2011/12	223.9
	2012/13	59.6
Greater Manchester 1/4/2011*	2013/14	81.1
	2014/15	182.6
	2015/16	241.9

	2016/17	290.3
	2014/15	27.4
North East 15/4/2014*	2015/16	117.1
	2016/17	132.0
	2014/15	72.3
West Yorkshire/ Leeds 1/4/2014*	2015/16	120.0
	2016/17	182.6
Tees Valley 1/4/2016*	2016/17	15.7
West Midlands 17/6/2016*	2016/17	85.1
	2014/15	26.0
Sheffield City Region 1/4/2014*	2015/16	82.6
	2016/17	101.2
	2014/15	28.3
Liverpool City Region 1/4/2014*	2015/16	60.1
	2016/17	98.9

*Date established

■ Economic Growth: Tees Valley

Tom Blenkinsop:

[\[43525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will publish a response to the recommendations in the report by Lord Heseltine, entitled Tees Valley: opportunity unlimited, published in June 2016.

Andrew Percy:

This independent report is for consideration by the Tees Valley Combined Authority and wider stakeholders. Government will not issue a formal response, but is committed to supporting Tees Valley Combined Authority relationship with Government across the

wide range of areas identified in the report. Local leaders are planning a formal update event for the report in the Autumn.

■ Homelessness

Colleen Fletcher: [\[43360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what recent estimate he has made of the number of (a) homeless people and (b) rough sleepers in (i) Coventry, (ii) the West Midlands and (iii) England.

Mr Marcus Jones:

One person without a home is one too many. That is why the Government is clear that prevention must be at the heart of everything we do to tackle homelessness. We have protected homelessness prevention funding for local authorities, which will amount to £315 million by 2020, to help them provide quality advice and assistance to everyone who approaches them for help. We are also exploring options, including legislation, to prevent more people from becoming homeless in the first place.

We have also increased central investment to tackle homelessness over the next four years to £139 million, including a new £10 million fund to support innovative ways to prevent and reduce rough sleeping, and a new £10 million Social Impact Bond to support rough sleepers with the most complex needs.

Statistics for each of the last five years on statutory homelessness acceptances, homelessness prevention and relief and rough sleeping are available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>.

■ Housing: Construction

Craig Whittaker: [\[43790\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what support he has provided to local authorities and the construction industry to encourage the promotion of self-build schemes for constructing new homes.

Gavin Barwell:

We have a strong commitment to supporting and encouraging the growth of self- and custom build homes.

The Government has implemented new legislation requiring most local planning authorities to hold and have regard to registers for those seeking to build their own home in a local authority area. Subject to Parliamentary processes, in the Autumn we will also introduce secondary legislation flowing from the Housing and Planning Act 2016 which will require local planning authorities to find and give permission to suitable land reflecting the demand demonstrated by the registers. We have made available £32 million in new burdens funding over the Spending Review period in order to support local planning authorities in meeting these new requirements.

In the 2015 Spending Review, the Government also announced a £3 billion loan fund of which £1 billion is specifically earmarked for short term loans to support small and

medium builders and custom build projects and is designed to provide further support for the legislation that we have introduced.

■ Housing: Energy

Judith Cummins: [\[43897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what proportion of dwellings in the UK have an EPC rating below band E; and what proportion of measures installed under the Energy Company Obligation have been in dwellings with an EPC rating below band E.

Gavin Barwell:

On 29 July 2016, 5% of dwellings in England and Wales where an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) has been produced are rated band F and 2% are rated band G.

Information on the proportion of measures installed under the Energy Company Obligation carried out in dwellings with an EPC rating below band E is not held centrally.

■ Local Government: Pensions

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[43617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will publish guidance for local authority pension schemes on investment in arms companies producing banned munitions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[43618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will review the powers of local authority pensions schemes to indirectly invest in companies linked with the manufacture of cluster munitions.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Investment decisions in the local government pension scheme are the responsibility of the 90 designated administering authorities in England and Wales and must be taken on the basis of expert advice and in compliance with the Scheme's regulatory framework. Since 2000, pension fund authorities have been required to publish a statement of investment principles, including their policy on the extent to which social, environmental or ethical considerations are to be taken into account in the selection, retention and realisation of investments. The regulations also require that each statement is published locally.

We have no immediate plans to change these existing obligations, but will keep them under review.

■ Planning

Greg Mulholland: [\[43788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps members of the public can take to ensure that their local authorities comply with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Gavin Barwell:

There are many ways in which local people can ensure that Local Planning Authorities have regard to the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework when carrying out their planning functions. Local Plans prepared by Local Planning Authorities are assessed against requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework as part of the tests of soundness. There are opportunities at various stages for communities to comment on the Local Plan including at publication stage. Each local council must prepare a Statement of Community Involvement. This should set out a local council's policy for involving communities in the preparation and revision of its Local Plan.

Local Planning Authorities are required to make decisions on planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework is such a material consideration. There are opportunities for communities to comment on planning applications.

Neighbourhood planning also provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure they get the right types of development for their community, where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Communities are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like, and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead.

■ Property Development: Floods**Rosie Cooper:**[\[43471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department can take against developers who illegally build new developments too close to river banks and exacerbate existing flooding problems in the area.

Gavin Barwell:

National planning policy is clear that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, including floodplains. Where unauthorised development has taken place, we have given local planning authorities a wide range of powers to tackle the situation. These powers include the ability to serve an enforcement notice setting out the steps required to remedy a breach – which can include the demolition of a building if the authority considers that appropriate. Non-compliance with such a notice is punishable by an unlimited fine and local authorities have the power to take the necessary steps themselves and recover the costs from the developer. Other powers include the ability to apply for a planning injunction against apprehended as well as actual breaches of planning control. The penalties for non compliance with an injunction are severe – including imprisonment for contempt of court. Full details of local authorities' enforcement powers can be found in our online planning guidance: <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/ensuring-effective-enforcement/>.

■ Right to Buy Scheme: Housing Associations

Royston Smith:

[43929]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what progress has been made on giving housing association tenants whose tenancies are defined as market rental the right to buy.

Gavin Barwell:

The voluntary Right to Buy will give 1.3 million housing association tenants the opportunity to purchase a home. We are currently working with the National Housing Federation and the housing association sector on the implementation of the main scheme and will announce more details in due course.

As is set out in the voluntary agreement, the scheme will apply to those housing association tenants who live in a social or affordable rented home.

■ Temporary Accommodation

Colleen Fletcher:

[43359]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of families with children living in temporary accommodation in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England in (i) each of the last two years and (ii) the latest month for which figures are available.

Gavin Barwell:

The numbers of homeless families with children in temporary accommodation for each local authority in England are published each quarter at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness#detailed-local-authority-level-responses>

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ 5G

Calum Kerr:

[43459]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will make it its policy to launch commercial 5G services in at least one city by 2020.

Calum Kerr:

[43460]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will establish a 5G venture fund for 5G technology start-ups.

Matt Hancock:

We are sponsoring the Future Communications Challenge Group (FCCG) of senior academics, industry experts and funders, chaired by the President of the Institute of Engineering and Technology, which is considering how we should drive forward our commitment to ensure that UK has a leading role in 5G development.

In parallel the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) is conducting a study, launched in Budget 2016, into how UK can achieve early deployment of 5G networks.

Both of these will report by the end of the year and the results will feed into a comprehensive 5G strategy for the UK, to be published in 2017.

■ **Broadband: Devon and Somerset**

Mr Hugo Swire: [\[43721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the progress against its targets of BT's commercial roll-out of superfast broadband in the Connecting Devon and Somerset area.

Matt Hancock:

Broadband Delivery UK works closely with the Connecting Devon and Somerset team and BT to keep progress on the BT commercial roll-out under review. Responsibility for the commercial roll-out lies with BT.

■ **Broadband: West Sussex**

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[43412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what additional support and resources her Department is providing to assist West Sussex County Council in meeting its universal broadband obligations.

Matt Hancock:

The Government has implemented a basic broadband scheme to enable all premises to gain access to speeds of at least 2Mbps. This enables residents to gain access to every government service available online. Funding for subsidised connections through the scheme is provided by Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) as part of the government's superfast broadband programme. Consumers in eligible premises can access services from any of the suppliers who have been entered onto the scheme by BDUK.

In addition it is the Government's intention to implement a new broadband Universal Service Obligation. This will give people the legal right to request a broadband connection, no matter where they live, by the end of this Parliament. Our ambition is that the minimum download speed should initially be set at 10 Mbps.

■ **Digital Technology**

Calum Kerr: [\[43458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she will take to protect businesses in the digital sector as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

Matt Hancock:

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is working closely with all of our sectors to make sure they have a voice as we prepare for negotiations to exit the European Union. We will continue to have regular engagement with organisations from across the

digital sector to make sure their views and concerns are represented fully in our preparations for exit negotiations.

■ Video Games

Anna Turley:

[\[43615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with Nintendo about incidences of trespass or disrespecting of cemeteries or religious sites caused by players of Pokémon Go.

Matt Hancock:

Many people in the UK enjoy playing Pokemon Go and most act responsibly whilst doing so. It is important that all players abide by the law and respect their surroundings. During the summer Pokemon Go's developers in the US, Niantic, added some new warnings to the game's loading screen, for example reminding players not to trespass and not to enter dangerous areas. Owners or managers of specific sites who are concerned about players visiting a nearby PokeStop or Gym are able to use Niantic's report system to request that the stop is removed from the game.

Meanwhile, we are in touch with representatives of Niantic to discuss features of Pokemon Go and the advice they provide to consumers in the UK.

■ Voluntary Work: Young People

Tim Loughton:

[\[43764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to encourage young deaf people to take part in the National Citizen Service.

Mr Rob Wilson:

In order to encourage young people with sensory disabilities to take part NCS, the Department for Culture, Media & Sport is working closely with NCS Trust, the independent organisation which delivers NCS, to ensure that NCS is accessible.

Many NCS providers already reach out and offer support to those with disabilities, including deaf young people. The largest provider, The Challenge, has worked with the National Deaf Children's Society, and adapted the programme for deaf young people, including providing dedicated support workers.

The NCS Trust is currently developing a detailed inclusion strategy to ensure that over the longer term there is consistent and high quality provision for young people with disabilities to take part in the programme.

Tim Loughton:

[\[43765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what proportion of young people taking part in the National Citizen Service since its inception have had a registered disability.

Mr Rob Wilson:

In 2011, 16% of NCS participants declared a disability or health problem expected to last more than a year, compared to 12% in the comparable population as recorded by

the National Pupil Database. In 2012, 15% of NCS participants declared a disability, compared to 12% in the comparable population as recorded by the National Pupil Database.

The NCS Trust, the independent organisation which has delivered NCS since 2013, does not mandate the recording of information about registered disability or health problems by providers.

However, the NCS Trust does capture self-declared Special Educational Needs information. In 2013, 4.5% of NCS participants had Special Educational Needs; in 2014, 3.6%. Data for 2015 will become available in due course. For comparison, in both the January 2013 School Census and January 2014 School Census, 2.8% of schoolchildren had a Special Educational Needs statement or Educational, Health and Care (EHC) plan.

Tim Loughton: [\[43766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many young people have (a) started, (b) completed and graduated from and (c) registered for the National Citizen Service since its inception.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The table below provides the most complete information on the number of young people who have registered for, begun and completed NCS. There was considerable national growth in the programme in 2015 – exact figures on 2015 NCS participation will be published in the independent evaluation in due course.

	TOTAL REGISTERED	TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	TOTAL COMPLETERS
2011	10,897	8,434	6,809
2012	30,987	26,003	21,360
2013	50,924	39,994	37,266
2014	74,559	57,789	52,413

The small number of participants for whom we recorded missing completion data have not been included in the above figures. Figures on participants and completers are available in the published independent evaluations of NCS.

DEFENCE

■ Apache AH-64 Helicopter

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the role will be of (a) Leonardo helicopters and (b) that helicopter's production facility in Yeovil in the long-term support work for the AH-64E Apache when it enters service between 2022 and 2024.

Harriett Baldwin:

Leonardo Helicopters will continue to lead on providing support to our existing Apache Mk 1 helicopters until they are retired from service in 2023-24. We have yet to decide the support arrangements for our new AH-64E Apache helicopters beyond the initial period of support that will be provided through the US Government.

The Ministry of Defence has signed a Strategic Partnering Arrangement with Leonardo Helicopters that will ensure that we continue to work together to enhance national prosperity through export success, and that the right innovation and technologies are available in the UK to meet our future defence requirements.

■ **Armed Forces: Credit Unions****Gareth Thomas:**[\[43472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress he has made on establishing a credit union for members of the armed forces; what steps he is taking to make military personnel aware of that service; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Lancaster:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 7 March 2016 to Question 29059 to the hon. Member for Strangford (Jim Shannon).

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-03-01/29059/>

Attachments:

1. 29059 - QnA extract on Armed Forces: Credit Unions
[Hansard_Extract_7_March_2016_HOC_29059[1].docx]

■ **Armed Forces: Dogs****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[43678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many military working dogs have been euthanized by his Department in the last 12 months.

Mark Lancaster:

A total of 62 Military Working Dogs were euthanised by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) during the 12 month period up to June 2016. Figures by month are provided in the table below.

2015	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
	9	4	7	4	10	8
2016	January	February	March	April	May	June
	5	4	5	3	2	1

Decisions to euthanise any animal in military service are only taken by a veterinarian officer after all possible treatment avenues have been exhausted and where it is

considered to be the most humane option for the animal. The only other scenario where an animal would be euthanised is where it is considered to pose a risk to public safety.

■ Armed Forces: Horses

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many horses have been euthanized by his Department in each of the last 12 months.

Mark Lancaster:

The numbers of horses euthanised by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) in each month up to June 2016 are provided in the table below.

2015	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
	2	0	0	2	0	1
2016	January	February	March	April	May	June
	0	0	2	2	1	0

Decisions to euthanise any animal in military service are only taken by a veterinarian officer after all possible treatment avenues have been exhausted and where it is considered to be the most humane option for the animal. The only other scenario where an animal would be euthanised is where it is considered to pose a risk to public safety.

Where possible, Military Working Animals (MWAs) at the end of their service life will be rehomed however sadly there are some occasions where veterinary reasons indicate that re-homing would compromise the welfare of the animal, or rehoming the would pose an unacceptable risk to public safety as a result of the animal's service life. The decision to euthanise an MWA must always be balanced and pragmatic, and consider a range of factors including the MOD covenant with society which allows us to use animals in Defence. This covenant requires us to:

Make decisions regarding animal care, use, and welfare by balancing scientific knowledge and professional judgment with consideration of ethical and societal values; and

Ensure animals are treated with respect and dignity throughout their lives and, when necessary, provided a humane death.

■ Defence: Finance

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make a commitment to spend two per cent of gross domestic product on defence in each year until 2020.

Michael Fallon:

Yes. This commitment was announced in the 2015 Summer Budget.

■ European Fighter Aircraft

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when his Department expects the Brimstone 2 missile system for Typhoon aircraft to be in service.

Harriett Baldwin:

The planned in service date for the integration of the Brimstone 2 missile system on the Typhoon aircraft is December 2018, as previously published in the Major Projects Report 2015.

■ Frigates

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the range of capability requirements for the General Purpose Frigate programme and the likely threats it will face.

Harriett Baldwin:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my predecessor (Philip Dunne) to Question 40451 to the hon. Member for Glasgow South West (Chris Stephens).

Attachments:

1. QnA extract on Warships: Antisubmarine Warfare
[20160627_QnA_extract_on_Warships_Antisubmarine_Warfare.docx]

■ Hercules Aircraft

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department plans to spend on the upgrade and life-extension programme for the C130-J programme.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 announced an out of service date (OSD) extension of 14 C130J Mk4 aircraft from 2022 to 2030. This does not constitute an extension of the overall design life of the platform, but a revision of the Royal Air Force's planned OSD. During this period, it is currently estimated that, over and above annual support costs, approximately £200 million will be spent on key components to maintain the life of the aircraft and £150 million on upgrading the fleet with new capabilities.

■ Maritime Patrol Aircraft

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what he plans the in-service date to be for each of the nine P-8 Poseidon aircraft.

Harriett Baldwin:

As previously stated, we expect that the first P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft will come into service in 2019, with the entire fleet being delivered by 2021. We are, as yet,

unable to provide details of the in-service date for each UK aircraft as this will only be available once the production contract has been placed with Boeing.

■ Military Attaches

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's planned expenditure is on UK defence attachés in each year to 2020.

Mike Penning:

The following information shows Ministry of Defence funding for the Defence Attaché and Advisor Network to financial year (FY) 2019-20 including costs associated with the British Defence Section in Washington.

	FY2016-17	FY2017-18	FY2018-19	FY2019-20
Attaché Costs	£39,616,021	£39,372,162	£38,899,766	£40,433,147
FCO Platform Charges	£13,136,434	£15,470,882	£15,689,819	£15,970,923
Total	£52,752,455	£54,843,044	£55,589,585	£56,404,070

■ Ministry of Defence: Accountancy

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43695\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the qualification of his Department's 2015-16 accounts by the Comptroller and Auditor General, what steps is he taking to improve compliance by his Department with international accounting requirements for leases.

Michael Fallon:

The Department has implemented an action plan to improve compliance with IFRIC 4/IAS 17 for new contracts which are single contracts and impact a single site, with effect from 2016-17. This work should enable further understanding of the challenges and resources required to improve compliance. The Department will review the results of this exercise during 2016-17 before considering whether it can be expanded further.

■ Ministry of Defence: Land

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his targets are for reductions in the defence estate in each year to 2020.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has committed to release land to accommodate 55,000 houses by 2020 in support of the Government's public sector land release agenda. This year I have announced the release of 22 sites which will provide land for some 22,000

homes. By the end of this year I will set out how the MOD will deliver the remainder of its land release commitment.

■ Ministry of Defence: Languages

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[43907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's planned expenditure is on language training in each year to 2020.

Mark Lancaster:

The following table highlights the projected expenditure by financial year (FY), for the delivery of language training by the Defence Academy (DA) (part of Joint Force Command) and the Army, broken down by 'Foreign Language Training' (FLT) and 'English Language Training' (ELT).

	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY2019-20	FY 2020-21	TOTAL
DA FLT	£2,124,453.00	£2,161,942.00	£2,211,652.00	£2,260,694.00	£8,758,741.00
Army FLT	£1,000,000.00	£1,000,000.00	£1,000,000.00	£1,000,000.00	£4,000,000.00
Army ELT	£18,000.00	£18,000.00	£18,000.00	£18,000.00	£72,000.00

■ Ministry of Defence: Living Wage

Frank Field:

[\[43516\]](#)

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

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) pays over and above the New National Living Wage across all of our business areas (£7.20 per hour).

In 2015 the Secretary of State for Defence agreed that London-based staff should be paid the London Living Wage rate (£9.40 per hour). This is in line with the rate defined by the Living Wage Foundation. This rate includes basic pay and any applicable allowances. It is regularly reviewed and where an individual's rate falls under this they are paid specific enhancements.

The MOD has not formally signed up to the National Living Wage rate as defined by the Living Wage Foundation (£8.25 per hour). The table below details those directly employed by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and its agencies who are paid less than this rate.

NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

MOD (outside London)	1,017
Defence Equipment & Support (outside London)	93
Defence Science & Technology Laboratory	107
United Kingdom Hydrographic Office	55
Defence Electronics and Components Agency	0

Contracted workers' rates of pay, where paid by their parent company or recruitment agency, are not visible to the MOD.

The MOD does not employ individuals on zero-hours contracts.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Redundancy**

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many civilian redundancies are planned in his Department in each year to 2020.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence is committed to meeting its obligations set out in the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review, including reducing our civilian workforce. Work is ongoing to develop detailed plans.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Staff**

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to page 36 of the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review, how many members of staff are employed in his Department's commercial specialist team designed to act as the single sponsor for aspects of the defence nuclear enterprise.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence's (MOD) new Director General Nuclear organisation was established on 1 April this year. The acting Director General was appointed in May and we expect to make a permanent appointment by the end of the year. The MOD Head Office staff working on different aspects of nuclear-related matters have transferred into the new organisation and additional recruitment to strengthen and deepen the capabilities of the team is also taking place. At present, the new organisation has around 120 staff and it is envisaged that this will rise to about 175 staff over the course of the next year.

■ Porton Down: Animal Experiments

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[43677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many experiments were conducted on each species of animal at the DSTL Porton Down facility in each of the last 12 months.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) reports the numbers of procedures involving animals to the Home Office on an annual basis in accordance with UK legislation. Figures for 2016 will not be available until after the reports have been made. Details of the annual Dstl reports to the Home Office for calendar year 2015, by month, are given in the table below:

SPECIES	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Guinea Pig	3	7	0	1	8	4	7	3	44	15	15	9	116
Marmoset	0	8	12	8	3	0	11	4	8	0	0	3	57
Mouse	15	449	543	80	83	50	85	213	319	505	450	102	2,894
Pig	1	2	0	0	5	4	10	3	9	8	10	6	58
Rat	4	8	100	1	0	0	5	0	0	0	6	0	124
Total	23	474	655	90	99	58	118	223	380	528	481	120	3,249

Dstl is proud to deliver cutting-edge science and technology for the benefit of national defence and security. Part of its work is to provide safe and effective countermeasures against the threat posed by chemical and biological weapons and to enhance the treatment of conventional casualties on the battlefield, which could not currently be achieved without the use of animals.

Dstl Porton Down conducts less than half of one per cent of the animal experimentation carried out in the UK. Every procedure is undertaken in strict accordance with the terms of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. Dstl operates in accordance with the principles of the '3Rs' (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement), and has an active programme to increase its implementation. Dstl Porton Down is licensed by the Home Office to conduct research involving animals.

■ Trident Submarines

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[43675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the first Vanguard successor submarine will come into service.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate his Department has of the out-of-service dates for each of the Vanguard-class submarines.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK's Vanguard Class submarines will begin to leave service by the early 2030s as the Successor submarines are introduced into service. I am withholding their respective planned out-of-service and in-service dates for the purpose of safeguarding national security.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the consequences for the viability of the Successor submarine programme of the conclusions of the Infrastructure and Projects Authority's assessment of that programme.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority's assessment of the Successor submarine programme accords with our own. That is why we have established a new Director General Nuclear sponsor organisation and will set up a new submarine delivery body, as set out in the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015. The assessment recognises the complexity and scale of delivering the most advanced submarines ever commissioned by the Royal Navy.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's planning assumptions are for formulating the in-service date for the first of the Vanguard-successor submarines.

Harriett Baldwin:

As set out in Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015, we expect the first Successor submarine to enter service in the early 2030s. I am withholding details of the planning assumptions for the purpose of safeguarding national security.

■ Type 26 Frigates

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[43689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the current budget is for the Type 26 Frigate programme.

Harriett Baldwin:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my predecessor (Philip Dunne) on 27 June 2016 to Question 40450 to the hon. Member for Glasgow South West (Chris Stephens).

Attachments:

1. 40450 - QnA extract on Type 26 Frigates
[20160627_40450_Type_26_Frigates[1].docx]

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[43693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with the Royal Navy about further extending the out-of-service dates for the Type 23 frigate.

Harriett Baldwin:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my predecessor (Philip Dunne) on 27 June 2016 to Question 39922 to the hon. Member for Portsmouth South (Mrs Flick Drummond).

Attachments:

1. 39922 - QnA extract on Type 23 Frigates
[Hansard_Extract_27_June_2016_HOC_39922.[1].docx]

■ **Unidentified Flying Objects**

Andy Slaughter:

[\[43413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many sightings of unidentified flying objects have been reported in each of the last five years.

Mike Penning:

The Ministry of Defence does not maintain a central record of the number of unidentified flying object (UFO) sightings reported, following the closure of the UFO Desk in 2009.

■ **Unmanned Air Vehicles**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[43696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how he plans to ensure that the Royal Navy maintains its maritime unmanned air system capability from late 2017.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Royal Navy recognises the potential benefits from the use of unmanned vehicles in both air and sea environments and continues to explore how such systems can further augment its capabilities, although no decisions on future systems have yet been taken.

■ **Warships: Shipbuilding**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[43686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, who has been consulted in drawing up the National Shipbuilding Strategy.

Harriett Baldwin:

Sir John Parker, the Independent Chair of the National Shipbuilding Strategy, has had bilateral meetings with a significant number of key Government officials and Ministers, as well as with a broad range of maritime industry leaders and the Trades Unions (Confederation of Shipbuilding Engineering Unions, Unite and GMB).

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[43687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to publish the National Shipbuilding Strategy.

Harriett Baldwin:

I REFER THE HON. MEMBER TO THE ANSWER GIVEN ON 4 JULY 2016 TO QUESTION 41500 TO THE HON. MEMBER FOR GLASGOW SOUTH WEST (CHRIS STEPHENS).

Attachments:

1. Shipbuilding [Hansard_Extract_4_July_2016,_HOC_41500[1].docx]

EDUCATION

■ Academies

Stephen Timms:

[\[43408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support her Department gives successful schools wishing to establish a multi-academy trust.

Edward Timpson:

The Department supports successful schools wishing to establish Multi-Academy Trusts and I refer the Hon. Member to the answer provided for question 42232 on 13 July 2016.

Maria Eagle:

[\[43648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many secondary schools which have not applied for academy status have been subject to intervention powers in each local authority area in England in the last 12 months.

Maria Eagle:

[\[43650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many maintained secondary schools have had Section 4 Academies Act orders enforced against them in the last 12 months.

Maria Eagle:

[\[43727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many maintained secondary schools have had orders under Section 4 of the Academies Act 2010 enforced in the last year.

Edward Timpson:

The Education and Adoption Act 2016 amended section 4 of the 2010 Academies Act to place a duty on the Secretary of State to issue an Academy Order to maintained schools judged by Ofsted as inadequate.

Since the 2016 Act came into force in April, 43 maintained secondary schools have been issued with an Academy Order under this duty. Four of these schools had previously submitted an application to convert to academy status. In the eight months before the

2016 Act came into force, no Academy Order was made without the consent of the governing body to become an academy.

The 2016 Act also provided the Secretary of State with a power to issue a warning notice to a maintained school where there are concerns about performance standards and safety. Under this power, nine warning notices have been issued by Regional Schools Commissioners to secondary schools.

There has been no other intervention by the Secretary of State in a maintained school over the last 12 months.

Local Authorities (LA) also have powers to intervene in maintained schools. These powers (alongside those of the Secretary of State) are set out in the *Schools Causing Concern* guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-causing-concern--2>

The LA power to constitute the governing body of a maintained school as an interim executive board requires the consent of the Secretary of State. During the last 12 months, the Secretary of State has consented to 5 applications from LAs to establish an interim executive board in a secondary school.

Information about the above interventions (as of July 2015) summarised by local authority is set out in the table attached.

Attachments:

1. Information about interventions
[Information_about_interventions_summarised_by_local_authority_July_2015.xlsx]

Stephen Timms: [\[43735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many applications from maintained schools to convert to academy status were (a) approved and (b) declined by each regional schools commissioner in 2015.

Edward Timpson:

The table below shows the total number of applications received in 2015 from Local Authority maintained schools and how many of these were subsequently approved or declined. The information is split by the RSC region in which the schools are located. Please note that the decision to approve or decline may in some instances have been made by ministers.

RSC REGION	TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN 2015	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN 2015 THAT WERE APPROVED	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN 2015 THAT WERE DECLINED
East Midlands & Humber	59	43	3
Lancashire & West Yorkshire	42	35	1

RSC REGION	TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN 2015	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN 2015 THAT WERE APPROVED	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN 2015 THAT WERE DECLINED
North	63	49	0
North East London & East	55	55	0
North West London & South Central	55	52	0
South London & South East	56	49	1
South West	90	74	0
West Midlands	113	100	1
Total	533	457	6

A small number of applications received in 2015 have been withdrawn or not yet decided.

The data is correct as at 1 July 2016.

Stephen Timms: [\[43995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to support successful multi-academy trusts in collaborating and sharing best practices with other such trusts.

Edward Timpson:

The Department supports successful Multi-Academy Trusts in collaborating with other such trusts and I refer the Hon. Member to the answer provided for question 42232 on 13 July 2016.

■ Academies: Standards

Stephen Timms: [\[43993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her Department's criteria are for intervening in order to close a multi-academy trust.

Edward Timpson:

It is crucial that underperformance in the school system is tackled rapidly. Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) consider the performance of Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) in their area at appropriate points in the academic year (such as following exam results) and at key stages of their growth. Where an RSC has concerns about a MAT there is a range of support they can offer and measures they can take. Ultimately, the Education and Adoption Act 2016 provides the Secretary of State with powers to

remove academies from a MAT where they are failing or coasting, and transfer them to a new trust. RSCs take decisions in the name of the Secretary of State and their functions are set out in a decision-making framework, available on GOV.UK at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/517565/RSC-Decision-Making-Framework.pdf

RSC powers of intervention are set out in the Education and Adoption Act 2016, Schools Causing Concern guidance and in individual academy funding agreements.

The Schools Causing Concern guidance describes what decisions RSCs will make and the arrangements for RSCs to take formal action in academies that are causing concern. The guidance can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510080/schools-causing-concern-guidance.pdf

The Department's White Paper *Educational Excellence Everywhere*, committed to testing further how we can develop the legal framework for academies to ensure that underperformance is addressed swiftly and that the system has the right balance of intervention, review and stability. We want to continue to engage widely on this in upcoming months.

■ Apprentices: Ethnic Groups

Stephen Timms:

[43404]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to increase the number of apprentices who are of an ethnic minority.

Robert Halfon:

In 2014/15, 10.6% of those starting an apprenticeship had a BAME background.

The Government is committed to increasing the proportion of apprentices from a BAME background by 20% by 2020.

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

We have taken action through our current marketing campaign, 'Get in Go Far' to ensure that there is clear representation from BAME apprentices. Research undertaken prior to the campaign ensured that it could reach a diverse audience. In addition, we have established a network of employer Diversity Champions, who are committed to sharing good practice and raising awareness of apprenticeships amongst employers.

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

Stephen Timms: [\[43405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the reasons for the low level of representation of ethnic minorities among people starting an apprenticeship.

Robert Halfon:

We are committed to increasing the proportion of apprenticeship starts taken up by people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds by 20%.

We have begun detailed analysis of the apprenticeship data to gain a full picture of the representation of ethnic minorities in apprenticeships, any barriers to participation, and areas of potential for growth.

In 2014/15, 10.6% of those starting an apprenticeship had a BAME background.

■ Children: Protection

Tim Loughton: [\[43762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the implications of the provisions in clause 15 of the Children and Social Work Bill for strengthening safeguarding responsibilities.

Edward Timpson:

Clause 15 of the Children and Social Work Bill is key to bringing about the changes proposed by Alan Wood in his review of the role and function of Local Safeguarding Children Boards. The review's recommendations, which we accepted, were to replace the existing Local Safeguarding Children Board structure with a stronger but more flexible framework for multi-agency working in local areas. We believe that this stronger framework and flexibility, as set out in clause 15, will improve outcomes for children and their families and enable the effective sharing of information which is so fundamental to safeguarding children.

Tim Loughton: [\[43763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to release local authority children's services departments from their safeguarding children responsibilities.

Edward Timpson:

There are no plans to release local authority children's services departments from their safeguarding responsibilities. The Children and Social Work Bill proposes a power for local authorities to test different ways of working. This power is not about questioning the fundamentals of what local authorities need to do in relation to children's safeguarding, but about exploring how things could be done better. We are seeking to create a controlled, time-limited space to test new ways of working before seeking to make any wider changes to the legislative framework. Accountability for safeguarding will remain the same even if exemptions are being tested.

■ Education: Tees Valley**Tom Blenkinsop:**[\[43989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many places for 16 to 19 year olds there are in (a) schools and (b) further education colleges in (i) the Tees Valley and (ii) Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency; and how many such places are planned for each of the next five years.

Edward Timpson:

i. The following table summarises the total number of places allocated to all post-16 institutions based in Tees Valley for the academic year 2016 to 2017:

ALLOCATED 16 TO 19 PLACES FOR TEES VALLEY AREA BASED INSTITUTIONS

Type	Student Numbers
Academy	2,274
Free School	56
Special Schools	311
Commercial and Charitable Provider	556
General FE and Tertiary	10,430
Local Authority	384
Sixth Form College	4,604
Grand Total	18,615

EFA Funded students – figures are yet to be published (October 2016) and may be subject to very minor change.

ii. The following table summarises the total number of places allocated to all post-16 institutions based in Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency for the academic year 2016 to 2017:

ALLOCATED 16 TO 19 PLACES FOR INSTITUTIONS BASED IN THE MIDDLESBROUGH SOUTH AND EAST CLEVELAND CONSTITUENCY

Type	Student numbers
Academy	227
Sixth Form College	1,742
Grand Total	1,969

EFA Funded students – figures are yet to be published (October 2016) and may be subject to very minor change.

We do not hold planned numbers for future years.

■ Further Education: Leeds

Hilary Benn: [\[43363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many places there are for 16 to 19 year olds in (a) schools, (b) further education colleges, (c) university technical colleges and (d) free schools in Leeds; and how many places are planned for each such category in each of the next five years.

Edward Timpson:

The following table summarises the total number of places allocated to all post-16 institutions based in Leeds for the academic year 2016 to 2017:

ALLOCATED 16 TO 19 PLACES FOR LEEDS LOCAL AUTHORITY BASED INSTITUTIONS

Type	Student Numbers
Academy	2,828
Free School	810
Maintained School Sixth Form	3,073
University Technology College	88
Special Schools	255
Commercial and Charitable Provider	1,200
General FE and Tertiary	6,416
Higher Education Provider	515
Sixth Form College	1,824
Total	17,009

EFA Funded students – figures are as at 20 July 2016 and are yet to be published (October 2016) and may be subject to minor change.

We do not hold planned numbers for future years.

■ Further Education: Liverpool City Region

Derek Twigg: [\[42684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the cost to the public purse has been to date of the area-based review of post-16 education in the Liverpool City Region.

Derek Twigg:

[42685]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the cost to the public purse has been to date of the area-based reviews of post-16 education in England.

Robert Halfon:

Area reviews are designed to deliver a further education system that meets the economic and educational needs of areas, whilst also ensuring the long term sustainability of colleges to support productivity. The Department and its agencies are undertaking this work without any additional staffing. Additional costs have, therefore, been minimal. Where they have arisen, they have been met by reprioritising existing resources. This has included providing access to additional advice and support from the Further Education and Sixth Form College Commissioners and their teams.

■ National Curriculum Tests

Gloria De Piero:

[43803]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make it policy to adopt a national assessment framework at Key Stage 3 in order to remove from schools the need to spend time writing their own assessment guidelines.

Nick Gibb:

The Government removed the system of 'levels' used to report children's attainment in September 2014 and has no plans to replace it. At Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, schools are expected to implement assessment systems that meet the needs of their pupils and takes account of their curriculum.

Levels were only ever intended to be used for end of Key Stage statutory assessment but, over time, they came to dominate all assessment and have a damaging impact on teaching practice. Removing levels has put assessment back in the hands of schools and restored its real purpose of helping teachers to evaluate pupils' understanding of curriculum content and plan lessons to support their progress. The removal of levels should also help to alleviate teacher workload over time by reducing the tracking burdens that levels encouraged.

In order to support schools so that they can make the most of the freedoms created by the removal of levels, we set up the Commission on Assessment Without Levels. In 2015, the Commission published guidance for schools, which includes examples of best practice. This guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/commission-on-assessment-without-levels-final-report>

■ Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

Paula Sherriff:

[43752]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to tackle hate crime through education in schools.

Edward Timpson:

Our vision is to ensure that pupils develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to succeed academically; protect themselves from harm; and play a full and active part in society. Schools play an important role in preventing hate crime by empowering young people to question and tackle the underlying beliefs of prejudice and intolerance that can lead to hatred and bigotry.

Schools are required to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This includes challenging prejudice and promoting tolerance. Schools are also subject to the Equality Act and to the Public Sector Equality Duty which require schools to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between communities. There are a variety of approaches that schools can adopt in meeting these duties and in raising issues relating to hate crime, including:

- using teaching materials which help pupils to understand and build knowledge of the diverse cultures and faiths in modern Britain.
- encouraging classroom debate, and giving pupils the opportunity to discuss topical issues, to challenge each other and themselves, and to build the resilience and critical thinking skills they need to challenge views which are unacceptable.
- teaching in Citizenship to include preparing pupils to take their place in society as responsible citizens.
- ensuring pupils are taught about safeguarding through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum - this may include covering relevant issues through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE).

In equipping pupils for life in modern, multi-cultural Britain, the Department wants to ensure that schools have access to good quality resources to support them. In January 2016, we launched the *Educate Against Hate* [1] website to provide practical advice to parents, teachers and school leaders on how to protect children from extremism and promote fundamental British values. The website includes resources to assist teachers to explore hatred and its consequences with their pupils and to develop their respect for diversity in their own cultural and religious traditions and in others. It also includes the Crown Prosecution Service's resource packs for schools on hate crime.

[1] <http://educateagainsthate.com/>

■ Pre-school Education**Stuart Andrew:****[43475]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how the planned early years workforce strategy will increase recruitment and improve retention of early years teachers.

Caroline Dineneage:

The government recognises the importance of the early years workforce in improving quality and delivering better outcomes for children. That is why we are committed to

publishing an early years workforce strategy. The strategy will set out how government will help to remove barriers to attracting, retaining and developing staff. As part of the strategy government will look at the barriers to growing the body of graduates in the workforce.

The government wants to see more trained graduates in the workforce, and we are supporting this by providing funding for course fees and bursaries to eligible trainees, and also funding for employers to support trainees. Information about training routes is available on the Get into Teaching website at: <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/>

Mr Clive Betts:

[43937]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her policies (a) in general and (b) on the gender gap for early language attainment at age five of the findings of Save the Children's report entitled The Lost Boys: How boys are falling behind in their early years published in July 2016.

Caroline Dineneage:

The government recognises a key part of raising the standard of education for all children, regardless of background or gender, is to ensure they receive a good level of development in literacy and numeracy before they start school at age five.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework sets the prime areas of learning which early years providers must follow. This includes a focus on communication and language. The Early Years Foundation stage is published on gov.uk and can be accessed through the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335504/EYFS_framework_from_1_September_2014_with_clarification_note.pdf

The 2014-15 EYFS Profile results tell us that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development continues to increase – 66 % in 2015, compared to 60% in 2014 and 52% in 2013. The EYFS Profile results also show that more than 80% of children are reaching the expected communication and language skills by age five. A higher proportion of children eligible for free school meals are achieving a good level of development – 51% in 2015 compared to 45% in 2014. Although the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers is narrowing, we recognise there is still some way to go.

The government is making a significant investment in the early years sector, working closely with the profession to help improve its status. As a result, numbers of qualified staff have risen, numbers of graduates in the workforce continues to rise, and a record number of providers are rated good or outstanding, with 86% of providers currently on the Early Years Register judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at 31 March 2016. This represents an eight percentage point increase on the position at 31 March 2014.

The quality of the workforce continues to rise with 87% of staff in full day care settings now qualified to level 3 (equivalent level of study to A-level). To improve the quality of

the workforce further, we have introduced early years teachers who must meet the same entry qualification requirements as teachers of older children.

■ Pre-school Education: Finance

Mr Laurence Robertson: [\[43415\]](#)

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

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government published a consultation on an Early Years National Funding Formula and changes to funding for the three- and four-year old free entitlements to childcare on Thursday 11 August. The consultation focuses on creating a fair and transparent way of distributing Government funding to childcare providers. Our proposals set out the means by which every child in receipt of the free entitlement attracts funding to meet their individual needs, regardless of their gender. We rely on the early years profession to spend the money appropriately to meet those needs.

We are making a significant investment in early years education – the expenditure on the free entitlements alone will rise by 38% over this Parliament. Our investment supports the continued increase in the number of qualified staff and the number of providers rated good or outstanding by Ofsted. More than 80% of children are reaching the expected communication and language skills by age five, but we will continue working with the sector until every child gets the high quality education they deserve.

■ Pupil Premium

Gloria De Piero: [\[43805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on the pupil premium; and what potential effect the national funding formula for schools once implemented will have on that policy.

Edward Timpson:

The Pupil Premium was introduced in 2011 to provide additional resources to mainstream schools to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils aged 5-16. The Government has committed to maintaining the Pupil Premium at current per-pupil rates for the remainder of this parliament. As a separate grant to schools, the Pupil Premium will not be affected by the introduction of a national funding formula.

■ Regional Schools Commissioners

Stephen Timms: [\[43406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what sanctions are available to a Regional Schools Commissioner to address the poor performance of a multi-academy trust in their region; and what her policy is on strengthening the sanctions available.

Edward Timpson:

One of the core functions of Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) is to intervene in under-performing academies and bring about rapid improvement.

RSCs consider the performance of Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) in their area at appropriate points in the academic year (such as following exam results) and at key stages of their growth. Where a RSC has concerns about a MAT there is a range of support they can offer and measures they can take. Ultimately, the Education and Adoption Act 2016 provides the Secretary of State with powers to remove an academy from a MAT where it has been allowed to fail or coast, and transfer it to a new trust. RSCs take decisions in the name of the Secretary of State and their functions are set out in a decision-making framework, available on GOV.UK at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/517565/RSC-Decision-Making-Framework.pdf

The White Paper *Educational Excellence Everywhere*, committed to testing further how we can develop the legal framework for academies to ensure the system has the right balance of intervention, review and stability. We want to continue to engage widely on this in upcoming months.

Schools: Finance**Gloria De Piero:**[\[43802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when she plans to introduce the national funding formula for schools in England; and what plans she has for how that formula will be implemented.

Nick Gibb:

We recently announced that the new national funding formulae for schools and high needs will apply from 2018-19. We are determined to introduce this landmark reform and to get it right. It is important that there is wide and full consultation with schools and the education sector. We will bring forward proposals for full consultation in the autumn and we will work closely with the education sector over the coming months to understand their views and priorities for the national funding formula.

The written Ministerial statement from the Secretary of State for Education is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/schools-funding>

Schools: Private Finance Initiative**Justin Tomlinson:**[\[43481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to reduce costs incurred by schools which were built under the Private Finance Initiative.

Edward Timpson:

Local authorities are responsible for their own Private Finance Initiative contracts and are encouraged to seek savings in the context of those contracts.

The Department is working closely with Her Majesty's Treasury to develop guidance to demonstrate how local authorities may make savings.

The Department continues to work closely with local authorities to assist in identifying and securing savings.

■ Schools: Standards

Maria Eagle: [\[43609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support is available for schools that do not wish to apply for academy status but which are judged by Ofsted to require improvement.

Edward Timpson:

We are committed to making sure that schools in all parts of the country can access support, collaboration and best practice by ensuring we have an effective network of system leaders.

School partnerships are a vital way of building capacity in the system and enabling schools to take ownership of school improvement by spreading the influence of the best school leaders. We already have over 1,150 National Leaders of Education and over 720 teaching schools working to increase leadership capacity and drive improvement in underperforming schools. The Department also funds programmes that aim to boost leadership capacity for schools in challenging contexts.

■ Teachers: Training

Judith Cummins: [\[43027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the trends in the number of applications to Early Years Teacher training courses over the last five years.

Caroline Dineneage:

The Head of Profession for Statistics for the Department is currently reviewing the data collected on Early Years initial teacher training. We are unable to provide any data or assessment of trends while this review is ongoing. It is intended that the first data will be published in November 2016.

■ Teachers: Vacancies

Gloria De Piero: [\[43804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make it her policy to introduce a government-run website for the purpose of advertising teacher vacancies so as to reduce the cost for schools of advertising such vacancies.

Nick Gibb:

In the March 2016 white paper, 'Educational Excellence Everywhere', the Department announced the following intention: "To reduce costs of recruitment for schools in a more challenging labour market, we will create simple web tools to enable schools to advertise vacancies more easily and a new, free national teacher vacancy website so that

aspiring and current teachers can find posts quickly and easily – transforming the current system and reducing the burden on schools when budgets are tight”.

Following the white paper publication, the Department has begun to deliver this in the way that meets the needs of schools and teachers and offers best value for money for the taxpayer.

■ Universities: Admissions

Conor McGinn:

[43624]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many school leavers in (a) St Helens North constituency, (b) Merseyside, (c) the North West and (d) the UK who were (i) entitled and (ii) not entitled to free school meals went to university in the last five years for which information is available.

Edward Timpson:

Information is given on the number and percentage of students completing key stage 5 study (A level and other level 3 qualifications) in mainstream state funded schools and colleges and progressing to study at a UK Higher Education Institution for at least two terms the following year; in each of the last four years for which information is available.

The tables below show comparable figures for: a) St Helens North constituency; b) Merseyside metropolitan county (comprising Liverpool, Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral); c) The North West region; and d) England. The department does not hold information on students leaving schools in other constituent countries of the UK. Numbers of pupils are shown rounded to the nearest ten, as published. Percentages are calculated on unrounded figures.

In each of the last four years, around 10 students in St Helens North constituency who had been eligible for free school meals in year 11 (FSM) and completed key stage 5 study progressed to higher education. These represented between 31% and 52% of the FSM students completing key stage 5 study. For students who had not been eligible for free school meals (non-FSM) between 110 and 160 students in St Helens North progressed to higher education each year, representing between 48% and 63% of such students completing key stage 5.

Information on pupil destinations at local authority, regional and national level is published annually on gov.uk at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-destinations>

a)

St. Helens North constituency	Number of students completing KS5	Number at UK Higher Education Institution	% at UK Higher Education Institution (calculated on unrounded figures)
	(rounded to nearest 10)	(rounded to nearest 10)	

	FSM	Non-FSM	FSM	Non-FSM	FSM	Non-FSM
2013/14 (2012/13 KS5 cohort)	40	250	10	120	31%	48%
2012/13 (2011/12 KS5 cohort)	30	200	10	110	52%	56%
2011/12 (2010/11 KS5 cohort)	20	250	10	160	47%	63%
2010/11 (2009/10 KS5 cohort)	30	250	10	140	41%	55%

b)

Merseyside metropolitan county	Number of students completing KS5		Number at UK Higher Education Institution		% at UK Higher Education Institution (calculated on unrounded figures)	
	(rounded to nearest 10)		(rounded to nearest 10)			
	FSM	Non-FSM	FSM	Non-FSM	FSM	Non-FSM
2013/14 (2012/13 KS5 cohort)	1,340	7,950	520	4,180	39%	53%
2012/13 (2011/12 KS5 cohort)	1,250	8,020	520	4,280	41%	53%
2011/12 (2010/11 KS5 cohort)	1,300	8,290	520	4,800	40%	58%
2010/11 (2009/10 KS5 cohort)	1,320	8,500	520	4,490	39%	53%

c)

North West	Number of students completing KS5		Number at UK Higher Education Institution		% at UK Higher Education Institution (calculated on unrounded figures)	
	(rounded to nearest 10)		(rounded to nearest 10)			

	FSM	Non-FSM	FSM	Non-FSM	FSM	Non-FSM
2013/14 (2012/13 KS5 cohort)	5,460	44,440	2,290	23,310	42%	52%
2012/13 (2011/12 KS5 cohort)	5,230	44,190	2,210	23,010	42%	52%
2011/12 (2010/11 KS5 cohort)	4,680	43,310	2,110	24,790	45%	57%
2010/11 (2009/10 KS5 cohort)	4,450	44,190	1,930	23,640	43%	53%

d)

	Number of students completing KS5		Number at UK Higher Education Institution		% at UK Higher Education Institution (calculated on unrounded figures)	
England	(rounded to nearest 10)		(rounded to nearest 10)			
	FSM	Non-FSM	FSM	Non-FSM	FSM	Non-FSM
2013/14 (2012/13 KS5 cohort)	35,390	323,580	15,550	157,220	44%	49%
2012/13 (2011/12 KS5 cohort)	31,670	314,120	14,140	150,300	45%	48%
2011/12 (2010/11 KS5 cohort)	28,770	306,720	13,540	163,010	47%	53%
2010/11 (2009/10 KS5 cohort)	27,250	313,940	12,130	152,490	45%	49%

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Air Pollution****Mr David Lammy:**[\[43783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government plans to take to tackle air pollution and the associated health effects.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government is committed to improving the UK's air quality and reducing health impacts. Air quality has improved significantly in recent decades and we are working at local, national and international levels to continue those improvements. The UK currently meets legal limits for almost all pollutants; however, reducing levels for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) remains the most challenging.

In December last year, the Government published the national air quality plan for NO₂. This is an ambitious plan combining national and local measures. It includes targeted measures, for example, the implementation of a new programme of Clean Air Zones, alongside wider approaches including continued investment in clean technologies, such as electric and ultra low emission vehicles. Our approach also includes working closely with the Mayor on improvements to air quality in London. The Plan sets out that we intend to meet legal limits for NO₂ in all areas outside London by 2020 and in London by 2025.

The Plan also sets out a range of action by local authorities across the UK. Alongside national action, local authorities have a crucial role to play in improving air quality. They are required to review and assess air quality in their areas and to designate Air Quality Management Areas and put in place Air Quality Action Plans to address air pollution issues where national air quality objectives are not being met.

Later this year, we will also consult on proposals to reduce pollution from electricity generating plants with high emissions of nitrogen oxides that are not currently regulated. The proposals would set emission limit values on relevant air pollutants, with a view to having legislation in force no later than January 2019 and possibly sooner.

James Berry:[\[43844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the Government expects to receive the EU Commission's assessment of the UK Air Quality Plan.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government submitted a revised air quality plan to the European Commission on 17 December last year. There is no formal timetable under the Air Quality Directive for the Commission to assess the plan. The Government is working with the Commission to ensure compliance with the nitrogen dioxide limits in the Directive in the shortest possible time.

■ Cane Sugar: Import Duties

Stephen Timms:

[\[43734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans she has to review the tariffs imposed on cane sugar imports in the course of negotiations on exiting the EU; and if she will make a statement.

George Eustice:

We are preparing for negotiations to exit the EU. As part of these preparations, we will consider future trading relationships with both the EU and internationally. Tariffs on agricultural commodities, such as the level of sugar tariffs, will be one element of this work.

■ Dogs

Andy Slaughter:

[\[43401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate her Department has made of the number of dogs in the UK (a) in 2010 and (b) on the latest date for which figures are available.

George Eustice:

The Government does not hold any official estimates of the numbers of dogs in the UK. However, according to the annual pet population survey carried out by the Pet Food Manufacturers' Association in 2010 there were an estimated 8 million dogs in the UK. The same survey for 2016 shows the estimated number of dogs in the UK to be 8.5 million.

■ Forests

Alan Brown:

[\[43626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to increase the rate of new woodland planting.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Forestry is a devolved matter and the answer refers to England only.

We encourage tree planting by championing sector-led initiatives, such as Grown in Britain and the Roots to Prosperity strategy. Their work to grow demand for wood from ground level up is helping develop the woodland economy. We also support the Woodland Carbon Code to help to attract private investment in woodland creation.

The window for Woodland Creation Grant applications for planting over the next two seasons, under the Rural Development Programme, closed on 31 March. We are continuing to process these applications and agreements are expected to be issued this month.

The Forestry Commission plans to re-open the £1m Forestry Innovation Fund for Woodland Creation Planning Grants for new applications this month. Funding for this has been confirmed by HM Treasury.

The Forestry Commission continues to support landowners to make applications through a series of workshops and online support.

As announced by the Chancellor in August, all Countryside Stewardship applications signed or agreed before the Autumn Statement will be fully funded, even when these continue beyond the UK's departure from the EU.

Alan Brown: [\[43627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the area of new woodland planting was in 2015-16; and what assessment she has made of progress towards meeting her Department's target for such planting.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Forestry is a devolved matter and the answer refers to England only.

Figures published by the Forestry Commission show that between April 2015-June 2016, 1,292,000 trees were planted on 968 hectares, supported by the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE).

In addition, the Forestry Commission estimates that a further 165 hectares of woodland was created without RDPE support during 2015-16.

The Government remains committed to planting 11 million trees during this Parliament.

Alan Brown: [\[43628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to reduce approval process timescales for woodland planting.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Forestry is a devolved matter and the answer refers to England only.

We have improved the process for Countryside Stewardship applications for woodland creation in the 2016-17 planting season. Any amendments that may be required for existing Environmental Stewardship Schemes can be made earlier in this year than in previous years. The Rural Payments Agency has new systems for digitisation of land registration and parcel amendments to support smoother application processing.

Scoring has been simplified and we have introduced a self-calculating and self-populating application form to ease the application process.

■ Hunting Act 2004

Karl Turner: [\[43936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many (a) prosecutions and (b) convictions there have been since 2010 under the Hunting Act 2004.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for offences under the Hunting Act 2004 in England and Wales from 2010 to 2015 (latest available) is available in the outcomes by offence tables in the annual publication, which is linked below. The relevant section is '121A – Offences under the

Hunting Act 2004' in the summary non motoring offences section. Statistics covering 2016 are scheduled for publication in May 2017.

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

■ Montreal Protocol

Barry Gardiner: [43815]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which (a) Ministers and (b) officials from the Government plan to attend the Montreal Protocol meetings in July 2016.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The UK Government delegation comprised two officials from Defra's Environmental Quality Directorate and one official from the Department's Team of the Government Legal Service.

■ Nature Conservation: EU Law

Steve McCabe: [43316]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 13 June 2016 to Question 39643, what plans the Government has to discuss the EU Nature Directive as part of the negotiations on the UK leaving the EU; what the EU Nature Directive's status will be during those negotiations; and whether her Department plans to retain the implemented measures that relate to the EU Nature Directive after the UK's negotiated exit from the EU.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Whilst we are still a part of the EU, the EU framework for our environment remains in place. Defra will continue to ensure the right policies are in place for a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone.

The Government is considering the impacts of the decision to leave the EU, including future arrangements for existing legislation. We have a manifesto commitment to produce a 25 Year Plan for the Environment.

We all now have an opportunity to consider our long-term vision for the environment following the referendum vote.

■ Pollution Control

Diana Johnson: [43743]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her policy is on future collaboration with the EU on tackling pollution and Directive 2008/1/EC.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government takes air pollution seriously and is committed to improving the UK's air quality, reducing health impacts, and fulfilling our legal obligations.

Directive 2008/1/EC, the Integrated Pollution, Prevention and Control Directive (IPPCD) has been superseded by the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED, 2010/75/EU) which brought together seven related directives including the IPPCD and the Large Combustion Plant Directive.

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 and funding in future once the UK has left the EU.

■ School Milk

Julie Elliott: [\[43409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if her Department will introduce a new programme to replace the EU School Milk Scheme after the UK's exit from the EU.

George Eustice:

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the EU and current EU funding arrangements will continue unchanged. The Government will work with industry and the public to develop any new proposals that support our agricultural industry as we leave the EU.

■ Wetlands: New Forest

Sir Desmond Swayne: [\[42959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate her Department has made of the cost to the public purse of the Latchmore Wetland Restoration Project in the New Forest.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The planned Latchmore Wetland Restoration Project is being undertaken by the Forestry Commission as part of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme. The Forestry Commission estimates that the cost of the project will be £1.5 million. The majority of this funding is being provided by the European Union under the Common Agricultural Policy.

Sir Desmond Swayne: [\[42960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will publish the habitats regulation assessment for the Latchmore Wetland Restoration Project in the New Forest.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

A habitat regulations assessment has not been undertaken. Where a project is carried out with the written consent of Natural England and is necessary to the management of the site, as in the case of the Latchmore Wetland Restoration Scheme, there is no

requirement for an assessment under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

A voluntary Environmental Impact Assessment has been undertaken by the Forestry Commission as part of the planning application for the Latchmore Wetland Restoration and this is available on the planning authority web site, the New Forest National Park Authority.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Aarhus Convention

Deidre Brock: [\[43455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what the Government's policy is on continuing to adhere to the terms of the Aarhus Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters after the UK has left the EU.

Mr David Jones:

I refer the honorable Member to the answer given on 26 July to Question 43162.

Until we leave the EU, EU law continues to apply so the UK continues to comply with EU law that implements obligations in the Aarhus Convention. The UK remains a Party to the Aarhus Convention.

■ British Nationals Abroad: EU Countries

Diana Johnson: [\[43684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what discussions he has had with governments of other EU countries on the rights of residence of British citizens resident in EU countries.

Mr David Jones:

The rights retained by EU nationals here and British citizens in other EU states once the UK has left the European Union will be agreed during the course of negotiations. The Government fully expects that the legal status of EU nationals in the UK will be properly protected when we leave the EU. We also expect the same for British nationals in other EU Member States.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Consultants and Legal Costs

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how much his Department has spent on consultancy and legal fees since it was established.

Mr David Jones:

The Department has been billed for £12,711 in relation to legal fees since it was established. There has been no spend on consultancy fees during this period.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Finance

Tom Watson: [\[43712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what budget has been allocated to his Department for all future years.

Mr Robin Walker:

The new Department for Exiting the European Union is equipping itself to oversee negotiations to leave the EU and establish the future relationship between the UK and EU. The overall size and scope of the new department, including staffing and budget, are now under consideration.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Legal Opinion

Diana Johnson: [\[43742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how much his Department has spent to date on legal advice; and how much he estimates will be so spent during 2016-17.

Mr David Jones:

The Department has been billed for £12,711 in relation to legal fees since it was established. Detailed work is underway to establish the Department's future budget requirements, including for legal advice.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Recruitment

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what the recruitment process is for employing an official from another government department in a new role in his Department.

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many officials from (a) the Foreign Office and (b) HM Treasury have (i) moved and (ii) are planning to move to work in his Department.

Tom Watson: [\[43713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many new civil servants he plans to employ in his Department.

Diana Johnson: [\[43720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many staff are currently employed by his Department; and what steps he is taking to recruit staff with the required expertise.

Mr David Jones:

The new Department for Exiting the European Union will be made up of staff from various departments across Government, including from the UK's Permanent Representation to the EU. The department has already started drawing together

expertise from a wide range of departments where there is specific relevant knowledge. The overall size and scope of the new department, including staffing and budget, are now being considered – the department now has over 180 staff.

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

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[43410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many staff of his Department will be based in (a) Brussels and (b) Strasbourg; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robin Walker:

A number of staff have joined the Department from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the UK Permanent Representation to the EU (UKRep) will report through DExEU as well.

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many staff will be employed by his Department with the remit of renegotiating trading agreements with the EU.

Emma Reynolds: [\[43808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many trade negotiators are employed by his Department; how many such negotiators his Department plans to recruit; and what estimate his Department has made of the cost of those negotiations.

Emma Reynolds: [\[43809\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what his policy is on recruiting non-UK nationals as trade negotiators; in which countries his Department has advertised the recruitment of such negotiators; and how many such negotiators have been recruited.

Mr David Jones:

Britain has been at the forefront of the free trade-supporting countries in the EU for the last 40 years. The overall size and scope of the new department, including staffing and skill mix, are now under consideration. We will have the right resources in place so we can secure the best possible outcome for the UK as a whole.

Tom Watson: [\[43789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether he plans to employ any national security experts in his Department.

Mr Robin Walker:

The overall size and scope of the new department, including staffing and budget, are now under consideration but we will have the right resources in place, including national security experts if appropriate.

■ Devolution

Diana Johnson: [\[43461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what his policy is on transferring powers and functions currently held by the EU to devolved administrations once the UK exits the EU.

Mr David Jones:

The Government is committed to working with the devolved administrations as we prepare for a new negotiation with the EU. We will engage fully with the devolved administrations, as well as Gibraltar, the Crown Dependencies, the other UK Overseas Territories and other key parties, in accordance with their various constitutional relationships with the UK, to ensure that all of their interests are taken properly into account.

■ EU Staff: Conditions of Employment

Diana Johnson: [\[43683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether any staff of EU institutions will be eligible to transfer their employment to the UK Government under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006.

Mr Robin Walker:

The new Department for Exiting the European Union will oversee negotiations to leave the EU and establish the future relationship between the UK and EU. At every step of the negotiations we want to get the best deal for Britain and for the British people, including for British nationals employed by the EU institutions.

■ European Court of Justice: Judgements

Diana Johnson: [\[43536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has undertaken of the level of need to transfer European Court of Justice rulings into legislation to ensure their continued application in Britain after the UK leaves the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

The UK remains a member of the EU until our withdrawal is completed. We will exercise our rights and meet our obligations as a member of the EU accordingly. Under Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union, the arrangements relating to the UK's withdrawal are to be made between the UK and the EU.

■ European Research Council

Deidre Brock: [\[43587\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what steps he plans to take during negotiations on leaving the EU to seek continued UK participation in the European Research Council after the UK leaves the EU.

Mr David Jones:

The Department is leading the UK's negotiations to leave the European Union and establish the future relationship between the EU and the UK. We need a UK approach and clear objectives for negotiations. The process for leaving the EU and determining our future relationship will clearly not be brief or straightforward, so we need to take time to think through our objectives and approach.

The Government will ensure that the UK remains a world leader in international research collaboration, and will expect close collaboration between the UK and the EU in science to continue. UK businesses and universities should continue to bid for competitive EU funds while we remain a member of the EU. The Government will work with the European Commission to ensure payment when funds are awarded, and will underwrite the payment of such awards even when specific projects continue beyond the UK's departure from the EU.

■ Immigration**Diana Johnson:**[\[43739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what weight he plans to give to enabling the Government to meet its net migration target in his negotiation of a trade deal with the EU.

Mr David Jones:

The Government is committed to bringing net migration down to sustainable levels. The Prime Minister has said that as we conduct our negotiations, it must be a priority to regain more control of the numbers of people who come here from Europe in future – but also to allow British companies to trade with the single market in goods and services.

■ Iron and Steel: Manufacturing Industries**Tom Blenkinsop:**[\[43526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the future of the UK steel industry.

Mr Robin Walker:

As we prepare for negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU, we will continue to consult with a broad range of stakeholders within Government and beyond in order to secure the best possible deal for the whole UK.

■ Service Industries: EU Internal Trade**Diana Johnson:**[\[43673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of the potential costs to the (a) financial sector, (b) legal services sector and (c) professional services sector of not having access to the EU Single Market.

Mr David Jones:

The government is keenly aware of the importance of these sectors to the economy. The new department is undertaking a great deal of factual and detailed work to establish how best to deliver the government's objectives, to ensure that we achieve the best possible outcome for the British people.

■ **Trade Agreements**

Emma Reynolds:

[\[43812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what discussions he has had with other EU countries on the UK's future trading relationship with those countries; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robin Walker:

We are about to begin these negotiations and it would be wrong to set out unilateral positions in advance. At every step of these negotiations we will work to ensure the best possible outcome for the British people.

■ **Trade Agreements: European Union**

Tom Watson:

[\[43748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of (a) the Norwegian, (b) the Swiss, (c) the Canadian and (d) other models for a new form of economic relationship with the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

At every step of our negotiations to leave the European Union we want to secure the best deal for Britain and for the British people. We won't be following any other nation's model – the position we build outside the EU will be unique to Britain.

■ **UK Trade with EU**

Diana Johnson:

[\[43462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what his policy is on access to the single market for services; and if he will make a statement.

Emma Reynolds:

[\[43811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what the Government's policy is on access to the European Economic Area; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robin Walker:

Our economy is fundamentally strong, and the UK is open to business and investment. The Government has been consulting, and will continue to consult, with a broad range of stakeholders and we will need to consider all factors carefully in implementing the decision of the British people. This is clearly a very important issue for UK business and we will want the strongest possible economic links with our European neighbours.

Emma Reynolds:

[\[43810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, when he plans to start negotiations on a new trading relationship with the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

We need a UK approach and clear objectives for negotiations. It's in everyone's interests that we establish that before we trigger Article 50. The process for leaving the EU and determining our future relationship will clearly not be brief or straightforward, so we need to take time to think through our objectives and approach. We want to get the best deal for Britain, not the quickest one.

■ UK Withdrawal from EU

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[43456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, when he expects negotiations between the UK and EU on the UK leaving the EU to begin; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robin Walker:

We need a UK approach and clear objectives for negotiations. It's in everyone's interests that we establish that before we trigger Article 50. The process for leaving the EU and determining our future relationship will clearly not be brief or straightforward, so we need to take time to think through our objectives and approach. We want to get the best deal for Britain, not the quickest one.

Diana Johnson:

[\[43463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, if his Department will publish a white paper on the UK's exit from the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

In preparation for negotiations to leave the EU the Government is undertaking work across a range of areas to establish how best to deliver the government's objectives. No decisions have yet been made on how this should be presented publicly.

Diana Johnson:

[\[43548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether his Department plans to commission professional service companies to assist with the negotiation process of exiting the EU.

Tom Watson:

[\[43714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what plans he has to recruit external experts to facilitate negotiations with the EU on the UK exit from the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

We will have the right resources in place so we can secure the best possible outcome for the UK as a whole, and will be taking advice from a variety of sources as we consider options, including on staffing and skill mix, for the new department.

Tom Watson: [\[43709\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what steps he plans to take to ensure cross-party input at each stage of formulating national goals and strategy in negotiating the UK's exit from the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 28 July to Question 43465. The Department for Exiting the EU will lead the UK's negotiations to leave the European Union and establish the future relationship between the EU and the UK, working closely with the UK Parliament, devolved administrations, and a wide range of other interested parties. Consultation with opposition parties will be an important part of this process.

■ Vienna Convention

Tom Watson: [\[43710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of how the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1969 applies in relation to UK citizens currently living in other EU countries.

Tom Watson: [\[43711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of how the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1969 applies to EU citizens currently living in the UK.

Mr David Jones:

Article 70 of the Vienna Convention applies to States only. It does not create rights for individuals. Nevertheless, we would expect to deal with the rights of UK citizens living in other EU member states and the rights of EU nationals already living in the UK as part of the UK's exit negotiations.

At every step of these negotiations we will work to ensure the best possible outcome for the British people. The Prime Minister has been clear that she wants to protect the status of EU nationals already living here, and the only circumstances in which that wouldn't be possible is if British citizens' rights in other EU member states were not protected in return.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ British Nationals Abroad: Forced Marriage

Steve McCabe: [\[43633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many British citizens who have entered into early forced marriage have been charged with the cost of repatriation to the UK in the last four years.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not provide financial assistance to British nationals overseas, but is sometimes able to provide an emergency loan from public funds for pay for a repatriation. The FCO aims to support all vulnerable British Nationals overseas and this includes victims of forced marriage who receive specialist support from the Forced Marriage Unit. The Forced Marriage Unit work with colleagues overseas to repatriate forced marriage victims and arrange post-repatriation assistance which includes finding suitable emergency accommodation where needed and providing advice and support. The Forced Marriage Unit gave advice or support related to a possible forced marriage in 1,220 cases in 2015, 1,267 in 2014, 1,302 in 2013, and 1,485 in 2012. To provide more information on the nature of the assistance provided over the last 4 years, including repatriation, would involve a disproportionate cost.

Capital Punishment**Nia Griffith:**[\[43960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to promote the abolition of the death penalty worldwide.

Alok Sharma:

The UK strongly supports global abolition of the death penalty. It is part of the day-to-day work of all diplomatic missions to countries that retain the death penalty.

Under the Magna Carta Fund for Human Rights and Democracy, the Foreign Office has this year approved funding for anti death penalty projects worth over £500,000, covering more than 10 countries.

We continue to work closely with our international partners to promote the abolition of the death penalty, including supporting the UN resolution on a global moratorium on the death penalty.

Cybercrime: EU Action**Diana Johnson:**[\[43740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what his policy is on future UK participation in the EU cyber security strategy.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Protecting the UK from global cyber threats is a top priority. The UK is a prominent voice in the international cyber community, and as long as we remain a member of the EU, the Government will continue work on the implementation of the 2013 EU Cyber Security Strategy.

The nature of the UK's future relationship with the EU on cyber security will be determined by the outcome of the EU exit negotiations, but whatever the outcome we will continue to work with our partners across Europe, and internationally, to safeguard the long term future of a free, open, peaceful and secure cyberspace.

In parallel, the Government intends to publish the UK's second five-year National Cyber Security Strategy later this year.

■ Forced Marriage

Mr David Lammy: [\[43781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how the Forced Marriage Unit defines historic victims.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

There is no formal definition of historic victim for the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU), which considers every case individually and advises accordingly. The support that the FMU offers includes providing advice and support to victims of forced marriage, as well as to professionals dealing with cases, via a public helpline and email address. This advice will include safety planning to prevent forced marriages (both in the UK and abroad), supporting victims attempting to escape forced marriages or to return from overseas, and in extreme circumstances organising the rescue of victims held against their will overseas. Where the FMU is not the appropriate service to provide advice, for example on matters of immigration status, divorce, child custody or other legal issues, victims and professionals will be signposted to partner organisations.

Mr David Lammy: [\[43786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many forced marriages the Forced Marriage Unit has helped prevent since 2005.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Figures on cases of potential or actual forced marriage reported to the Forced Marriage Unit via its public helpline and email inbox are published on GOV.UK on an annual basis and already includes data for 2012-2015. Figures for 2005-11 are provided below.

Year Total number of cases

2011 1,468 2010 1,735 2009 1,682 2008 1,618 2007 262 2006 197 2005 152

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Living Wage

Frank Field: [\[43518\]](#)

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

Sir Alan Duncan:

No member of staff of the Foreign and Commonwealth (FCO) or its Executive Agencies who is directly employed is paid less than the living wage.

The FCO defines zero-hours contracts as a contract of employment which does not specify a fixed number of hours per week, and has no guaranteed minimum number of hours. The FCO uses this type of contract to cope with fluctuating demand and/or retain

specialist expertise no longer available in the current workforce. For example, we bring back retired FCO officers with relevant skills/experience to act as sensitivity reviewers or VIP visit liaison officers.

Our centrally held records do not enable us to differentiate between staff on zero-hours contracts and those on contracts with a fixed number of hours. To provide this information would incur disproportionate cost.

We do not hold a record of contract status for staff employed by companies providing outsourced services to the FCO.

■ Indonesia: Capital Punishment

Nia Griffith: [\[43959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to encourage the abolition of the death penalty in Indonesia.

Alok Sharma:

The British Government is opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances as a matter of principle. We raise our concerns at the highest level and will continue to do so. The former Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron), reiterated our position to Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo in April following the executions which took place in July.

■ Indonesia: LGBT People

Nia Griffith: [\[43961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to promote LGBT rights in Indonesia.

Alok Sharma:

The British Ambassador and Deputy Head of Mission in Jakarta have discussed this issue with a range of civil society organisations and have raised our concerns with Indonesian Ministers, including the Minister for Women's Empowerment and Child Protection. Embassy officials will continue to meet the LGBT community and human rights activists to understand their concerns and provide support where we are able.

■ Indonesia: Mental Illness

Nia Griffith: [\[43963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Indonesian government on the treatment of people living with mental health conditions in that country.

Alok Sharma:

The Deputy Head of Mission at our Embassy in Jakarta has raised this issue with the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection. The United Kingdom is committed to working with other states to ensure the rights of people with mental

health conditions are upheld in full. It is important to recognise the inherent dignity and worth, and the equal and inalienable rights, of all people.

■ **Islamic State: Genocide**

Hilary Benn: [\[43364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he plans to act upon the Resolution of the House of 20 April 2016 on the recognition of genocide by Daesh against Yazidis, Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Government shares the House of Commons's condemnation of Daesh atrocities and we remain very concerned about appalling crimes committed against Christians, Mandeans, Yazidis and other minorities, as well as the majority Muslim populations in Iraq and Syria. Daesh's victims, whether in Iraq and Syria or elsewhere in the world, must receive justice. This is why the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), announced on 21 July that the UK will work with our international partners to drive a global campaign to hold Daesh to account for its crimes.

Hilary Benn: [\[43365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the statement in his article in The Telegraph of 27 March 2016, on his Department's hesitation in using the term genocide, what his assessment is of whether Daesh has committed genocide.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Government maintains that genocide should be a matter for judicial authorities rather than a political decision. The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), announced on 21 July that the UK will work with our international partners to drive a global campaign to hold Daesh to account for its crimes.

■ **Israel: Palestinians**

Richard Burden: [\[43520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Israel was asked to sign the letter, signed in July 2016 by eight European ambassadors, to Israeli officials on the confiscation of EU-funded structures and the displacement of 49 people in Jabal al Baba; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Our Ambassador to Israel was not asked to sign this letter. We understand that a group of international donors to the Occupied Palestinian Territories Humanitarian Pooled Fund wrote to the Israeli authorities to note their concerns about confiscation of several humanitarian assistance projects. The UK is not part of this fund.

Patrick Grady:

[\[43828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will issue a response to Early Day Motion 110, on Palestinian oil and gas reserves, tabled on 26 June 2016.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Government believes that Israel must fulfil its obligations under the Oslo Accords, including through the exploration of shared natural resources. We continue to stress to the Israeli authorities the damage caused by its restrictions. I can assure you that the Government has long been of the view that easing restrictions, both on the movement of Palestinian people and goods internally and externally, and on access to natural resources, is an important step on the path to a two-state solution.

The gas fields off the coast of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories are a commercial matter. We remain in regular contact with British Gas, the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel about the exploration of offshore oil and gas. We also continue to follow the situation of oil exploration licenses in the Golan Heights closely. We have been clear that Israel must comply with its obligations under international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention.

■ Kashmir: Violence

Hilary Benn:

[\[43606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to encourage a reduction in violence in Kashmir; and if he will make a statement.

Alok Sharma:

I remain very concerned by reports of violence and offer my condolences to the victims and their families. The UK abides by its commitments under international law and expects all countries to comply with their international legal obligations. Our High Commission in Delhi is monitoring the situation closely and we have updated our travel advice.

■ Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

Steve McCabe:

[\[43317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 12 July 2016 to Question 905825, whether he has received reports on which formal charges have been levelled against Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have not received further information about the charges faced by Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe despite raising with the Iranians repeatedly at the highest levels. Although the Iranians do not recognise dual nationality, we continue to push for consular access to Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe. Most recently, the Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) raised Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case with Iranian President Rouhani on 9 August and the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for

Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson) raised Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif on 4 August.

■ **Palestinians: Capital Punishment**

Richard Burden: [\[43598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Palestinian authorities on reports that three death sentences were issued or upheld by Gaza Military Court on 19 July 2016; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have not raised this issue with the Palestinian Authority (PA) as the sentences were issued by the de-facto authorities in Gaza and the PA, at this present time, has no control over the Gaza Strip. However, the EU missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah issued a statement on 21 July condemning the death sentences, calling for the de facto authorities in Gaza to refrain from carrying out any executions of prisoners and comply with the moratorium on executions put in place by the PA.

On 19 August, I issued a statement condemning the latest death sentence issued in Gaza on 17 August and also called on the de-facto authorities in Gaza to respect the PA's moratorium on implementation of the death penalty.

■ **Papua: Human Rights**

Nia Griffith: [\[43962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to promote human rights in West Papua.

Alok Sharma:

We follow the situation in the province of West Papua with close interest, whilst respecting the territorial integrity of Indonesia. The British Ambassador to Indonesia has visited West Papua a number of times to raise our concerns on this issue with members of the police, religious and community leaders.

■ **Rebecca Coriam**

Christian Matheson: [\[43595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 19 July 2016, to Question 42328, if he will provide (a) a schedule of the consular documents and (b) a copy of the investigation report referred to in that Answer.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The consular documents referred to in my Answer of 19 July, to Question 42328, contain numerous pieces of correspondence between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the many interested parties in the case, including the Governments of the Bahamas and Mexico. However, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not hold a copy of the police report, which was passed to Cheshire Police. Officials will meet you

and the Coriam family to discuss the case, and our engagement with the Governments of the Bahamas and Mexico.

■ Syria: Cultural Heritage

Hilary Benn:

[\[43361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of whether there have been contraventions of the (a) 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and (b) 1972 World Heritage Convention during the conflict in Syria.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have no diplomatic presence in Syria and so are unable to provide an accurate assessment of the damage to cultural property ourselves. The Cultural Property (Armed Conflicts) Bill introduced to Parliament in May 2016 will enable the UK to ratify the 1954 Hague Convention for the protection of cultural property in the event of Armed Conflict. We are also working with Counter-Daesh Coalition partners to tackle the illicit trade in antiquities through UN and EU sanctions. The 1972 World Heritage Convention is policed by the World Heritage Committee, supported by UNESCO. At present all six World Heritage Sites (ancient cities of Aleppo, Bosra, Damascus & N Syria, Crac des Chevaliers & Qal'at Salah El-Din, site of Palmyra), in Syria have been placed on the "World Heritage in Danger" list. The continuing concern of the World Heritage Committee was expressed at its annual meeting held in July, but its conclusions are yet to be published.

Earlier this year the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in partnership with the British Council launched a Cultural Protection Fund, which will allocate £30 million to projects which will foster, safeguard and protect cultural heritage in global conflict zones.

■ Turkey: Human Rights

Karl Turner:

[\[43847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to encourage the Turkish government to protect citizens' rights after the attempted coup in that country.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Government has firmly condemned the attempted coup in Turkey on 15 July. Britain stands firmly in support of Turkey's democratically elected government and institutions.

We are aware that on 21 July Turkey introduced a state of emergency. It is important that measures under the state of emergency be proportionate, justified and in line with its democratic principles and its international human rights obligations. I emphasised the need for Turkey to respect human rights including press freedom and the rule of law during my visit to Ankara on 20-21 July. We continue to engage with the Turkish Government at all levels on these issues, and to monitor the situation closely.

■ UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

Alan Brown: [\[43523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has received of allegations that UK funding through the UN to MINURSO is being misused and that UN personnel are being overcharged by hotels at which they stay; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has received no representations on this issue. The UK contributes towards the UN Peacekeeping funds, and FCO officials have raised the alleged fraud with the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Special Representative of the Secretary General for Western Sahara and the local authorities have investigated the allegations and taken the necessary steps to address the situation and prevent a recurrence.

■ Western Sahara: Self-determination of States

Patrick Grady: [\[43977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara on the right of the Saharawi people to exercise their right to self-determination.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UN Under-Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the UN Security Council on 26 July, where the UK and other member states encouraged a return to the political process. The UK encourages both sides to cooperate with the United Nations process to reach a mutually acceptable solution that provides for the self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

■ Yemen: Cultural Heritage

Hilary Benn: [\[43362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of whether there have been contraventions of the (a) 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and (b) 1972 World Heritage Convention during the conflict in Yemen.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We remain concerned about any damage to cultural property in Yemen and are aware of reports of alleged damage by actors in the conflict. Yemen and many members of the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition are parties to the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict and to the 1972 World Heritage Convention. We have raised our concerns regarding protection of cultural property with both the government of Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

■ Yemen: Politics and Government

Helen Goodman: [\[43318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the (a) Saudi Arabian and (b) Yemeni ambassador on the humanitarian situation in Yemen.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK is playing a leading role in responding to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Over the last financial year, we more than doubled our humanitarian aid to Yemen to £85m, which allowed us to help more than 1.3 million Yemenis with food, medical supplies, water, and emergency shelter. We regularly engage with Saudi Arabia and the Government of Yemen on the humanitarian situation in Yemen.

HEALTH

■ Abortion: Lancashire

Mr Mark Hendrick: [\[43487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many abortions (a) overall and (b) where Downs syndrome had been identified were carried out at each (i) NHS hospital, (ii) clinic and (iii) surgery in Lancashire in 2016.

Nicola Blackwood:

Data for 2016 is not yet available.

■ Action on Smoking and Health: Finance

Philip Davies: [\[43858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will place a copy of the grant application for funding for 2016-17 from Action on Smoking and Health in the Library.

Philip Davies: [\[43859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will initiate an open tender process for the activities previously contracted through an annual grant to Action on Smoking and Health before he awards any further such grants.

Philip Davies: [\[43975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has received any complaints about the organisation Action on Smoking and Health in the last five years.

Nicola Blackwood:

A grant of £160,000 has been awarded to Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) for financial year 2016/17 and a copy of the signed award letter, including the detailed deliverables of the grant, is attached.

Grants made under Section 64 of the Health Services and Public Health Act 1968 can be made in a number of ways. The grant awarded to ASH has been assessed as most appropriate for the non-competed route.

The Department received a complaint about the deliverables of the 2015/16 grant awarded to ASH in June this year. The Department responded to the complainant, confirming it was satisfied that none of the deliverables were in breach of the provisions of Section 64.

Attachments:

1. PQ43858 grant award letter [PQ43858 REDACTED final signed grant award letter ASH 16-17.pdf]

■ **Antibiotics: Drug Resistance**

Tulip Siddiq: [\[43934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when his Department plans to publish its response to the recommendations in the final report of the Review on Antimicrobial Resistance, published in May 2016.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department is finalising the cross-Government response to the recommendations contained in the final report of the Review on Antimicrobial Resistance. The response will be published shortly.

■ **Antibiotics: Prescriptions**

Tulip Siddiq: [\[43932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when his Department plans to publish its strategy for halving inappropriate antibiotic prescriptions by 2020.

Nicola Blackwood:

Optimising prescribing is a key priority in the UK Five Year Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Strategy 2013-2018.

Public Health England and NHS Improvement are in the process of establishing a Joint Advisory Group to establish a central authority of national and local experts in the field to take forward the Government's ambition to halve inappropriate antibiotic prescribing. This Group will produce a detailed implementation plan for delivery of this ambition. The Department will publish progress on halving inappropriate prescribing through its annual progress reports on the AMR Strategy.

Tulip Siddiq: [\[43933\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much additional funding is being made available by his Department to meet the target of a 50 per cent reduction in prescription of antimicrobial drugs.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government's ambition to reduce inappropriate prescribing of antibiotics by half by 2020 will be achieved through financial incentives within the Commissioning for Quality

and Innovation and Quality Premiums schemes. These schemes reward healthcare providers for improvements in the quality of the services that they commission or provide, that contribute to better patient outcomes.

The National Health Service has already made good progress in reducing inappropriate prescribing of antibiotics. Between April and December 2015, two million fewer prescriptions were dispensed compared to the same period in 2014. Overall, the NHS' new programme to reduce prescribing went live in April 2016 and will offer hospitals incentive funding worth up to £150 million to support expert pharmacists and clinicians review and reduce inappropriate prescribing.

■ Autism

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[43872\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what funding is available for training care workers on supporting people with autism.

David Mowat:

Revised statutory guidance for local authorities and National Health Service organisations to support implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy was issued in 2015 and reiterated requirements and expectations for staff including care workers who work with people who have autism. In 2016/17, the Department is providing approximately £23.3 million in funding to Skills for Care for the training and development of the adult social care workforce. Skills for Care has developed a comprehensive suite of standards and qualifications to help workers develop the skills and knowledge they need to support people who use services, including those with autism.

Support for people who are diagnosed with autism is provided and facilitated at a local level by local authorities, the NHS, and schools and colleges when the person is still in education. An adult diagnosed with autism has, under the Care Act 2014, a right to an assessment of needs and, where relevant, a carer's assessment. Adults who subsequently do not qualify for social care support should receive information on what other support may be available. A child who is diagnosed with autism may be eligible for special educational support in school; where a child's special educational needs require an Education, Health and Care plan, the local authority and clinical commissioning group must work together to commission services jointly across education, health and social care.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[43877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what support his Department (a) provides and (b) facilitates for people who are diagnosed with autism.

David Mowat:

Revised statutory guidance for local authorities and National Health Service organisations to support implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy was issued in 2015 and reiterated requirements and expectations for staff including care workers who work with people who have autism. In 2016/17, the Department is providing approximately £23.3 million in funding to Skills for Care for the training and development of the adult social

care workforce. Skills for Care has developed a comprehensive suite of standards and qualifications to help workers develop the skills and knowledge they need to support people who use services, including those with autism.

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■ Autism: Diagnosis

Rosie Cooper: [\[43830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average length of time is for children to be diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders in (a) England and (b) West Lancashire.

David Mowat:

This information is not collected centrally.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has published a guideline on the recognition, referral and diagnosis of autism in under 19s. This recommends that an assessment for autism is begun within three months of referral.

■ Autism: West Lancashire

Rosie Cooper: [\[43469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what support is available in West Lancashire for children with autistic spectrum disorders.

David Mowat:

The provision of local health services is a matter for the local National Health Service. This information can be obtained from the West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group.

Rosie Cooper: [\[43470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many children in West Lancashire have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder in each of the last five years.

David Mowat:

This data is not collected centrally.

■ Biomedicines

Jim Shannon: [\[43305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment the Government has made of the level of compliance with Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency guidance that specifies that biological medicines should be prescribed by brand name.

Nicola Blackwood:

Guidance issued by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in 2008 states that, when prescribing biological products, it is good practice to use the brand name.

MHRA does not have responsibility for monitoring the compliance of healthcare professionals with its prescribing guidance. The responsibility for prescribing rests with the practitioner who has clinical responsibility for their patient's care and we would expect practitioners to take any relevant guidance into account when making their prescribing decisions. Practitioner professional bodies also have a role in setting out best practice to their members.

■ Biosimilar Medicines

Jim Shannon: [\[43306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the level of compliance with Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency regulations which state that biosimilars should be subject to additional monitoring until the safety of such drugs is well established.

Nicola Blackwood:

In accordance with European Union pharmacovigilance legislation, biosimilar products authorised in the EU since 1 January 2011 must undergo additional monitoring. The European Medicines Agency maintains and publishes a list of medicines subject to additional monitoring. These medicines are readily identifiable by an inverted black triangle which appears on the product information which is available to health professionals and patients.

Jim Shannon: [\[43307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance the NHS has given on the minimum standards for consenting patients when their originator biological medicine is switched for a biosimilar.

Jim Shannon: [\[43308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with patient groups on the minimum standards for consenting patients when their originator biological medicine is switched for a biosimilar.

Nicola Blackwood:

We have had no such discussions with patient groups.

NHS England published the guide[What is a biosimilar medicine?](#) in September 2015. This provides key information to clinical and non-clinical stakeholders on the developing role of biosimilar medicines in the NHS in England and support the safe, effective and consistent use of all biological medicines, including biosimilar medicines, to the benefit of patients.

The guide requires prescribers to explain to patients the likely benefits, risks and burdens, including serious and common side effects of treatments they are proposing. Sections 4.3 – 4.5 of the document provide guidance on patients being switched from their originator medicine to a biosimilar. The guide is available at:

www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/biosimilar-guide.pdf

■ Care Homes: Mental Patients

Rosie Cooper: [\[43468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, under what criteria NHS trusts can place mental health patients in care homes.

David Mowat:

Mental health providers must comply with the requirements of the Mental Health Act 1983 and its Code of Practice when delivering mental health services.

We would expect that commissioners and providers would assess the clinical and care needs of a person to determine the most appropriate setting to deliver care, whether in a hospital or other setting such as a care home. The setting should be the least restrictive setting to meet the needs of the person.

Before it is decided that admission to hospital is necessary, consideration must be given to whether there are alternative means of providing the care and treatment which the patient requires. However, if a person requires treatment in hospital for their mental health needs then we would expect them to receive that treatment in a hospital, it is unlikely that a care home could provide equivalent treatment.

■ Continuing Care

Helen Whately: [\[43862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people received NHS Continuing Healthcare in each year since 2009-10.

David Mowat:

The number of people who have received NHS Continuing Healthcare (NHS CHC) in each year since 2009/10 is:

YEAR ENDING:	NUMBER OF PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR NHS CHC:
2009/10	50,424
2010/11	53,264

YEAR ENDING:	NUMBER OF PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR NHS CHC:
2011/12	55,654
2012/13	58,809
2013/14	60,046
2014/15	62,939
2015/16	59,377

Until 31 March 2013, quarterly data on the number of people in receipt of NHS CHC was collected and published on the Department's website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-continuing-healthcare>

Since 1 April 2013, responsibility for the collection of data for NHS CHC has been transferred to NHS England. Data on the number of people who are eligible for NHS CHC is published quarterly by NHS Digital at:

<http://digital.nhs.uk/article/2021/Website-Search?q=NHS+Continuing+Healthcare+Activity&area=both>

■ Dental Services

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[43878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what funding his Department provides to support new NHS dental practices in areas with inadequate provision.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[43880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what standard his Department has set for the number of dental practices required per head of population.

David Mowat:

NHS Dentistry is commissioned by NHS England following a local oral health needs assessment undertaken in partnership with Local authorities and other partner organisations. Local services are then commissioned to meet local needs, NHS England determines how best to use its resources to meet this need.

NHS dental services are commissioned by NHS England through contracts with independent providers. These contracts are set on the basis of the oral health needs assessment, which identifies the level of dental need for a particular community and pays particular attention to access to local dental services and the dental health of the local population. There is considerable variation in oral health across England and so there are no national standards for the number of dental practices per head of population.

■ Department of Health: Living Wage

Frank Field: [\[43517\]](#)

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

David Mowat:

No civil servants employed by the Department or its executive agencies: Public Health England and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

The Department currently has no agency worker paid less than the living wage. As at 22 July 2016, 23 people employed via outsourced contract companies were paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation, none of these were on zero hours contracts. Six other people, on zero rated hours are paid the Living Wage or more.

The Department's executive agencies do not routinely collect information on the salaries of employees working for their contracted companies. However, all service providers are required to comply with the law in respect of the 'National Living Wage' or the 'minimum wage' where appropriate.

■ Department of Health: NHS Property Services

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[43611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which Minister in his Department is responsible for NHS Property Services.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Property Services is a limited company 100% owned by the Secretary of State for Health, to whom it is accountable. Within the Department, Ministerial responsibility for NHS Property Services is delegated to my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Lord Prior).

■ Drugs: Misuse

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[43411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of drug-related visits to accident and emergency units involved the use of legal highs in the last six months.

Nicola Blackwood:

This information is not collected centrally.

■ Food: Labelling

Justin Tomlinson: [\[43583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to standardise nutritional information in food and drink labelling.

Nicola Blackwood:

The legislation on food labelling sets out the content, format and expression of nutrition information on food labels. It is implemented in England by the Food Information Regulations 2014. Nutrition labelling for most pre-packed food and drink will be mandatory from 13 December 2016.

General Practitioners**Helen Hayes:**[\[43665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how GP practices will be able to access the planned additional investment in general practice of £2.4 billion per year by 2020-21.

David Mowat:

The General Practice Forward View, published by NHS England on 21 April 2016, set out that investment in primary medical care will increase by £2.4 billion a year by 2020/21.

Total funding to primary medical care includes core funding for practices, funding allocated locally by clinical commissioning groups, and centrally allocated funding from NHS England for the measures to help boost the workforce, drive efficiencies in workload and modernise primary care infrastructure and technology that are set out in the General Practice Forward View. The £2.4 billion will be delivered by both national and local level mechanisms.

An advisory oversight group with patients and partners, including the British Medical Association's General Practitioners Committee and the Royal College of General Practitioners, will steer implementation of the General Practice Forward View. NHS England is holding a number of events between July and September 2016 across the country to discuss the General Practice Forward View and its implications for local plans with general practitioners.

Giant Cell Arteritis**Sir David Amess:**[\[43699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will develop and implement a national measure to (a) monitor whether patients with suspected giant cell arteritis (GCA) are being referred to a specialist within one working day and (b) ensure services are complying with the recommendation in National BSR and BHPR Guidelines for the management of GCA's urgent referral to a specialist.

Sir David Amess:[\[43700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to promote the Fast Track Giant Cell Arteritis pathway piloted by Southend University Hospital.

Sir David Amess:[\[43715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps are being taken to ensure adoption of the National BSR and BHPR guidelines for the management of giant cell arteritis within the NHS; and whether his Department plans to assess whether the recommendations in those guidelines are being met.

David Mowat:

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for the provision of services for people with giant cell arteritis (GCA). Whilst it would not be appropriate for NHS England to direct CCGs to adopt a particular clinical pathway, it continues to ensure that the innovative approach developed at Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (FT) is shared and made available to clinicians.

There are a number of clinical guidelines that are available to support the prompt diagnosis and referral of patients with suspected GCA, including one produced by the Royal College of Physicians, which Professor Bhaskar Dasgupta, who developed the GCA pathway at Southend University Hospital NHS FT, helped to produce. This guidance provides a framework for disease assessment, immediate treatment and referral to specialist care. Furthermore, both the British Society for Rheumatology and the British Health Professionals in Rheumatology published guidelines on the management of polymyalgia rheumatica, a related condition, for general practitioners and rheumatologists. These encourage the prompt diagnosis and urgent management of GCA, helping to minimise GCA related vision loss.

The Specialised Rheumatology Clinical Reference Group at NHS England has developed proposals to establish local rheumatology networks. These are being implemented over a three year period to support consistent access to clinically effective therapies and to share good and innovative practice across the country. In addition, NHS England's innovation team has invited Professor Dasgupta to contribute to the NHS Innovation Exchange Portal to ensure that this knowledge is shared.

On 24 June 2016, NHS England recently facilitated a webinar presented by Professor Dasgupta, which aimed to show how the fast-track pathway has significantly reduced the number of patients suffering sight-loss as an avoidable complication of GCA and, in addition, presents a case that this model is cost-saving, results in an increased patient quality of life, and successfully reduces the time to diagnosis in line with established clinical guidelines. NHS England promoted the webinar across the musculoskeletal community as well as to CCGs and patient groups through a wide range of communications channels.

Health: Equality**Conor McGinn:**[\[43623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of welfare reform on health inequalities in (a) St Helens North constituency, (b) Merseyside and (c) England.

Nicola Blackwood:

The policy responsibility for welfare reform sits with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The Department of Health has not made a separate assessment of the effect of welfare reform on health inequalities in England.

Although no assessment has been made in England, DWP has engaged across government on its proposals for welfare reform. The Department of Health has been

involved in discussions on the introduction of Universal Credit and its impact on health inequalities for programmes such as Healthy Start and Help with Health Costs.

■ Hearing Impairment: Research

Nic Dakin:

[\[43604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what research into hearing loss at what cost his Department has commissioned in the last three years.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) invested £4.1 million in ear disease research in 2014-15 (the latest year for which data is currently available).

The NIHR is investing £6.2 million over five years (2012-17) in the Biomedical Research Unit in Deafness and Hearing Problems at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust and the University of Nottingham.

The NIHR has launched a new, open competition for biomedical research centre funding from April 2017 to March 2022. In this competition, a number of clinical areas of particular strategic importance to the health of patients are highlighted including deafness and hearing problems.

Current NIHR-funded awards relating to hearing loss include a £1.6 million research professorship to develop the evidence base for Ear, Nose and Throat medicine and surgery, and a £1.3 million feasibility study of an implantable middle-ear microphone.

■ Hepatitis

Jim Shannon:

[\[43309\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the need for a proposed hepatitis C improvement framework; and if he will make a statement.

David Mowat:

NHS England has already published its planning approach to implement National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recommended treatment during 2016/17. It has committed to producing a further operational framework for hepatitis C during 2016/17. Since making this commitment, NHS England's approach is currently subject to legal proceedings which means that NHS England is keeping the timing of the publication of the Operational Framework under review.

In the meantime, NHS England continues to support the development of Operational Delivery Networks which provide an important local focus for improvements in hepatitis C. The National Health Service continues to work to deliver treatment to 10,000 patients. NHS England is also working with the pharmaceutical industry to secure reductions in price of these effective but costly drugs to enable more people to be cured of hepatitis C.

■ Liver Diseases

Alex Cunningham: [\[43646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment has been made of the causes of regional variation in liver disease outcomes in England.

David Mowat:

Public Health England (PHE) has developed and publishes liver disease profiles for all local authorities in England. The profiles provide support to local areas to understand liver disease and its risk factors in their area. They present key local statistics and highlight questions to ask locally about current action to prevent liver disease.

The Local Authority Liver Disease Profiles demonstrate geographical variation in the main risk factors: alcohol, obesity, hepatitis B and C which explain some of the regional and local authority variations in outcome. Experts at PHE in these three areas regularly review these statistics and the evidence for intervention. The profiles demonstrate that there are widespread opportunities to reduce mortality from liver disease prevention.

PHE is also updating the 2013 NHS Atlas of Variation in Healthcare for People with Liver Disease highlighting variations in risk factors, health services and outcomes.

■ Liver Diseases: Health Education

Alex Cunningham: [\[43644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to increase awareness of liver disease in the (a) general population and (b) NHS.

Alex Cunningham: [\[43645\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to improve (a) expertise and (b) facilities in primary care to strengthen (i) detection of early liver disease and (ii) treatment for liver disease.

David Mowat:

I understand that the British Liver Trust is working in partnership with the Royal College of General Practitioners on a three year programme to make liver disease a clinical priority for primary care. This is aimed at improving awareness and understanding of liver disease as well as treatment amongst those working in primary care.

Public Health England is currently developing a framework to tackle liver disease. This will include the action that needs to be taken across the health and care system, including in primary care, to prevent and better manage liver disease.

■ Mental Capacity

Anna Turley: [\[43616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will review processes for handling deaths of persons subject to deprivation of liberty safeguards, and their effect on (a) members of the family of the deceased, (b) police services and (c) the role of care providers.

David Mowat:

We have asked the Law Commission to review the deprivation of liberty safeguards. As part of this review, the Law Commission is considering the role of coroners in investigating all deaths of people subject to deprivation of liberty safeguards. We expect its final report and recommendations to be published in December.

■ Mental Health Services

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[\[43885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to implement the recommendations of the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Commission on Acute Adult Psychiatric Care in its report, entitled *Old problems, new solutions*, published in February 2016.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department of Health welcomed the publication of the Royal College of Psychiatrist's Commission on Acute Adult Psychiatric Care: "Old Problems, New Solutions". The Department and NHS England have already started to implement some of the key recommendations of the Commission including:

- Announcing a national ambition to eliminate inappropriate out of area treatments;
- Investing £400 million in crisis resolution and home treatment teams as a safe alternative to hospital;
- Designing referral to treatment standards for acute mental health care, identifying effective pathways of care and clinically appropriate maximum waiting times for treatment by 2020;
- Introducing capital schemes to improve the availability of supported housing and working with the Department for Communities and Local Government to address housing and health issues throughout 2016; and
- Working with NHS Improvement to address Mental Health Delayed Transfers of Care.

NHS England accepted the independent Mental Health Taskforce's recommendation to publish a response to the Commission's report at the end of 2016/17, which will set out in more detail how we are implementing its recommendations.

■ Mental Health Services: Hospital Beds

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[\[43886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to increase the number of acute adult psychiatric beds for patients.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Royal College of Psychiatrists' Commission on Adult Psychiatric Care – "Old Problems, New Solutions" highlighted a need to develop effective alternatives to inpatient care, rather than to increase the number of acute psychiatric beds.

We are investing over £400 million up to 2020 in crisis resolution and home treatment teams as a safe alternative to hospital. We invested £33 million in 2014/15 in early intervention in psychosis services and we have introduced waiting times for mental health to improve timely access to treatment, starting with psychological therapies and early intervention in psychosis.

However, we are clear that increasing effective alternatives must also ensure that a mental health bed is always available if someone needs it.

■ National Childbirth Trust

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[43612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he or officials in his Department last met the Chairman or Chief Executive of the National Childbirth Trust.

Mr Philip Dunne:

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health has not met with the chair or chief executive of the National Childbirth Trust (NCT). However, my Rt. hon. Friend the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Ben Gummer), met with Nick Wilkie, chief executive of NCT, on 3 November 2015.

Officials met with the chair of NCT, Helen Stephenson, and Nick Wilkie on 15 November 2015.

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[43613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what grants for what purpose his Department is making to the National Childbirth Trust in 2016.

David Mowat:

The Department awarded the National Childbirth Trust (NCT) an Innovation Excellence and Strategic Development Grant in 2015-16 under the Innovation strand.

The grant is funding a Perinatal Mental health project. The main aims of the NCT project are, to promote positive maternal mental health and support engagement with specialist services for women experiencing perinatal mental illness.

■ NHS: Waiting Lists

Wes Streeting: [\[43843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NHS trusts failed to provide data on referral to treatment times in each year since May 2010.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Patients have a legal right, set out in the NHS Constitution, to start consultant-led treatment within a maximum of 18 weeks from referral for non-urgent conditions.

Since May 2010, performance has been measured against one or more of the following operational standards:

— 92% of patients who have not yet started treatment should have been waiting within 18 weeks from referral (the incomplete pathway standard, introduced from April 2012 and the current measure of performance).

— 90% of patients admitted to hospital should have started consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks from referral (the admitted pathway standard, introduced from April 2008 and abolished in practice from June 2015 and in legislation in October 2015).

— 95% of non-admitted patients (outpatients or patients on pathways that end without treatment) should have started consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks from referral (the non-admitted pathway standard, introduced from April 2008 and abolished in practice from June 2015 and in legislation in October 2015).

To monitor performance against these standards, organisations that provide NHS services that fall within the scope of referral to treatment, including NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts, are required to submit a monthly return to NHS England. Admitted and non-admitted data are still collected but are no longer used for monitoring against standards.

The NHS Standard Contract includes a comprehensive requirement on providers to submit all nationally-mandated datasets. However, from time to time trusts need to implement new IT systems and temporarily suspend submissions of data for technical reasons.

The following table shows the number of NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts that did not report referral to treatment data in one or more months in each financial year from 2010-11.

Table: number ¹ of NHS trusts ² and NHS foundation trusts ² that did not report referral to treatment data in one or more months of each financial year from 2010-11

YEAR	ADMITTED PATHWAY DATA	NON-ADMITTED PATHWAY DATA	INCOMPLETE PATHWAY DATA
2010-11	1	1	5
2011-12	1	1	3
2012-13	1	1	4
2013-14	6	6 ³	7
2014-15	9	9	12
2015-16	14	15	16

Source : NHS England, consultant-led referral to treatment waiting times

Notes :

1. Table shows the total number of different trusts not reporting data in a year and not the maximum number of trusts not reporting in anyone month.
2. The same trust could have been a non-reporter in more than one month.
3. Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust did not report February 2014 non-admitted data in 2013-14. The data was submitted in a later revision to the dataset.
4. Each year is April to May. Two trusts that did not report incomplete pathways data in April 2010 also did not report data in some subsequent months of 2010-11.

■ Nutrition: Health Education

Simon Hoare: [43854]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations his Department has received on the references to dairy products in the revised Eatwell Guide.

Nicola Blackwood:

Following the publication of the Eatwell Guide, representations about dairy contribution towards the diet have been received from the Farmers' Union of Wales, Dairy UK and the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board.

Government continues to encourage the consumption of dairy products as part of a healthy, balanced diet and acknowledges their role as an important source of a range of nutrients.

Simon Hoare: [43855]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when Public Health England plans to publish its report on the process of revising the Eatwell Guide.

Nicola Blackwood:

It is anticipated that Public Health England's report covering the refresh of the Eatwell Guide will be published later this year.

■ Obesity

Helen Jones: [43310]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, on what dates Ministers of his Department have met representatives of the food industry to discuss the Government's proposed national obesity strategy; and what was discussed at each such meeting.

Nicola Blackwood:

Details of all Ministerial meetings with external stakeholders are published quarterly in arrears on the GOV.UK website. The latest publication which covers meetings between January and March 2016 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministerial-gifts-hospitality-travel-and-external-meetings-2016>

Tom Blenkinsop:

[43527]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to tackle obesity in (a) the North East and (b) England.

Nicola Blackwood:

We launched *Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action* on 18 August. A copy of the plan is attached and is available at:

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

Attachments:

1. PQ43527 Childhood Obesity Strategy [PQ43527 Childhood Obesity Strategy.pdf]

■ **Pain**

Patrick Grady:

[43806]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will issue a response to Early Day Motion 195, on Chronic pain, tabled on 13 June 2016.

David Mowat:

Chronic pain is a long term condition where patients have persistent pain or repeated bouts of intermittent pain and it is a condition in its own right or as a component of other long term conditions. The routine assessment and management of pain is a required competency of all healthcare professionals. Many patients with chronic pain can be successfully supported and managed through routine primary and secondary care pain management services. Approaches to treatment are not all pharmacological and for some patients, education in self-management approaches for their condition may be also be appropriate.

It is important that patients with the most serious pain management issues are able to access specialist care. A patient whose pain is particularly difficult to manage may be referred to a specialised pain management service. Under the care of an expert multidisciplinary team, patients may be offered specialised pain management programmes and more complex drug treatments. Such services are commissioned nationally by NHS England as part of its remit to deliver specialised services.

To support clinicians in the management of pain, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has published several clinical guidelines on the treatment and management of different types of pain, such as migraine and back pain, as well as technical guidance on specific treatments, such as the use of opiates in palliative care and deep brain stimulation for chronic pain.

■ **Pharmacy**

Helen Hayes:

[43664]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many of the 1,500 clinical pharmacists pledged in the GP Forward View will have been brought in by the end of each financial year until April 2020.

David Mowat:

NHS England has advised that the rollout of the additional 1,500 clinical pharmacists, as published in its *General Practice Forward View*, is still in the planning stage.

As part of this work, NHS England is profiling the numbers for the rollout but cannot say at this time how many will be rolled out over each year.

In July 2015 NHS England announced a £15 million pilot scheme to part fund and support general practices to recruit and employ clinical pharmacists to work alongside general practitioners (GPs) as part of the clinical team. In November 2015 this funding was more than doubled to £31 million, due to an overwhelmingly positive response from GP surgeries. These pharmacists will help to ease current pressures in general practice by working with patients who have long term conditions and others with multiple medications. Having a pharmacist on site will mean that patients who receive care from their general practice will be able to benefit from the expertise in medicines that these pharmacists provide.

Michael Dugher:[\[43775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 21 July 2016 to Question 42983, when his Department plans to publish the impact assessment for changes to the budget for community pharmacy in 2016-17.

David Mowat:

No publication date has yet been finalised. The Department remains committed to publishing the full and final impact assessment alongside any Drug Tariff determination.

■ Prescriptions: Fees and Charges**Royston Smith:**[\[43988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 30 June 2016 to Question 41004, what the cost to the NHS was of financing free prescriptions in 2015-16.

David Mowat:

Assuming that for each prescription item a prescription charge would have been paid, the revenue foregone from providing free prescriptions during 2015-16 was £8 billion. However, as many people could limit their total prescription costs by purchasing a Prescription Prepayment Certificate in the event that they were no longer exempt, we estimate that the actual revenue foregone was in the region of £2 billion.

■ Social Services**Helen Whately:**[\[43856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people in each local authority area were identified as having eligible care needs in each year since 2009-10.

Helen Whately:[\[43857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many complaints relating to the adult social care assessment process were made under the Local Authority Social Services and National

Health Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 in each local authority area in each year since 2009-10.

Helen Whately: [43863]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people in each local authority area were referred for a care needs assessment by a GP in each year since 2009-10.

David Mowat:

In 2014-15 local authorities in England met the (long and short term) needs of over 1.1 million adults. NHS Digital publishes information on social care activity, including by individual local authority. The most recent report and data (2014-15) are available at:

<http://digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB18663>

Data for previous years are available at:

Activity 2009-10 <http://digital.nhs.uk/pubs/carestats0910asr>

Activity 2010-11 <http://digital.nhs.uk/pubs/finalcarestats1011ssa>

Activity 2011-12 <http://digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB10291>

Activity 2012-13 <http://digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB13148>

Activity 2013-14 <http://digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB16133>

In 2014-15 there were over 1.8 million requests for local authority support from new clients. NHS Digital does not collect information on how many of these referrals came from general practitioners.

NHS Digital does not collect centrally data on the number of complaints relating to the needs assessment process, made under the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 in each local authority in England in each year since 2009-10.

■ Strokes: Medical Treatments

Andrew Gwynne: [43555]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the treatment of strokes of withdrawing access to patent foramen ovale closure and left atrial appendage occlusion during the commissioning through evaluation analysis phase.

David Mowat:

NHS England's Commissioning through Evaluation (CtE) programme enables a limited number of patients to access treatments, such as patent foramen ovale closure and left atrial appendage occlusion, which are not routinely funded by the National Health Service. These are usually treatments which show significant promise for the future and enable a small number of patients to access them while new clinical and patient experience data are collected within a formal evaluation programme. This approach ensures that each CtE scheme provides valuable new data, beyond that already available

from clinical trials, or where there is no clinical trial data, to inform future commissioning policy decisions.

During the analysis phase, NHS England's published policy position for the treatment concerned will continue to apply. For patent foramen ovale closure and left atrial appendage occlusion this will mean that these procedures will not be routinely available within the NHS. However, patients already being treated as part of a CtE scheme will continue to receive appropriate follow-up care.

Once the CtE evaluation report is available, or if other significant clinical trial information becomes available more quickly, NHS England's published policy for the treatment concerned will be reviewed and a decision will be made about whether NHS England will or will not make the treatment available within the NHS.

■ Tobacco

Philip Davies: [43850]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will place in the Library the reviews his Department has conducted of the effectiveness of tobacco control measures introduced in the last 20 years.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department assesses the impact of tobacco control measures on an ongoing basis as it develops policy and considers new measures. In September 2013, the Department published *An Audit of the impact of the Department of Health's Regulations upon business*. The link to this report is below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-of-health-regulations-impact-on-business>

As advised in the report, there is a robust cost-benefit case for the tobacco control regulations considered and experience shows that initiatives to reduce smoking prevalence work best in combination, with cumulative effects over time.

■ Tobacco: Retail Trade

Philip Davies: [43853]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make an estimate of the cumulative effect of the tobacco control measures introduced in the last 10 years on small independent retailers before the publication of the Government's next smoking strategy.

Nicola Blackwood:

Tobacco control measures are reviewed regularly, including by statutory requirement. The impact of individual measures is also assessed in advance of implementation through impact assessments which are made publicly available.

■ Urinary System: Diseases

Greg Mulholland: [43528]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with NICE about the effectiveness of guidelines to tackle urinary tract infections that are (a) acute and (b) chronic.

Nicola Blackwood:

No such discussions have taken place.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published a clinical guideline on Urinary tract infection in under 16s: diagnosis and management (CG54) in August 2007. NICE has also published Quality Standards on Urinary tract infection in children and young people (QS36) in July 2013 and Urinary tract infections in adults (QS90) in June 2015.

NICE periodically reviews its technology appraisal methods and processes to ensure that they remain appropriate in the light of wider developments.

Greg Mulholland: [43750]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to improve the accuracy of diagnosing chronic urinary tract infections.

David Mowat:

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are caused by the presence and multiplication of microorganisms in the urinary tract.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) publishes quality standards to define clinical best practice for the diagnosis and treatment of conditions.

The NICE published the *Urinary tract infections in adults* quality standard in June 2015. The quality standard comprises of quality statements concerning the diagnosis, treatment and management of UTIs. Quality statement 1 and 2 offer specific guidance on ensuring more accurate diagnoses of UTIs in adults.

The guidance is available at: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs90

Greg Mulholland: [43777]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he has had representations on the research conducted by Professor Malone-Lee and University College London researchers on the effectiveness of the standard NHS tests for diagnosing urinary tract infections.

David Mowat:

A search of the Department's ministerial correspondence database has identified 12 items of correspondence received since 1 January 2016 about the research conducted by Professor Malone-Lee and University College London researchers on the effectiveness of the standard National Health Service tests for diagnosing urinary tract infections. This is a minimum figure which represents correspondence received by the Department's ministerial correspondence unit only.

NHS commissioners are responsible for making decisions on individual treatments on the basis of the available evidence, taking into account guidance from the National Institute

for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) where available. NICE guidance is always evidence based, assuring us of the latest clinical thinking and research to determine the best treatment for patients.

NICE quality standards for urinary tract infections can be found here:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs90>

■ Visual Impairment: Health Services

Rebecca Long Bailey: [43882]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to increase the number of eye clinic liaison officers.

David Mowat:

The Government fully appreciates the impact that sight loss can have on a person's life and the importance of information being available for those newly diagnosed with sight loss, including signposting patients to appropriate support and rehabilitation services.

Eye clinics and their staffing, including eye clinic liaison officers, are commissioned and funded by individual clinical commissioning groups on the basis of local assessments of need.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [43883]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether GPs are required to ensure that patient letters are provided in a format that is readable for blind and partially-sighted people.

Rebecca Long Bailey: [43884]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to enforce NHS standards on accessibility for health information for blind people.

David Mowat:

NHS England published the Accessible Information Standard (formally called SCCI1605 Accessible Information) in July 2015.

Compliance with the Standard is a legal duty and organisations that provide NHS care or adult social care – including general practice – are required to implement the Standard in full by 31 July 2016, and then ensure ongoing compliance thereafter.

The [Specification](#) for the Accessible Information Standard sets out a series of requirements that organisations that provide NHS care and/or publicly-funded adult social care must follow. These required actions can be summarised as five key steps, which all 'applicable organisations' must complete. They must:

1. Ask people if they have any information or communication needs, and find out how to meet their needs;
2. record those needs clearly and in a set way;
3. highlight or flag the person's file or notes so it is clear that they have information or communication needs and how to meet those needs;

4. share information about people's information and communication needs with other providers of NHS care and adult social care, when they have consent or permission to do so; and
5. take steps to ensure that people's needs are met, including receiving information which they can access and understand, and communication support if they need it.

The Standard is expected to have particular impact for people who are blind, deafblind or have visual loss.

HOME OFFICE

■ Armed Forces: Foreign Nationals

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[43970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that former service personnel from other Commonwealth countries who wish to reside in the UK are supported through the immigration process.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Under the Immigration Act 1971 Commonwealth Nationals are exempt from immigration control whilst serving in HM Forces. They may qualify for Indefinite leave to remain in the United Kingdom on discharge from the Services, if they have completed more than four years' reckonable service and meet the other requirements of the Immigration Rules.

To assist the transition of serving personnel to civilian life, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) offers a wide-ranging resettlement programme. Home Office officials work closely with MoD colleagues and the Tri Services to ensure that those discharged from HM Forces receive advice on their immigration status.

■ Asylum

Steve McCabe:

[\[43314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 13 June 2016 to Question 39897, how many full-time equivalent officials of her Department are responsible for identifying, verifying and processing all asylum cases.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Asylum Operations in UK Visas and Immigration currently have 73 full time equivalent (FTE) staff who are responsible for screening asylum claims. Staff in Border Force and Immigration Enforcement will also encounter new asylum claimants in the course of their duties.

Asylum Operations have 271 (FTE) decision makers responsible for interviewing and deciding asylum

claims. Over 100 additional decision makers are currently being recruited and trained, and we continually review our staffing levels to ensure that we can deal with levels of

intake. The figures quoted have been derived from management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change. This information has not been quality assured under National Statistics protocols

■ **Asylum: Birmingham**

Shabana Mahmood:

[\[43974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the (a) appropriateness and (b) implications for safeguarding of children of private contractors using hotels to accommodate asylum seekers in Birmingham for periods of over 19 days.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office takes its responsibility towards all asylum seekers in their care seriously, ensuring their welfare and safety is at the heart of every decision made.

The statement of requirements within the accommodation providers' contract is clear: asylum seekers must be managed with sensitivity, treated in a polite and courteous manner and their safety and security is of absolute importance and must not be jeopardised.

These principles apply to all accommodated asylum seekers (including families with children) regardless of whether they are accommodated in more regular initial accommodation premises or contingency hotel accommodation.

As with all accommodation that is provided for asylum applicants, contingency accommodations are inspected to ensure that they are safe and fit for purpose.

Additionally the Home Office monitors the length of time all applicants spend in initial and contingency accommodation and works closely with its contracted providers to ensure that family applications are prioritised in recognition of the family's needs and in accordance with our duty under section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act of 2009.

Shabana Mahmood:

[\[43981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department has taken to ensure that there are sufficient resources at a local level to manage the needs of (a) asylum seekers and (b) local residents using the same services as asylum seekers in Birmingham.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office maintains active partnerships with local authorities across the UK and funds regional Strategic Migration Partnerships (SMPs) to plan the dispersal of asylum seekers across the regions. The partnerships consider the impact on communities and local services so that adjustments can be made where appropriate. This ensures that community cohesion, social welfare and safety issues are properly considered.

SMPs act as a focal point, allowing the sharing of expertise and vital information between the Home Office, its asylum accommodation providers, local government, health, education and the police. This coordinated planning ensures leadership on

asylum dispersion and assesses its impact on the requirements of local government duties towards the resident population.

■ **Asylum: Birmingham Ladywood**

Shabana Mahmood:

[\[43973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what criteria have been used to determine how many asylum seekers could be managed in Birmingham, Ladywood constituency without causing significant disruption to the local community.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The UK Government has been coordinating the dispersal of asylum seekers for many years. Existing policies are aimed at ensuring an equitable distribution of asylum seekers across the country so that no individual local authority bears a disproportionate share of the burden.

We work closely with local authorities and Strategic Migration Partnerships, who act as a focal point for the sharing of expertise and vital information between the Home Office, its asylum accommodation providers, local government, health, education and the police, to ensure consultation with local authorities is consistent and coordinated across all dispersal areas.

■ **Asylum: Children**

Thangam Debbonaire:

[\[43772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by which date she expects to have resettled 3,000 at risk child asylum-seekers and their families from the Middle East and North Africa to the UK.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Government has committed to resettling to the UK up to 3,000 individuals under a scheme designed to protect vulnerable children in the Middle East and North Africa over the lifetime of this Parliament. There will be a review of the scheme at the two year mark.

■ **Asylum: Families**

Steve McCabe:

[\[43315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2016 to Question 40147, what steps her Department takes in cases where further evidence of family links is required before asylum can be granted.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

As stated in the Answer of 15 June to Question 40147 the Dublin Regulation concerns the determination of the Member State responsible for examining an application for asylum. The Dublin Regulation does not, however, concern the factual assessment of whether or not asylum can be granted in individual cases. Consideration of an asylum claim will only take place in the UK once a transfer from another Member State has

been accepted, the transfer has taken place and the individual has formally lodged their claim in the UK. In any event, existence of family links is not a reason for a grant of asylum.

The Dublin Implementing Regulation (EC) No. 1560/2003, as amended by Regulation (EU) No. 118/2004, contains two lists indicating the relevant elements of proof and circumstantial evidence to be considered. If the initial evidence does not establish the existence of proven family links referred to in the Implementing Regulation then the reasons why the Department is not satisfied about the claimed relationship are given so that the requesting Member State and/or the individuals concerned can provide further information

■ Confiscation Orders

Mark Menzies:

[\[906098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to confiscate money from criminals; and what plans she has to further strengthen the asset recovery regime.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Government is committed to attacking criminal finances, by making it harder for criminals to move, use and hide their proceeds of crime. The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015, provides a robust set of provisions for confiscating assets from criminals, and further reforms will be brought forward in the forthcoming Criminal Finances Bill. These reforms will significantly improve our ability to recover the proceeds of crime, tackle money laundering and corruption, and counter terrorist financing.

■ Counter-terrorism

Graham Evans:

[\[906097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that the police and security services have the necessary powers to apprehend people planning terrorist attacks in the UK.

Amber Rudd:

We continue to strengthen our Counter Terrorism powers. The 2015 Counter Terrorism & Security Act provided the police with new powers and created a general duty on public bodies to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. To apprehend terrorist suspects the police and security agencies need to collect intelligence to support arrests and develop evidence to secure prosecutions.

Therefore the government is taking forward the Investigatory Powers Bill, which will provide them with powers fit for the digital age.

■ Crimes of Violence: Cleveland

Tom Blenkinsop: [\[43990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many reports of offences of violence against the person were reported to Cleveland Police in each of the last five years; and what proportion of those reports led to prosecutions.

Tom Blenkinsop: [\[43991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many reports of sexual offences Cleveland Police received in each of the last five years; and what proportion of those reports led to prosecutions.

Brandon Lewis:

The number of sexual and violence against the person offences recorded by Cleveland police from 2011/12 to 2015/16 are given in the table.

The Home Office does not hold data on the number of prosecutions resulting from offences recorded by the police. Information on crimes assigned a charge or summons outcome is available from April 2014, when data on outcomes were first collected linked specifically to their associated crimes. Previously, outcomes data supplied by forces related to the volume recorded regardless of when the crime was committed. The new method of collection was implemented to provide greater transparency and highlight how each crime recorded in any period is resolved by the police.

The table shows the proportion of sexual and violent offences that resulted in a police charge or summons in 2014/15 and 2015/16. In addition, it shows the proportion of each offence group that has not been assigned an outcome. This is important to note, in particular for sexual offences, because length of investigations mean that the most recent year has more crimes that have yet to be assigned an outcome than the previous year.

Not all charges or summonses will lead to a prosecution, the Ministry of Justice hold and publish data on prosecutions.

Attachments:

1. Sexual and violent offences [PQ43990-91 Blenkinsop table _dw.xlsx]

■ Cybercrime

Christian Matheson: [\[906099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of trends in the level of cybercrime.

Mr Ben Wallace:

As crime falls, we know that it is also changing. The internet and new technology offer criminals new opportunities to commit crimes such as fraud and cyber crime. This is why we have committed to spending a further £1.9 billion on cyber security over the next five years.

■ Domestic Violence

Meg Hillier: [\[43529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how often the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme has been applied in each police authority area in England.

Sarah Newton:

The Home Office published an evaluation report on the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme on 8 March 2016 which showed that there had been over 1,900 disclosures under the scheme since national roll out. A full breakdown by police force area can be found in the report which is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-violence-disclosure-scheme-assessment-of-national-roll-out>

■ European Arrest Warrants

Diana Johnson: [\[43741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her policy is on future British involvement in the European Arrest Warrant.

Diana Johnson: [\[43744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to continue British access to the Schengen Information System for law enforcement purposes once the UK exits the EU.

Brandon Lewis:

[Holding answer 5 September 2016]: Until Article 50 negotiations have concluded, the UK remains a full member of the EU, with all the rights and obligations that brings, and UK authorities continue to cooperate with their counterparts in other EU Member States, including on the European Arrest Warrant (EAW). The Government is exploring options for cooperation arrangements once the UK has left the EU. However, it would be wrong to set out unilateral positions in advance of negotiations.

■ Europol

Diana Johnson: [\[43706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her policy is on future British membership of Europol.

Brandon Lewis:

The Prime Minister has made clear that law enforcement cooperation with our European partners will continue when the UK is outside the EU – we will do what is necessary to keep our people safe.

Europol, like all the other EU measures, will be subject to the wider UK and EU negotiations on post-Brexit arrangements. The Government will consider all available options for cooperation arrangements with Europol once the UK has left the EU, but it is too early to speculate on what those arrangements may be.

■ Female Genital mutilation

Thangam Debbonaire:

[43496]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what monitoring her Department undertakes of the incidence of female genital mutilation (a) for each of the four known types of female genital mutilations and (b) in Bristol; and if she will make a statement.

Sarah Newton:

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a crime and it is child abuse. We will not tolerate a practice that can cause extreme and lifelong physical and psychological suffering to women and girls.

Work to tackle FGM forms an integral part of our cross-Government Violence Against Women and Girls strategy published on 8 March. The first annual statistics on the number of cases recorded by the NHS in England were published on 21 July for the period April 2015 to March 2016. They show that there were 5,702 newly recorded cases of FGM reported and of those, where type was known, Types 1 and 2 have the highest incidence (35 and 31 per cent respectively). In Bristol, there were 385 cases newly recorded.

More information on these figures is available on the Health and Social Care Information Centre's website.

A 2015 prevalence study part-funded by the Home Office estimated that approximately 137,000 women and girls in England and Wales are affected by FGM and 60,000 girls were born to women who had undergone FGM.

■ Forced Marriage: Victims

Mr David Lammy:

[43780]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what help and support is available to historic victims of forced marriage.

Mr David Lammy:

[43785]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many victims of forced marriage with indefinite leave to remain in the UK or with British citizenship her Department has information on who are (a) male and (b) female aged (i) under 13, (ii) 13 to 15, (iii) 16 or 17 and (iv) 18 or over.

Sarah Newton:

Figures on the number of cases reported to the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU), via its public helpline and email inbox, are published annually and are available on GOV.UK. The figures include a breakdown of cases by age, gender and country to which the case relates.

The FMU carries out a range of activity, including delivery of a comprehensive programme of outreach, provision of an e-learning tool and guidelines for professionals, and a series of short films aimed at supporting victims and deterring potential

perpetrators. We also recently launched a new forced marriage campaign, ahead of the summer holidays, aimed at raising awareness through radio adverts.

■ Fraud

Craig Williams: [\[906101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to protect people from fraud and its effect on families and communities.

Mr Ben Wallace:

Fraud is a heinous crime which can have a devastating effect on individuals, families and the most vulnerable members of society. That is why this Government launched the Joint Fraud Taskforce last February with law enforcement and banks, and has committed to spending £1.9bn over the next five years on cyber security, including to tackle cyber enabled fraud. The Taskforce is working to protect the public from fraudsters, to maximise every opportunity to catch the criminals and to help victims.

■ Hate Crime

Paula Sherriff: [\[43753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department has taken to identify areas that have higher than average levels of hate crime; and if she will provide additional resources for those areas.

Paula Sherriff: [\[43754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that police officers are trained to deal with hate crime.

Paula Sherriff: [\[43755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what targets she has set the police relating to dealing with hate crime incidents.

Paula Sherriff: [\[43756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department provides specialist care for victims of hate crime; and if she will provide additional resources to deal with the rise in hate crime since the referendum on UK membership of the EU.

Paula Sherriff: [\[43758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to encourage reporting of hate crime incidents; and whether she plans to introduce new ways of reporting.

Sarah Newton:

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

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

We also have stronger sentences for hate crime. We continue to carefully consider the recommendations from the Law Commission review into hate crime legislation. The Government has committed to taking action to improve our response to hate crime.

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

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

Hate crime statistics show number of crimes recorded by the police by force area. The decision as to how hate crime is resourced in individual forces is an operational matter for the Police and Crime Commissioner for that area. The latest police funding settlement represents a fair deal for the police and reinforces this Government's commitment to protect the public. No Police and Crime Commissioner who maximised precept income is facing a reduction in cash funding this year.

Police and Crime Commissioners are also responsible for commissioning local support services for victims of crime. The Ministry of Justice provides the Commissioner with a grant to enable services which best meet the needs of local victims of crime to be funded.

The Home Office published a new hate crime action plan on 26 July 2016, which sets out Government action over the next four years to tackle hate crime. It includes:

- new steps to boost reporting of hate crime and support victims;
- new CPS guidance to prosecutors on racially aggravated crime;
- a new £2.4 million fund for protective security measures at potentially vulnerable places of worship;
- and additional funding to community organisations tackling hate crime.

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

■ Human Trafficking

Sir David Amess:

[906094]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle people trafficking.

Sarah Newton:

Tackling human trafficking and modern slavery remains a top priority for this government. The Modern Slavery Act 2015 provides law enforcement agencies the tools to tackle trafficking and modern slavery. In July, the Prime Minister announced a new taskforce to accelerate progress. The PM also pledged £33.5m of development assistance funding to tackle slavery in countries from where we know victims are regularly trafficked to the UK.

■ **Police: Rural Areas**

Chris Davies: [\[906102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support policing in rural areas.

Brandon Lewis:

It is an operational decision for individual Chief Constables to determine how their resources are deployed and it is for Police and Crime Commissioners to hold their forces to account, including on how they tackle the crimes that matter most to residents and businesses in rural and urban areas alike.

■ **Racial Hatred**

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[43593\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what representations she has received from police forces in England and Wales on reports of an increase in racist incidents after the EU referendum; and if she will make a statement.

Sarah Newton:

The Home Office has been working with the police at national and regional levels to monitor the increase in reported hate crime over the past few weeks and to ensure that local forces have the necessary assistance and guidance to respond.

Police forces are responding robustly to recent incidents, and victims can be reassured that their concerns about hate crime will be taken seriously by the police and courts.

Any decisions regarding resourcing of front-line policing are a matter for chief constables in conjunction with their police and crime commissioner.

■ **Refugees**

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[43497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what measures her Department plans to put in place to improve the processing time for sending documentation including national insurance numbers and biometric residence permits to people who have been granted refugee status.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Details to apply for a National Insurance Number (NINO) are collected at the substantive interview and sent to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) if a claimant is

granted asylum. DWP aim to return these to the Home Office within seven working days before it is sent to the claimant. Processing for Biometric Residence Permits begins once claimants have enrolled their details. If completed promptly it can be received by them within seven working days of the grant of asylum but delays can occur if a claimant has not enrolled their signature or biometrics prior to the grant of asylum.

■ Refugees: Children

Mr David Lammy:

[\[43930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many unaccompanied refugee children in Europe have been accommodated in the UK in each month of 2016 to date.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Since January 2016 the UK has transferred over 60 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) from Europe to the UK under the family reunion provisions of the Dublin Regulation.

The UK made a commitment to bring vulnerable unaccompanied refugee children from Europe to the UK under the Immigration Act 2016. Over 20 children who meet the criteria in the Act have been accepted for transfer from Europe since Royal Assent in May, the majority of whom have already arrived in the UK.

Mr David Lammy:

[\[43939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of refugee children seeking reunion with family in the UK who are currently in Europe.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We are unable to provide an estimate. Determining such figures is extremely difficult given the mobility of children within and between Member States, differing collection methods at different times and due to lack of registration and monitoring of children. The majority of estimates rely on partial censuses given different access rights and as such, figures can vary greatly.

■ Refugees: Disability Living Allowance

Caroline Lucas:

[\[43778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions her Department has had with Ministers in the Department for Work and Pensions on people who have been granted refugee status in the UK being eligible to access disability living allowance.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

There have been no recent discussions between the Home Office and Department of Work and Pensions Ministers about people who have been granted refugee status in the UK being eligible for disability living allowance.

■ Refugees: Families

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[43814]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assistance is available to foreign nationals in the UK who have indefinite right to remain to communicate with family members who are refugees abroad; and what support she is providing to overseas refugees with family members in the UK to seek asylum in the UK.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Recognised refugees and those granted humanitarian protection in the UK are advised about family reunion provisions as part of the information they receive with the decision on their asylum claim. Details are also on the Gov.UK website. Support in tracing family members overseas is available through the British Red Cross Family Tracing Service. More information can be found at: <http://www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/Finding-missing-family/International-family-tracing>

We do not consider asylum claims made abroad and there is no provision in our Immigration Rules for someone to be allowed to travel to the UK to seek asylum. The Refugee Convention places no obligation on signatory states to consider claims made outside their territory. Those who need international protection should claim in the first safe country they reach – that is the fastest route to safety.

We support the principle of family unity and have several routes for families of refugees to be reunited safely. Our family reunion policy allows a spouse or partner and children under the age of 18 of those granted refugee status or humanitarian protection in the UK to join them here, if they formed part of the family unit before the sponsor fled their country.

The UK also operates several resettlement schemes that bring vulnerable individuals who need protection to the UK. These are Gateway, Mandate, the Syrian Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme and the new Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme. All schemes see the UK working closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to identify cases that they deem in need of resettlement according to agreed criteria.

■ Refugees: Syria

Thangam Debbonaire:

[43773]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what timetable she has set for resettling 20,000 Syrian refugees in the UK; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Work continues with local authorities and international partners to deliver the Government's commitment to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees over the lifetime of this Parliament and we are on track to do this.

■ Right of Abode: EU Nationals

Patricia Gibson:

[\[906096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with people from other EU countries living in the UK since the EU referendum on their right to live in the UK after an exit from the EU.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Government Ministers and officials engage with a wide range of stakeholders.

The Prime Minister has been clear that she wants to protect the status of EU nationals here. The only circumstances in which that would not be possible are if British citizens' rights in other EU Member States were not protected in return.

■ Turkey: Refugees

Caroline Lucas:

[\[43495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the ability of refugees in Turkey to receive international protection in that country.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Turkey currently hosts over 2.7 million refugees from Syria and around 250,000 from other nationalities. Turkey now hosts more refugees than any other country in the world.

Turkey has established very detailed legislation setting out a comprehensive international protection system for migrants in need of protection.

We are monitoring the situation in Turkey very closely following the attempted coup. At this stage there is no indication that the conditions and protections available to refugees have been impacted.

■ Undocumented Migrants: Greater London

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[43807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who in her Department authorised the decision to trial in London the use of Go Home advertisement vans in 2013; and what information her predecessor had received on that trial before it commenced.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The pilot to use the AdVans referred to was authorised by former Immigration Minister, Rt. Hon. Mark Harper MP.

The former Home Secretary, Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP was informed of the intention to pilot this campaign.

■ Vetting**Mr David Lammy:****[43784]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether compensation is available when the Disclosure and Barring Service does not resolve checks within the 60 day service level agreement period.

Sarah Newton:

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has a target to issue 95% of certificates within 8 weeks, which it is close to achieving. The DBS is reliant on police forces completing their checks in a timely manner.

DBS will liaise with the police on behalf of a customer who is experiencing delays when their enhanced level DBS application is with the police to undertake statutory checks. In these cases DBS will aim to resolve the customer's issues as quickly as possible, and keep the customer informed until resolution. However, the DBS cannot provide financial remedy for any complaint about police actions including the timescales taken by the police to complete a check. It would be up to individual police forces to comment on any local redress policies.

If the delay is due to maladministration on behalf of DBS, the DBS redress policy is designed to ensure that the person who is the subject of that maladministration is not disadvantaged. Further information can be found on the DBS website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about/complaints-procedure>

Rosie Cooper:**[43831]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recourse there is for individuals who have been prevented from earning a wage due to the time taken for the processing of Disclosure and Barring Service certificate applications.

Sarah Newton:

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has a target to issue 95% of certificates within 8 weeks, which it is close to achieving. The DBS is reliant on police forces completing their checks in a timely manner.

DBS will liaise with the police on behalf of a customer who is experiencing delays when their enhanced level DBS application is with the police to undertake statutory checks. In these cases DBS will aim to resolve the customer's issues as quickly as possible, and keep the customer informed until resolution. However, the DBS cannot provide financial remedy for any complaint about police actions including the timescales taken by the police to complete a check. It would be up to individual police forces to comment on any local redress policies.

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about/complaints-procedure>

Mr David Lammy:

[\[43931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of cases the Disclosure and Barring Service did not resolve within 60 days in (a) the UK, (b) London, (c) Haringey and (d) Tottenham in the most recent year for which figures are available.

Sarah Newton:

In the last 12 months (July 2015 – June 2016), the proportion of disclosure cases which took longer than 60 days to resolve was as follows: (a) all applications (including those from people residing outside the UK at the time of their application), 5.2%, (b) London, 14.6% (c) Haringey, 14.6% and (d) Tottenham, 16.8%.

The Disclosure and Barring Service is reliant on police forces completing their checks in a timely manner and is working closely with those forces whose performance does not meet turnaround time targets.

■ **Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre**

Paul Blomfield:

[\[43769\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2016 to Question 41904, what mechanisms are in place to ensure that her Department meets its non-refoulement obligation in respect of victims of human trafficking held at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre, and that no victims of human trafficking at risk of re-victimisation, torture or degrading treatment at return are subjected to deportation.

Paul Blomfield:

[\[43770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2016 to Question 41904, what mechanisms are in place to ensure her Department meets its positive obligation under Article 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights to identify and take operational measures to protect victims of human trafficking held at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

No one who is found to be at risk of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment on return to their country will be deported from the UK. There are processes in place for those held in Immigration Removal Centres to claim asylum if they believe they are at risk of such treatment.

Home Office staff working in all Immigration Removal Centres, including Yarl's Wood, are trained as First Responders to identify signs that individuals may be potential victims of trafficking or slavery. Where an individual is identified as a potential victim, they will be referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for assessment.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Department for International Development: Departmental Responsibilities**

Stephen Doughty: [\[43731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what mission statements and priorities her Department has had in place in each of the last six years; and what recent changes have been made to those statements and priorities.

Rory Stewart:

DFID's mission and priorities have been set out in various publications since 2010 including the "UK Aid Changing Lives" publication, the DFID Results Framework, and the DFID Business Plan. Priorities and progress are updated periodically, including through DFID's Annual Report to Parliament. Most recently the Government published the "*UK Aid Strategy: tackling global challenges in the national interest*" and DFID's Single Departmental Plan.

■ Department for International Development: Living Wage

Frank Field: [\[43507\]](#)

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

Rory Stewart:

Direct employees

There are no staff directly employed by DFID who are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Workers in agencies which report to DFID

There are no workers in agencies which report to DFID who are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

Outsourced workers

We encourage outsource partners to pay the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. None of our contracted workers are paid less than the National Living Wage and London Living Wage.

■ Department for International Development: Staff

Stephen Doughty: [\[43728\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many civil servants have been (a) transferred, (b) seconded and (c) given cross-departmental roles with which Department's since the recent changes to the machinery of government.

Rory Stewart:

Since the recent changes to the machinery of government (18th July 2016) DFID has:

- Transferred 6 civil servants to other Departments.
- Seconded / loaned 7 civil servants to other Departments.
- Engaged 2 civil servants in cross-departmental roles.

■ Israel: Palestinians

Richard Burden:

[\[43522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she has had discussions with her European counterparts on the letter signed in July 2016 by eight European Ambassadors to Israeli officials on the confiscation of EU-funded structures in Jabal al Baba; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

I have not had discussions with my European counterparts about the letter regarding EU-funded structures, and the UK Ambassador to Israel was not asked to sign this letter. I understand that a group of international donors to the Occupied Palestinian Territories UN Humanitarian Pooled Fund wrote to the Israeli authorities to note their concerns about confiscation of several humanitarian assistance projects. The UK is not part of this fund.

The UK remains extremely concerned at the large increase in demolitions and confiscations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories since the start of 2016, compared to the monthly average in 2015, and continues to raise this with the Israeli authorities. Demolitions and the evictions of Palestinians from their homes cause unnecessary suffering, are harmful to the peace process, and in all but the most exceptional of cases are contrary to international humanitarian law.

■ Overseas Aid

Philip Davies:

[\[43599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 13 July 2016, to Question 41982, which nations receive direct foreign aid from the UK.

Rory Stewart:

DFID has now stopped providing general budget support in all countries with the exception of Pakistan. This year DFID only anticipates providing sector budget support in Ghana, Nepal, Pakistan and Zambia.

We also support partner governments to deliver development objectives in other ways including technical assistance and support to build their core systems. This ensures appropriate safeguards for UK taxpayers' resources are in place.

Stephen Doughty:

[\[43729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she plans to delay or revisit the (a) bilateral aid review and (b) multilateral aid reviews in response to the EU referendum result.

Rory Stewart:

The Secretary of State is currently considering the outcomes of the Department for International Development's Multilateral and Bilateral Aid Reviews, ahead of their publication.

Stephen Doughty: [\[43732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she plans to amend the definition of overseas development assistance used by her Department.

Rory Stewart:

The Government adheres to the definition of Official Development Assistance (ODA) set by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC). After several years of complex negotiations, the DAC updated the ODA rules in February 2016 so that they better recognise the challenges to development posed by conflict, insecurity and terrorism, as well as the growing importance of private sector investment. The Government's priority is to ensure these reforms are implemented effectively.

As a donor that pursues its national interests by contributing 0.7% of its Gross National Income to ODA, the UK welcomes the DAC's commitment to keeping ODA relevant and credible.

Stephen Doughty: [\[43733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she plans to (a) amend or (b) repeal any of the international development acts.

Rory Stewart:

There are no plans to amend or repeal any of the International Development Acts.

Alex Chalk: [\[43787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of applying the target of spending 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product on international aid over a five-year term.

Rory Stewart:

The International Development (Official Development Assistance Target) Act 2015 requires the 0.7% of Gross National Income target to be met on an annual basis. This is also in accordance with Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) rules to report Official Development Assistance annually to the OECD. The Government is committed to continuing to comply with the Act.

■ Venezuela: Overseas Aid

Martin Docherty-Hughes: [\[43568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to assist those suffering from hunger in Venezuela.

Rory Stewart:

The current political, social and economic problems in Venezuela, in particular shortages of food and medicine are concerning. DFID is supporting Venezuela through our core

contributions to United Nations' (UN) agencies, the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department and the Red Cross, all of whom are currently working to support food and medicine distribution systems to the most vulnerable people in Venezuela.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Arms Trade: Saudi Arabia

Helen Goodman: [\[43357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what representations he has received from non-governmental organisations on the reported use of arms sold by Britain to Saudi Arabia in Yemen.

Mark Garnier:

There have been no representations from non-governmental organisations on the reported use of arms sold by Britain to Saudi Arabia in Yemen.

JUSTICE

■ Courts: Domestic Violence

Mr Mark Hendrick: [\[43488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, which magistrates' and Crown courts have separate waiting rooms for victims of domestic violence and those accused of assaulting them.

Dr Phillip Lee:

All Crown Court Centres have separate waiting facilities for victims and witnesses, including victims of domestic violence.

97% of magistrates' courts have some kind of separate witness waiting facility. For those courts that do not have this facility, special arrangements will be put in place providing the court is notified in advance.

There are separate secure facilities for those accused that are held in custody. The accused who are remanded on bail, do not have designated waiting rooms.

■ Prisons: Locks and Keys

Andy Slaughter: [\[43414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much has been spent on the replacement of prison keys, doors and locks in each of the last five years.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

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

■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals

Colleen Fletcher:

[43358]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of appeals to the Tribunals Service from appellants in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England in relation to (i) personal independence payment, (ii) employment and support allowance, (iii) income support, (iv) jobseeker's allowance and (v) tax credits were successful in the latest period for which figures are available.

Sir Oliver Heald:

Information about the volumes and outcomes of appeals to the Tribunal is published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunals-and-gender-recognition-certificate-statistics-quarterly-january-to-march-2016>.

The information provided below is a further breakdown of this data.

PROPORTION OF APPEALS DECIDED IN FAVOUR OF THE APPELLANT BETWEEN JANUARY AND MARCH 2016

6

	PIP ¹	ESA ²	IS	JSA	Tax Credits ³
Coventry	78%	65%	33%	83%	50%
West Midlands ⁴	65%	50%	47%	42%	38%
England ⁵	64%	57%	45%	43%	44%

Based on cases cleared at tribunal hearing

SSCS data are normally registered to the venue nearest to the appellants home address. We cannot retrieve data based on the appellants actual address, but can produce reports detailing the numbers of cases that were dealt with at one of our Regional centres

¹ Personal Independence Payment (New Claim Appeals) which replaces Disability Living Allowance was introduced on 8 April 2013, also includes Personal Independence Clams (Reassessments)

² Includes Employment Support Allowance and Employment Support Allowance (Reassessments)

³ Includes Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit.

⁴ West Midlands includes the venues: Birmingham, Coventry, Hereford, Stoke, Wolverhampton, Worcester, Shrewsbury, Nuneaton, Worcester (Fownes), Kidderminster, Coventry (CMCB), Walsall, Worcester (Magistrates Court), Hereford (Magistrates Court)

⁵ Excludes SSCS Scotland Region and Wales Region

⁶ Proportion of decisions in favour represents the number of cases found in favour of the appellant as a percentage of those cleared at hearing. Cleared at tribunal hearing excludes those cases disposed of without the need of a hearing (i.e. decisions retrospectively superseded by the 1st Tier Agencies and those stuck out or withdrawn prior to hearing)

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the details are subject to inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale case management system and is the best data that is available.

The data may differ slightly to that of the published stats as this data was run on a different date.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Northern Ireland Office: Living Wage

Frank Field:

[\[43509\]](#)

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

James Brokenshire:

My Department does not directly employ any members of staff on an hourly rate below that set by the Living Wage Foundation.

My Department currently employs 1 person on an agency basis. This person is not paid less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation for employees in this region.

In my Department there are 8 staff that are outsourced, 7 are paid less than the hourly Living Wage set by the Living Wage Foundation for employees in this region, but are paid above the minimum wage.

Of these none are employed on zero hours contracts.

PRIME MINISTER

■ Armed Conflict

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[43530\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, with reference to the Oral Answer by the Prime Minister of 6 July 2016, Official Report, Column 881, what assessment she has made of the level of military action or the deployment of military equipment that would fall within the parameters referred to in that statement.

Mrs Theresa May:

I have nothing further to add.

■ Attorney General: Legal Opinion

Kirsten Oswald: [\[43531\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, in what circumstances she will restrict the dissemination of written legal advice of the Attorney General to (a) the Cabinet and (b) the Government.

Mrs Theresa May:

The provision of advice from the Attorney General will continue to be handled in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code.

■ Department for International Development

Patrick Grady: [\[43524\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for International Development on maintaining that Department as a stand-alone government department and on strengthening its role; and if she will make a statement.

Mrs Theresa May:

This Government remains committed to continuing the UK's leading role on international development, including through spending 0.7% of GNI on aid. The Department for International Development has a critical role to play not only in tackling poverty but helping the UK play a confident, engaged and ambitious role in the world.

■ Departmental Responsibilities

Tom Watson: [\[43745\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she has made any further machinery of government changes since her Written Ministerial Statement of 18 July 2016.

Mrs Theresa May:

Machinery of Government changes are set out in Written Statements, and are available in the Official Report.

SCOTLAND

■ Fisheries: Scotland

Deidre Brock: [\[43585\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, whether the Government plans to devolve the areas of law and policy on fishing formerly dealt with by the EU to Scotland's Government and Parliament after the UK leaves the EU.

David Mundell:

While the United Kingdom remains a member of the European Union, the current arrangements for fisheries remain in place.

Preparations for our negotiations to leave the EU will include looking at future approaches to fisheries management and the UK Government will fully involve the Scottish Government in this process.

TRANSPORT■ **Aviation: Noise****James Berry:**[\[43846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans his Department has to use the National Noise Attitudes Survey 2014 to update the Government's policy on aviation noise and health costs.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government is taking account of all relevant evidence in its current review of policy on aviation noise.

■ **Blue Badge Scheme****Michael Dugher:**[\[43800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to include having dementia and Alzheimer's Disease as criteria for (a) eligibility without further assessment or (b) eligibility subject to further assessment for the Blue Badge Scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Michael Dugher:[\[43801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his officials last updated the Blue Badge Scheme local authority guidance; whether he plans to update that guidance; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Jones:

The extent to which a specific condition affects people will vary. If we were to provide automatic eligibility without further assessment by virtue of having dementia it may not reflect genuine need.

However, the 'subject to further assessment' criteria do not preclude the issue of badges to people with mental/cognitive disabilities. Any permanent and substantial disability may qualify for a badge if it causes "very considerable difficulty in walking". It is for the local authority to assess the degree of challenge on a case-by-case basis.

The guidance was last updated in October 2014. There are no plans to update it at this time.

■ **Cycling and Walking****Lilian Greenwood:**[\[43768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the level of potential savings to NHS budgets were the targets set out in the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy to be met.

Andrew Jones:

We have published a report commissioned on the health benefits of active travel

"Claiming the Health Dividend: A summary and discussion of value for money estimates

from studies of investment in walking and cycling”

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371096/claiming_the_health_dividend.pdf.

■ Cycling: Accidents

Anna Turley: [43614]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many cyclists died as a result of road traffic incident in each year since 2010 in (a) Redcar, (b) the North East and (c) the UK.

Andrew Jones:

The table below provides the number of cyclists killed in a road traffic accident on public roads in a) Redcar, b) the North East of England, and c) Great Britain.

YEAR	REDCAR CONSTITUENCY	NORTH EAST ENGLAND	GREAT BRITAIN
2010	0	4	111
2011	3	7	107
2012	0	6	118
2013	0	6	109
2014	0	3	113
2015	0	1	100

The Department does not hold data for Northern Ireland, therefore the table includes statistics for Great Britain rather than the United Kingdom.

These statistics come from police reported data on personal injury accidents on the public highway. The Department does not collect information about accidents that were on private roads, car parks or off-road.

Conor McGinn: [43625]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many deaths of cyclists on roads there were in (a) St Helens North constituency, (b) Merseyside, (c) the North West and (d) the UK in each of the last five years.

Andrew Jones:

The table below provides the number of cyclists killed in road traffic accidents on public roads in a) St Helens North, b) Merseyside, c) the North West of England and d) Great Britain.

ST HELENS NORTH	MERSEYSIDE	NORTH WEST	GREAT BRITAIN	
2011	0	0	13	107
2012	0	4	10	118

ST HELENS NORTH	MERSEYSIDE	NORTH WEST	GREAT BRITAIN	
2013	0	1	9	109
2014	0	2	13	113
2015	0	3	7	100

The Department does not hold data for Northern Ireland, therefore the table includes statistics for Great Britain rather than the United Kingdom.

These statistics come from police reported data on personal injury accidents on the public highway. The Department does not collect information about accidents that were on private roads, car parks or off-road.

■ Department for Transport: Living Wage

Frank Field:

[\[43511\]](#)

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

Mr John Hayes:

My Department does not hold information on the earnings or contracts of staff where work is outsourced. The Department for Transport pays its directly employed and agency staff at least the Living Wage however, both in the central Department and its executive agencies.

■ Heathrow Airport

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[43767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will estimate the contribution to the UK economy of airline passengers who have transferred through Heathrow Airport in each of the last three years.

Mr John Hayes:

The Department has no plans to undertake such analysis of the specific contribution.

However, transfer passengers benefit the UK economy primarily through increased connectivity - their demand has helped to make more flights and routes viable, generating connectivity benefits to UK residents. In addition, they have directly contributed to revenue and employment for UK airlines and Heathrow airport.

Zac Goldsmith:

[\[43833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to require Heathrow Airport to pay for relocation for the Lakeside Energy From Waste Facility in the event of that airport being awarded a third runway.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government is currently considering the Airports Commission's comprehensive evidence. Commercial property, such as the Lakeside Energy from Waste facility, is a part of this consideration.

Zac Goldsmith:

[43834]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of whether there will be an increase in airport-related traffic at Heathrow Airport in the event of that airport being awarded a third runway.

Mr John Hayes:

The Airports Commission undertook a range of detailed assessments to support its Final Report published in July 2015. The analysis included a detailed assessment of transport network impacts for each of the Commission's three short-listed options.

Copies of the Commission's Surface Access: Dynamic Modelling Reports, and, Strategic and Local Roads Study for both the Heathrow Northwest Runway and the Heathrow Extended Northern Runway schemes and Gatwick Second Runway; along with a Freight Impacts Study, Resilience Study and a Demand Management Study were published alongside its Final Report, and are available from the Commission website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airports-commission-final-report-surface-access>

The Government will carefully consider all the evidence set out when making a decision on the location of additional runway capacity.

Dr Tania Mathias:

[43838]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what (a) models and (b) criteria his Department is using to make a cost and benefit analysis of the effect of the proposed Northwest runway at Heathrow Airport on economic growth and the environment.

Mr John Hayes:

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December 2015 and is considering all of the evidence very carefully before reaching a view on its preferred scheme. The Government is not providing a running commentary on this work and nor would it be appropriate to outline specific pieces of evidence before an announcement on its preference. Any work to inform an announcement will be set out in subsequent publications and associated consultation.

James Berry:

[43845]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect on the level of fees charged by Heathrow Airport to airlines in the event of a third runway being built at that airport.

Mr John Hayes:

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December 2015 and is considering all of the evidence very carefully before reaching a view on its preferred scheme. The Government is not providing a running commentary on this work and nor would it be appropriate to outline specific pieces of evidence before an announcement on its preference. Any work to inform an announcement will be set out in subsequent publications and associated consultation.

Kate Hoey:

[43873]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if his Department will request that Heathrow Airport complies with all the conditions set out by the Airports Commission in its final report, published in July 2015, before making an announcement on airport expansion in the UK.

Mr John Hayes:

A number of important decisions on airport capacity were taken by the Government in December 2015, including to accept the case for expansion in the South-East and the three schemes shortlisted by the Airports Commission. However, we must take the time to get the decision right on a preferred scheme.

The Government believes it is essential that expansion via any of the shortlisted schemes is accompanied by a strong package of measures to mitigate the impacts on communities and the environment, and will set out any requirements in this area on a preferred scheme promoter in due course.

Ruth Cadbury:

[43874]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to recommendation 11 of the Environmental Audit Committee in its First Report of Session 2015-16, on The Airports Commission Report: carbon emissions, air quality and noise, HC 389, whether his Department has carried out an assessment of the likely costs of preventing an adverse impact on health from expansion at Heathrow Airport.

Mr John Hayes:

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December 2015, and has since been undertaking a programme of further work to support a decision on a preferred scheme. The preferred scheme promoter would need to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment as part of any Development Consent application it makes.

Zac Goldsmith:

[43997]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to recommendation 22 of the Environmental Audit Committee in its First Report of Session 2015-16, on the Airports Commission Report: carbon emissions, air quality and noise, HC 389, what his policy is on implementing that recommendation as it applies to requiring Heathrow Airport to set out proposals for mitigation.

Mr John Hayes:

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December 2015, and has since been undertaking a programme of further work, including on mitigation, to support a decision on a preferred scheme. We are carefully considering the evidence in relation to all three schemes, including the Airports Commission's comprehensive work and the recommendations in the Environmental Audit Committee's interim report.

Zac Goldsmith:

[\[43998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to page 307 of the Airports Commission Final Report, published in July 2015, what steps his Department is taking to assess options for a legislative process for permanently banning a fourth runway at Heathrow Airport.

Mr John Hayes:

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December 2015 and is considering all of the evidence very carefully before reaching a view on its preferred scheme. It is vitally important that we get this decision right.

The Government is not providing a running commentary on this work and it would not be appropriate to opine on the Commission's scheme-specific recommendations before an announcement on its preference.

■ Heathrow Airport: Impact Assessments

Andy Slaughter:

[\[43837\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has undertaken or commissioned an environmental impact assessment of a construction phase for a third runway at Heathrow Airport.

Mr John Hayes:

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December 2015, and has since been undertaking a programme of further work to support a decision on a preferred scheme. The preferred scheme promoter would need to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment as part of any Development Consent application it makes.

■ Heathrow Airport: Night Flying

Zac Goldsmith:

[\[43835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if his Department will require Heathrow Airport to accept the recommendation of the Civil Aviation Authority that night flights at that airport be banned between 11.00pm and 6.00am before the Government makes a decision on airport expansion.

Mr John Hayes:

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December 2015, and has since been undertaking a programme of further work, including on mitigation, to support a decision on a preferred scheme. We are carefully considering the evidence in relation to all three schemes, including the Commission's comprehensive evidence base and recommendations. These recommendations included a ban on night flights between 1130 and 0600 for its preferred scheme, the Heathrow Northwest Runway. We are aware of no such recommendation from the Civil Aviation Authority.

Adam Afriyie:

[\[43848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of implementing the recommendation of the Civil Aviation Authority that night flights at Heathrow Airport be banned between 11.00pm and 6.00am on the two runways at that airport.

Mr John Hayes:

We are aware of no such recommendation from the Civil Aviation Authority.

■ Heathrow Airport: Passengers

Dr Tania Mathias:

[\[43839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will estimate the number of long-haul business passengers that will terminate at Heathrow Airport in 2050 (a) with and (b) without a third runway at that airport; and what proportion of those passengers will be (i) UK residents and (ii) foreign visitors.

Mr John Hayes:

The estimated numbers of total passengers that will terminate at Heathrow Airport in 2050 are as follows:

- without airport expansion: 88.0 million terminal passengers. Of these, the estimated number of long-haul business passengers is 16.08 million, of which 59.75% of these are estimated to be UK residents and 40.25% foreign visitors;
- with a third runway at Heathrow: 114.8 million terminal passengers. Of these, the estimated number of long-haul business passengers is 16.29 million, of which 59.81% of these are estimated to be UK residents and 40.19% foreign visitors.

These estimates are based on the Airports Commission forecasts of July 2015, Assessment of Need/carbon traded scenario.

These estimates include both departures and arrivals at Heathrow airport and exclude transfer passengers.

Dr Tania Mathias:

[\[43840\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many long-haul business passengers terminated at Heathrow Airport in 2011; and what proportion of those passengers were (a) UK residents and (b) foreign visitors.

Mr John Hayes:

In 2011, around 5 million long-haul business passengers terminated at Heathrow. Of these passengers, 53% were UK residents and 47% were foreign visitors.

This estimate includes arrivals and departures at Heathrow but excludes transfer passengers.

■ London Airports

Andy Slaughter:

[\[43836\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether it is the Government's policy that the airport that is awarded an extra runway must meet the costs of any surface access works required by that expansion.

Mr John Hayes:

The government has been clear that we expect the promoter of any airport expansion scheme to meet the full cost of any surface access schemes that are required as a direct result of airport expansion and from which they will directly benefit.

Dr Tania Mathias:

[\[43842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, in which month he plans to make an announcement on airport expansion.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government remains fully committed to delivering the important infrastructure projects it has set out, including delivering runway capacity on the timetable set out by Sir Howard Davies.

The Government will carefully consider all the evidence before reaching a view on its preferred scheme.

■ London Airports: Public Consultation

Dr Tania Mathias:

[\[43841\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what he plans the timescale to be for the planned public consultation after the Government has made its decision on airport expansion.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government will take a view on the timing of a public consultation once it has reached a decision on its preferred scheme.

■ River Mersey: Bridges

Maria Eagle:

[\[43608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer about the introduction of tolls on the Mersey Gateway and Silver Jubilee bridges; and whether a decision has been taken on discounts for local businesses and residents.

Maria Eagle:

[\[43610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what criteria he will use to determine eligibility for discounted travel as part of the local discount scheme when tolls on the Mersey Gateway and Silver Jubilee bridges are introduced.

Andrew Jones:

Following the previous Chancellor's further statement in July 2015 that the Government is looking at extending Mersey Gateway bridge toll discounts to residents of Chester West & Chester and Warrington, officials are currently working through what the proposed further extension means for the scheme both by way of the cost to the Department but also and importantly what this would do to the commercial structure of the contracts already signed for the scheme. Once this is clear we will be able to provide more information.

Maria Eagle:

[\[43667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what funding he is making available to (a) Warrington and Cheshire West and (b) Chester councils to enable residents to travel toll-free across the Mersey Gateway Bridge and Silver Jubilee Bridge when they open in 2017.

Maria Eagle:

[\[43701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress he has made on ensuring financial support will be made available for local businesses in Knowsley and Liverpool once tolls are introduced on the Mersey Gateway bridge.

Andrew Jones:

Following the previous Chancellor's further statement in July 2015 that the Government is looking at extending Mersey Gateway bridge toll discounts to residents of Chester West & Chester and Warrington, officials are currently working through what the proposed further extension means for the scheme both by way of the cost to the Department but also and importantly what this would do to the commercial structure of the contracts already signed for the scheme. Once this is clear we will be able to provide more information.

■ Roads: Accidents

Mr Hugo Swire:

[\[43722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the average accident rate is higher on dual carriageways than on three lane roads.

Andrew Jones:

The Department does not hold any information on the number of lanes in either the road accident data supplied by police forces or road traffic estimates. Therefore it is not possible to provide a comparison between dual carriageway roads and single carriage roads with three lanes.

However, the Department does record the number of carriageways at the scene of accidents as well as the length of 'A' roads by number of carriageways. As a guide, in 2015 for Great Britain there were 380 reported personal-injury accidents per billion

vehicle miles on single carriageway 'A' roads and 140 accidents per billion vehicle miles on dual carriageway 'A' roads.

■ **Roads: Construction**

Mr Hugo Swire: [43723]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether dual carriageways are more expensive to build than three lane roads.

Mr John Hayes:

Although a two lane dual carriageway might be expected to cost more to build than a three lane single carriageway, simply because it is wider, the costs involved in building new carriageways are influenced by a wide range of considerations specific to the particular location, such as topography, cost of acquiring land etc.

■ **Roads: South West**

Mr Hugo Swire: [43724]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will re-evaluate the dualling of the entire A303/A30 corridor.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government is committed to upgrading all single carriageway sections of the A303 and A358 between the M3 and M5 to dual carriageway standard. In respect of the A303/A30 between Southfields and Honiton, Highways England will assess the options for improvements, including dualling, as part of its South West Peninsula route strategy, for which evidence gathering is underway. All interested parties are encouraged to submit evidence on the performance of this route through the tool at: www.highways.gov.uk/route-strategies.

Mr Hugo Swire: [43725]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department will (a) approve and (b) fund the upgrade of the A303/A30 between Southfields and Honiton.

Mr John Hayes:

The Road Investment Strategy, covering the period 2015 to 2020, commits funding for small-scale improvements to the A303/A30 between Southfields and Honiton to improve safety and journey quality, alongside a £2bn commitment to upgrade the A303 as a strategic corridor to the South-West. The Department and Highways England are gathering evidence to inform plans for investment in the Strategic Road Network post-2020, and decisions about further investment in this route will be made as part of this process.

■ Shipping: Exhaust Emissions

Richard Burden:

[\[43521\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his European counterparts on promoting (a) a sulphur limit and (b) decarbonisation measures through the International Maritime Organisation.

Mr John Hayes:

Department for Transport officials continue to work with their European and international counterparts on both matters.

Ships operating in an emission control area (ECA) – such as the North Sea (including the English Channel) and Baltic Sea – are already subject to a 0.1 per cent sulphur limit. The next sulphur limit to affect shipping will be the 0.5 per cent global cap for ships when operating outside an ECA. The limit will apply in 2020, subject to the outcome of IMO's review of fuel availability, which could see its application deferred until 2025. The review's findings will be considered at the next session of the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), which takes place in October 2016.

Regarding measures to reduce carbon emissions from ships, we expect a global data collection system on fuel consumption from ships to be adopted at the upcoming MEPC meeting. This is the first step in a process considering further technical and operational measures to enhance the energy efficiency of shipping. Officials will also play an active role in the Working Group at the same meeting to discuss how international shipping can play its part in delivering the goals of the Paris Agreement on climate change.

WALES

■ Wales Office: Living Wage

Frank Field:

[\[43513\]](#)

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

Guto Bebb:

The Wales Office has no direct employees or contracted workers. Staff at the Wales Office are subject to Ministry of Justice (MoJ) policies for pay and agency contract purposes. No permanent staff working at the Wales Office are paid less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. We have less than five agency staff and none are paid less than the national living wage. No staff are on zero hours contracts.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Attendance Allowance**

Debbie Abrahams: [43519]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in each parliamentary constituency receive attendance allowance.

Penny Mordaunt:

Statistical information on Attendance Allowance claimants, including the numbers of cases in payment in each parliamentary constituency, is available from the DWP

Tabulation Tool: <http://tabulation-tool.dwp.gov.uk/100pc/tabtool.html>

■ Children: Maintenance

Steve McCabe: [43313]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2016 to Question 40131, on Children: maintenance, for what reasons the (a) updating work has taken less time than assumed and (b) setting up of arrears on the CMS system is taking longer than anticipated.

Caroline Nokes:

It is not unusual for cost estimates to vary as broad assumptions are replaced by more detailed ones. The cost estimates in the impact assessment were produced before the detailed processes involved were finalised and were therefore subject to change. The changes in cost estimates were not due to any change in the scope or objectives of case closure.

■ Employment and Support Allowance: Bradford South

Judith Cummins: [43893]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have had their payment of employment and support allowance suspended whilst waiting for a work capability assessment to be completed in Bradford South constituency in each of the last three years.

Judith Cummins: [43894]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have waited longer than (a) three, (b) six and (c) 12 months for a work capability assessment from the date of making a claim for employment and support allowance in Bradford South constituency in each of the last three years.

Judith Cummins: [43895]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of claims for employment and support allowance were refused following a work capability assessment were subsequently allowed after (a) mandatory reconsideration and (b) appeal to tribunal in Bradford South constituency in each of the last three years.

Penny Mordaunt:

Information on Employment and Support Allowance, outcomes of Work Capability Assessments and Mandatory Reconsiderations are published at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about/statistics>.

Constituency level information is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Local Government: Pensions

Debbie Abrahams: [43486]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on the introduction of the cost collection process within the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Richard Harrington:

None.

Pension Funds

Mr Jim Cunningham: [43594]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department plans to bring forward legislative proposals to ban the indirect investment by pension schemes in companies linked with the manufacture of cluster munitions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [43619]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will review the powers of UK pensions schemes to indirectly invest in companies linked with the manufacture of cluster-munitions.

Richard Harrington:

Trustees and managers are responsible for acting in the best interests of beneficiaries, including the investment of members' funds. They must, under existing obligations, prepare a statement of investment principles. This must set out the extent to which social, environmental, or ethical considerations are taken into account in the selection, retention, and realisation of investments.

We have no immediate plans to change these existing obligations, but will keep them under review.

Pension Funds: Disclosure of Information

Debbie Abrahams: [43311]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans his Department has to ensure that pension schemes are obliged to (a) identify and (b) publish details of costs to a pension fund for scheme members.

Debbie Abrahams:

[43312]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department plans to take in response to the Report of the Transparency Taskforce, published in May 2016, on the costs and hidden fees associated with investments and pensions.

Richard Harrington:

The Government remains committed to increasing transparency and ensuring that members of pension schemes are able to obtain information about the costs and charges which they bear.

Governance bodies of defined contribution workplace pension schemes are obliged, under existing requirements, to assess costs and charges. We and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) are actively considering how to achieve greater transparency and standardisation of transaction costs, and the FCA plans to publish a consultation later this year.

■ Personal Independence Payment

Deidre Brock:

[43589]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many applications for personal independence payments have been rejected since the introduction of that benefit; and how many of those rejected applications have been overturned by (a) mandatory reconsideration and (b) tribunal hearing.

Deidre Brock:

[43590]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many applications for personal independence payments have been rejected since the introduction of that benefit in Edinburgh North and Leith constituency; and how many of those rejected applications have been overturned by (a) mandatory reconsideration and (b) tribunal hearing.

Penny Mordaunt:

The latest available data on personal independence payment (PIP) registrations and clearances split by geographical area (local authority and parliamentary constituency) and by type of clearance (i.e. whether the claim was awarded, disallowed or withdrawn) for both new claims and reassessed claims, can be found at <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>. Guidance on how to use Stat-Xplore can be found here: <https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/index.html>.

The latest available data on personal independence payment (PIP) mandatory reconsideration registrations and clearances by type (e.g. 'New decision - Award changed') for Great Britain, for both new claims and reassessed claims, can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-independence-payment-april-2013-to-april-2016> (Tables 7a and 7b). These statistics will include a number of mandatory reconsiderations that have been raised against awarded claims as well as disallowed (rejected) claims.

To answer your questions in full, and provide a further breakdown of the mandatory reconsideration data for the Edinburgh North and Leith constituency, can only be done at a disproportionate cost.

Information on the number of PIP appeals and their outcomes is published by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). A link to the latest national level statistics published on 6 June 2016 can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/tribunals-statistics#employment-tribunal-and-employment-appeal-tribunal-statistics-gb>

See table 2.7. However, the data is not published at lower geographical levels. Further enquiries should be referred to MoJ.

Rosie Cooper:

[43832]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, within what period for time a mandatory reconsideration must be completed for a personal independence payment application.

Penny Mordaunt:

We introduced Mandatory Reconsideration to make the system as fair as possible for those going through it. It gives people the opportunity to present new evidence and to have their case looked at again.

The Department for Work and Pensions does not have a clearance time target for Mandatory Reconsiderations. Claimants have one calendar month from the date of their Personal Independence Payment (PIP) decision to request a Mandatory Reconsideration. Further information on Mandatory Reconsideration in PIP can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/pip/appeals>.

■ Social Security Benefits: Childbirth

Kirsten Oswald:

[43969]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what account his Department takes of the short and long-term economic effect of the number of births in a household in setting the level of welfare benefits.

Damian Hinds:

The law relating to the annual increases to certain social security benefits, known as up-rating, is set out in the Social Security Administration Act 1992.

■ Social Security Benefits: Diabetes

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[43887]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support his Department offers to benefit claimants with diabetes once sanctions have been imposed.

Damian Hinds:

All claimants who have a sanction imposed upon them will have access to support from the Department under the Hardship Provision, as long as they meet the Hardship criteria. Further information can be found in the Decision Makers Guide:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470852/dmgch35.pdf relating to Hardship and Health & Disability consideration when imposing a sanction.

The Departmental intranet also contains multiple pages of information about vulnerable claimants and those with illnesses and/or disabilities, some specifically covering diabetes. These provide staff with information about the condition and help them to assist claimants with complex needs in obtaining the support they need.

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[43888]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what guidance is provided to jobcentre advisers on imposing sanctions on benefit claimants with diabetes.

Damian Hinds:

There is no specific guidance available to Jobcentre Plus staff on imposing sanctions on benefit claimants with diabetes. There is guidance available to Jobcentre Plus staff on the application of sanctions imposed by a Decision Maker if a claimant fails to fulfil all of their responsibilities as a claimant.

When Decision Makers make their decisions they do so using guidance for decision makers taking into account all the claimants individual circumstances including health conditions. These circumstances determine whether or not a claimant should be sanctioned.

■ State Retirement Pensions

Alan Brown:

[43605]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 19 July 2016 to Question 42832, if he will allow part payments to cover the one to six day period between people reaching State Pension Age and their allocated pension payday.

Richard Harrington:

New rules apply in the new State Pension scheme introduced from 6 April 2016. Individuals who reach State Pension age on or after that date are paid their new State Pension from the date they reach their State Pension age. Payments are made in arrears on a payday based on the individual's National Insurance number. This means that in most cases the first payment may be in respect of a part of a week – that is from the day the individual reaches State Pension age to their first normal payday. The new State Pension is payable until the date of their death and a part week payment may also apply at the end of their claim.

Under the State Pension system that applies to people who reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016, for those who did not move from a working age benefit to State Pension, the State Pension is payable only in full benefit weeks. This means that depending on the individual's payday, as determined by their National Insurance number, their payment may not have begun from the day they reached their State Pension age. These arrangements for full week payment apply to both the start and the

end of their claim for their State Pension and a full week is paid in respect of the week in which their death occurs.

■ **Universal Credit**

Debbie Abrahams:

[\[43532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many employers have been advised that their pay cycles might affect universal credit payments; how many employers have altered their pay cycles as a result of that advice; and how many employees have been affected by such alterations.

Damian Hinds:

Throughout the life of Universal Credit, officials and Ministers have consulted and liaised with employers about Universal Credit and its interaction with labour market and employers' processes.

We are currently implementing a test and learn approach to understand the interaction of Universal Credit and employer pay cycles and its effect on awards. This work will include discussions with employers.

Debbie Abrahams:

[\[43533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many employees in receipt of universal credit are paid (a) monthly on the same date each month, (b) monthly on the same day of the week in each month, (c) 4-weekly, (d) 2-weekly and (e) weekly.

Damian Hinds:

The specific information requested could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

Universal Credit is assessed and paid in a way that fits with the vast majority of claimants in work who are paid monthly. For a minority of cases, there will be instances where UC payments do not align with an individual's wages, such as those who are paid 4-weekly.

We have consulted and liaised with employers about Universal Credit and its interaction with labour market and employers processes and recommend, where they can, employers align with Universal Credit.

We are currently implementing a test and learn approach to understand the interaction of Universal Credit and employer pay cycles and its effect on awards. This work will include discussions with employers.

Debbie Abrahams:

[\[43550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the average loss incurred by people in receipt of universal credit in regular employment and paid monthly whose pay date fluctuates with their universal credit assessment period resulting in two sets of earnings in one assessment period and no earnings in the following assessment period, compared with claimants whose pay date does not fluctuate with their assessment period resulting in one set of earnings in each assessment period since the roll-out of the digital service.

Debbie Abrahams:

[\[43551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his estimate is of the number of people in receipt of universal credit in regular employment and paid monthly whose pay date will fluctuate with their universal credit assessment period resulting in two sets of earnings in one assessment period and no earnings in the following assessment period since the roll-out of the digital service.

Debbie Abrahams:

[\[43746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of people in receipt of Universal Credit who are in regular employment and paid every four weeks and receive two sets of earnings in one assessment period since the roll-out of the digital service.

Debbie Abrahams:

[\[43747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the average loss incurred by people in receipt of Universal Credit who are in regular employment and paid every four weeks and receive two sets of earnings in one assessment period compared with claimants with the same annual income who are paid monthly with one set of earnings in each assessment period since the roll-out of the digital service.

Damian Hinds:

The specific information requested could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

Unlike tax credits which meant that claimants received demands for repayments and could never be sure they were receiving the correct entitlement, Universal Credit assesses monthly earnings and income in that month. That lessens the burden on claimants who have fluctuating incomes or irregular payments so they can budget with greater confidence and without the anxiety they will be hit with a demand for repayment.

We are currently implementing a test and learn approach to understand the interaction of Universal Credit and employer pay cycles and its effect on awards. This work will include discussions with employers.

■ Work Capability Assessment: Medical Certificates

Rosie Cooper:

[\[43467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if his Department will assess the potential merits of a cost cap applying to welfare claimants requiring a medical certificate as part of a work capability assessment.

Penny Mordaunt:

Prior to the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) claimants are advised that they should only submit information that they already hold with their claim. During the WCA additional evidence may be requested from doctors on behalf of the Department, at no charge to the claimant.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

CABINET OFFICE

■ Government responses to electoral law reports

Minister for the Constitution (Chris Skidmore):

[\[HCWS132\]](#)

The Government is today publishing its responses to a number of reports published on the administration of the UK Parliamentary General Election and other polls on 7 May 2015. The response to the Electoral Commission's statutory reports on the elections incorporates responses to recommendations made by the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA) and the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB).

Recommendations made by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) have been addressed in a separate response.

We are grateful for the analysis and recommendations within the reports from all of these organisations. Their work helps the Government to monitor the effectiveness of existing electoral provisions, determine where improvements are needed and helps government to set future direction for policy development. The Government will continue to work with electoral administrators and partners to remove burdens and ensure they are supported to carry out the effective running of elections.

We will also be considering any future change in light of the review of electoral fraud undertaken by Sir Eric Pickles and his report published last month. I would like to thank Sir Eric for the work he has undertaken over the past year in producing this detailed and thorough report. It will be an important contribution to our fight against all types of fraud in the UK. We will look closely at the recommendations.

Copies of the Government responses will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

Attachments:

1. WMS Election Reports [WMS Election Reports.pdf]

TREASURY

■ Finance Bill 2016

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Jane Ellison):

[\[HCWS130\]](#)

I have today published a written submission outlining the Government's analysis of how the English Votes for English Laws principle relates to all Government amendments tabled for Report stage of Finance Bill 2016.

The department's assessment is that the amendments do not change the territorial application of the Bill. The analysis reflects the position should all of the Government amendments be accepted. I have deposited a copy of the submission in the Libraries of the House.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ DESTRUCTION OF LIBYAN CHEMICAL WEAPON PRECURSORS

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson):
[\[HCWS127\]](#)

My right honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Defence (Michael Fallon), and I wish to make a joint statement about the significant contribution that Her Majesty's Government has made to international efforts to ensure the safe destruction of precursor chemicals from Libya's historic chemical weapons programme.

Libya's chemical weapons stockpile was destroyed under international supervision and verification by 2014. However, a quantity of precursor chemicals remained in Libya. The international community was concerned about the risks that, in the current security situation, these chemicals might be acquired and misused by non-state actors. Earlier this year, the Libyan Government of National Accord asked for support from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the international community to remove the remaining chemicals from Libya and to destroy them in a safe and timely manner in a third country. The UK has played a major role in coordinating international efforts to assist Libya and the OPCW to achieve this, including in the UN Security Council and with practical steps.

On 22 July, I voted on behalf of the UK in the UN Security Council for authority to be given for the chemicals to be removed from Libya for destruction in another country. Subsequently, the Danish Government asked the UK to provide a naval escort to support Denmark's operation to ship the chemicals out of Libya.

The Secretary of State for Defence agreed to provide support, in the same way as the Royal Navy supported Denmark and Norway in the operation to remove chemical weapons from Syria in 2014. During late August, RFA Mounts Bay escorted the Danish task group from Libya through the Mediterranean.

In order to enable the safe transport and destruction of the Libyan chemicals, and to provide verification assistance to the OPCW, experts at the UK's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory at Porton Down were tasked to analyse samples of the chemicals. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has contributed some £500,000 to support both the analysis and destruction of the chemicals.

The UK's contribution to this task is now almost complete. The chemicals are being taken to a specialist facility in a third country, where they will be safely destroyed.

In close cooperation with our international partners – notably Denmark, Germany and the US, who contributed significant funding to the overall destruction effort, as well as with the OPCW – the UK has taken practical and effective action to eliminate chemical weapon risks in Libya. This reinforces our collective commitment to the people and government of Libya, and, ultimately, to all of us who want to live in a world free from chemical weapons.

■ Yemen Update

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson):

[\[HCWS128\]](#)

This government continues to believe that the best way to achieve stability in Yemen is through a political solution. The UK's priority is to support the UN Special Envoy to Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, in facilitating a credible peace process in Yemen. I deeply regret the failure of the parties to reach an agreement at the UN-led peace talks in Kuwait, and I continue to urge them to find the compromises that will end the current conflict.

There has been a sustained international effort in support of the UN throughout and the UK continues to play an active role. In July I hosted a meeting in London to discuss Yemen with the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the US Secretary of State where we collectively reiterated our strong support for the role of the UN in mediating a lasting political solution to the crisis. We affirmed that a successful resolution should include arrangements that would require the withdrawal of armed groups from the capital and other areas, and a political agreement that would allow for the resumption of a peaceful, inclusive political transition. In August, Minister for the Middle East, Tobias Ellwood, represented me in Saudi Arabia for talks with the US Secretary of State, GCC Foreign Ministers and the UN Special Envoy. The discussions focused on finding a way to end the political deadlock in Yemen, humanitarian assistance and ways to support Yemen's precarious economy.

We will continue to support the peace process through our diplomatic efforts. The UK will host a discussion on Yemen at the UN General Assembly later this month with key international partners. In parallel, we continue to press for military restraint on all sides and call for a renewed commitment to a Cessation of Hostilities.

We are aware of reports of alleged violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) by parties to the conflict and take these very seriously. We regularly raise the importance of compliance with IHL with the Saudi Arabian Government and other members of the Saudi-Arabian led military Coalition. I raised the issue of IHL compliance with my Saudi counterpart, Foreign Minister Al Jubeir on 22 August. It is important that the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition in the first instance conducts thorough and conclusive investigations into incidents where it is alleged that IHL has been violated. They have the best insight into their own military procedures and will be able to conduct the most thorough and conclusive investigations. It will also allow the Coalition forces to understand what went wrong and apply the lessons learnt in the best possible way. This is the standard we set ourselves and our allies.

In this respect, Saudi Arabia announced more detail of how incidents of concern involving Coalition forces are investigated on 31 January. The Saudi Arabian-led Coalition Joint Investigations Assessment Team publically announced the outcome of eight investigations on 4 August.

The UK Government takes its arms export responsibilities very seriously and operates one of the most robust arms export control regimes in the world. All export licence applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, taking account of all relevant factors at the time of the application. The key test for our continued arms exports to Saudi Arabia in relation to IHL is whether there is

a clear risk that those weapons might be used in a commission of a serious violation of IHL. Having regard to all the information available to us, we assess that this test has not been met.

HOME OFFICE

■ Appointment of a new Chair of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd): [\[HCWS131\]](#)

I wish to update the House on the change in Chair of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) and today is my first opportunity to do so.

This Inquiry was established in March 2015 to consider the extent to which state and non-state institutions have failed in their duty to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation, and to make recommendations to protect children from such abuse in future.

On 4 August 2016 the Chair Dame Lowell Goddard wrote to me to offer her resignation which I accepted. I am grateful for all of her work on the inquiry to date.

On 11 August I announced the appointment of Professor Alexis Jay as the new Chair of the Inquiry.

I am firmly of the view that the work of the Inquiry needed to continue without delay. Victims and survivors deserve nothing less. After consultation, I decided that Professor Jay was the best person to provide stability and maintain momentum in the Inquiry's work.

Professor Jay's experience, lifelong dedication to child protection and her outstanding leadership of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham demonstrate her suitability to lead the Inquiry. I am delighted that she has agreed to do so.

TRANSPORT

■ Govia Thameslink Update

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Paul Maynard): [\[HCWS129\]](#)

I am pleased to inform the House that from today Southern Railway have reinstated 119 train services into the weekday timetable. This means over 9 out of 10 trains on the network will be running in line with the original weekday timetable, and over a third of the 341 trains removed on 11 July as part of the temporary timetable, will be restored this week. This will benefit passengers on inner London services, almost all London Bridge peak trains and restores service to Southern's West London Line. The remaining trains will be reinstated to the timetable incrementally in the coming weeks. This is an issue of vital importance to the Government.

The Government has invested more than £1.6 billion of taxpayers' money in new, longer, and more spacious trains. These new trains are progressively being introduced on existing

Thameslink rail services and other routes from May 2017. The new trains are fully equipped with the latest technology allowing drivers to safely operate the doors from the cab.

The introduction of these new trains will mean that conductors, who currently operate the train doors, are freed up to spend their time on the train helping passengers during their journeys. GTR has promised this new on board supervisor role will be open to all conductors and will not result in any job losses or pay reduction. These changes will clearly benefit passengers. Importantly the vast majority of trains that currently have an on-board conductor will keep that staff member in a new on-board passenger focused role.

The Secretary of State recently announced a targeted £20m fund, to be spent by Network Rail under project board authority, and the appointment of one of Britain's most experienced rail industry figures, Chris Gibb, to help get the service back running as it should. His post will be paid for by GTR and will involve heading a new project board, working with the train operator and Network Rail, to explore how to achieve a rapid improvement to services for the public. The board will oversee the £20m fund and closer working between GTR and Network Rail to improve performance for Southern customers. A passenger representative will also be included on this review board to ensure commuters' views are heard and improvements properly reflect passenger demands. The project board will present its plan in the autumn and actions will be implemented as soon as possible.