

**Daily Report****Monday, 27 March 2017**

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 27 March 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:08 P.M., 27 March 2017). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ **Beer: Employment**

Steve McCabe:

[68166]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 28 February 2017 to Question 65129, on Heineken: Punch Taverns, what steps he is taking to help protect jobs in the microbrewing industry.

Margot James:

We are working with UK industry to create the right conditions for competitive, world leading manufacturing businesses to flourish and grow across the UK. We are supporting all UK food and drink manufacturers, including microbrewers, by cutting business taxes, reducing red tape and investing in new scientific infrastructure on a record scale.

Through our Industrial Strategy, we are offering an 'open door' to industry to come to us with proposals for a Sector Deal to transform and upgrade their sector. We are prepared to work with any sector which can organise behind strong leadership to address shared challenges and opportunities.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Freedom of Information**

Andrew Gwynne:

[68661]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, on how many occasions his Department took longer than 30 working days to respond to a freedom of information request in each month since July 2016.

Margot James:

I refer the hon. Member to my Answer of 24 March to Question 68034:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-03-15/68034/>.

■ **Living Wage and Minimum Wage: Sleep**

Nicky Morgan:

[909497]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what representations the Government has received on the applicability of the national minimum wage and the national living wage to staff who are asleep during a sleep-in shift at work.

Margot James:

The Government has received representations from social care providers and charities, social care workers, and hon. Members writing on behalf of their constituents.

■ Offshore Industry: Employment

Karl Turner:

[\[68761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to promote the transfer of employment and skills between different sectors of the offshore energy industry.

Jesse Norman:

[Holding answer 24 March 2017]: Many companies that work in offshore energy already do so across a range of sectors. To further support this, Government, working with industry, published a workforce plan for the oil and gas sector and also set up a recruitment portal for displaced oil and gas workers to enable them to access employment opportunities in other sectors.

■ Pay

Nicky Morgan:

[\[68558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what representations his Department has received on the national minimum wage and national living wage laws applying to staff who are asleep during a sleep-in shift at work.

Margot James:

The Government has received representations from social care providers and charities, social care workers, and hon. Members writing on behalf of their constituents.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Office: Freedom of Information

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[68663\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, on how many occasions his Department took longer than 30 working days to respond to a freedom of information request in each month since July 2016.

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[68672\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, on how many occasions 10 Downing Street took longer than 30 working days to respond to a freedom of information request in each month since July 2016.

Chris Skidmore:

I refer the hon. Member to my Answer of 21 March 2017 to PQ68036.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Non-domestic Rates: Public Houses****Richard Fuller:****[68565]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to paragraph 4.5 of the Spring Budget 2017, what estimate the Government has made of the number of public houses that will be eligible for the £1,000 business rate discount in (a) Bedford and (b) Bedfordshire.

Mr Marcus Jones:

At the Budget on 8 March the Chancellor announced a new relief scheme for pubs with a rateable value below £100,000. Under the scheme, eligible pubs will receive a £1000 discount on rate bills. My Department will shortly consult on guidance which will include proposals on the eligibility criteria and other aspects of the scheme.

■ Temporary Accommodation: Domestic Violence**David Simpson:****[68351]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what information his Department holds on the number of people who receive emergency housing as a result of violence, threats or abuse.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Department does not hold direct information on the number of people who receive emergency housing on account of violence, threats or abuse in the UK. We do hold figures for households who have been accepted as statutorily homeless by their local authority as a result of violence or harassment. We also hold figures for the numbers of households who have had their homelessness prevented by use of sanctuary scheme measures for domestic violence. These figures are published in live tables 773 and 789 respectively, here:

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

In addition, the numbers of homeless households temporarily accommodated in women's refuges can be found in section 6 of the detailed local authority homelessness tables here:

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

This information applies to England only. As housing is devolved, information in relation to Wales and Scotland is a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government and the Scottish Government.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Arts: Employment

Tracy Brabin:

[\[68411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential barriers to working in the creative industries for (a) expectant mothers and (b) parents.

Matt Hancock:

It is important that working parents have the choice and flexibility that enables them to fully realise their potential contribution to the creative industries workforce.

We will soon be hosting a Forum with industry leaders from across DCMS sectors, including the creative industries, which will aim to identify and share best practice around promoting diversity and social mobility in the workforce, to help ensure we have an economy that works for all.

■ Arts: Finance

Grahame Morris:

[\[68348\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how much funding the Arts Council has allocated to each region of England in each of the last 10 years.

Matt Hancock:

We are clear that the right balance of funding between London and the regions continues to require attention as part of our commitment to build a country that works for everyone. Everyone should be able to access great arts and culture and Arts Council England recently confirmed that the proportion of the national portfolio budget provided to cultural organisations outside London will increase from 2018.

The table below shows total funding by Arts Council England since 2006/07. Spending fluctuates from year to year because of large-scale capital investments; but 2014/15 and 2015/16 saw a larger proportion of spend outside of London than in each of the last eight years.

Arts Council England investment by region 2006- 2016 (full financial year)

2006-07	TOTAL
East	£16,062,689
East Midlands	£27,377,643
London	£232,861,198
North East	£29,947,655
North West	£45,458,765
South East	£28,241,463

2006-07	TOTAL
South West	£26,204,515
West Midlands	£65,911,944
Yorkshire	£44,221,157
Total	£516,287,029
2007-08	TOTAL
East	£21,437,219
East Midlands	£18,444,034
London	£212,693,350
North East	£24,307,138
North West	£38,680,070
South East	£25,712,626
South West	£30,835,084
West Midlands	£66,597,562
Yorkshire	£39,600,710
Total	£478,307,793
2008-09	TOTAL
East	£20,919,630
East Midlands	£19,869,551
London	£233,704,563
North East	£29,208,378
North West	£36,653,770
South East	£31,494,177
South West	£29,909,859
West Midlands	£66,612,523
Yorkshire	£39,584,267
Total	£507,956,718

2006-07	TOTAL
<hr/>	
2009-10	TOTAL
East	£21,038,610
East Midlands	£22,251,949
London	£236,191,892
North East	£72,802,855
North West	£53,543,879
South East	£26,451,405
South West	£27,514,758
West Midlands	£62,764,891
Yorkshire	£41,784,065
Total	£564,344,304
2010-11	TOTAL
East	£18,537,810
East Midlands	£16,928,456
London	£238,948,971
North East	£59,076,292
North West	£31,695,866
South East	£28,050,218
South West	£31,287,126
West Midlands	£61,266,698
Yorkshire	£37,692,035
Total	£523,483,473
2011-12	TOTAL
East	£20,423,942
East Midlands	£19,967,522
London	£238,687,931

2006-07	TOTAL
North East	£40,203,696
North West	£41,422,424
South East	£27,275,177
South West	£30,134,157
West Midlands	£69,659,755
Yorkshire	£44,855,177
Total	£532,629,781
2012-13	TOTAL
East	£55,865,073
East Midlands	£29,584,900
London	£325,482,724
North East	£42,833,496
North West	£56,888,314
South East	£62,080,945
South West	£45,623,260
West Midlands	£70,291,330
Yorkshire	£68,883,352
Total	£757,533,394
2013-14	TOTAL
East	£34,266,724
East Midlands	£28,838,281
London	£234,872,664
North East	£32,855,848
North West	£72,571,927
South East	£41,826,787
South West	£42,278,457

2006-07	TOTAL
West Midlands	£66,791,254
Yorkshire	£57,979,055
Total	£612,280,997
2014-15	TOTAL
East	£40,536,717
East Midlands	£28,186,414
London	£328,314,399
North East	£37,532,661
North West	£63,121,626
South East	£63,442,470
South West	£62,449,025
West Midlands	£119,162,810
Yorkshire	£106,236,753
Total	£848,982,875
2015-16	TOTAL
East	£38,666,553
East Midlands	£30,082,732
London	£219,239,107
North East	£33,812,840
North West	£70,912,072
South East	£39,957,033
South West	£49,078,544
West Midlands	£56,176,482
Yorkshire	£49,112,689
Total	£587,038,052

Please note these figures are based on hard commitments/reconciled grants and therefore may differ from previous datasets

■ Broadband: Wealden

Nusrat Ghani: [68324]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many premises in Wealden constituency have access to superfast broadband through the Broadband Delivery UK scheme.

Matt Hancock:

Over 16,000 premises within the constituency have received access to superfast broadband because of government intervention. A further 24,600 are able to connect as a result of commercially funded rollout.

Nusrat Ghani: [68326]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate she has made of when superfast broadband coverage in Wealden constituency will reach (a) 90 and (b) 95 per cent.

Matt Hancock:

Third party analysis by Think Broadband puts current superfast coverage in the constituency at 89.3%. Coverage is likely to increase further both as a result of the current Go eSussex project (<http://www.goesussex.co.uk/>) and a potential future project, for which an Invitation to Tender is expected to be issued shortly.

■ Cybercrime: Small Businesses

Andrew Gwynne: [68383]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Government plans to ring-fence a proportion of the £1.9 billion funding as part of the National Cyber Security Strategy to support small and medium-sized enterprises to adopt the latest cyber security technology, including the Cyber Essentials scheme.

Matt Hancock:

The £1.9bn of transformational investment from 2016 to 2021 supports the realisation of the thirteen objectives set out in the National Cyber Security Strategy. Although funding is not specifically ring-fenced towards any of these objectives there is investment available which will be used to support small and medium-sized enterprises.

The new National Cyber Security Centre has a dedicated Wider Economy and Society team which will provide bespoke support and advice for small and medium-sized firms. This will supplement a number of our existing programmes, including the Cyber Essentials scheme designed to protect SMEs from the vast majority of internet-borne threats, and the Cyber Aware scheme which offers simple, practical advice to small businesses and consumers.

■ Sports: Drugs

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[68575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what plans her Department has to tackle doping in amateur competitive sports.

Tracey Crouch:

Doping is unacceptable in any level of sport. It is important that all involved in sport play their part in educating participants about the dangers of doping, both in terms of the damage it does to sport's integrity but also the health risks to individuals as well. There is still more that sports governing bodies can do on this front, working alongside UK Anti-Doping, to help promote clean and fair sport at all levels.

DEFENCE

■ Aircraft Carriers

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[68434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has made a recent estimate of the number of UK-flagged escorts required to support Carrier-Enabled Power Projection capability.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Force Protection profile for current and future operations is under constant review. The proportion of the Royal Navy's deployed escorts used to support Carrier-Enabled Power Projection capability will depend on the operational tasking and circumstances at that time.

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[68435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if his Department will prioritise UK suppliers during contracting negotiations on complex support arrangements for Carrier-Enabled Power Projection capability.

Harriett Baldwin:

Our default approach to meeting defence requirements remains open competition and this approach has been successful in driving efficiency into the UK defence industry. This is also the case for the Carrier Strike capability, for which UK suppliers are making an important contribution. For example the F-35 global programme benefits the UK by around 15% by value per aircraft.

We are committed to creating the right conditions for the UK defence industry to thrive and encouraging British suppliers to bid for contracts. We will therefore work with our prime contractors to ensure that any procurement opportunities are well advertised.

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[68458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to minimise cost increases to the Carrier Strike programme.

Harriett Baldwin:

The approved cost of the Queen Elizabeth Class programme remains at £6.212 billion. The Department keeps costs within the programme under very close scrutiny, and industry is incentivised to manage cost pressures.

Mr Kevan Jones:[\[68470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraph 22, page 13 of the National Audit Office report, Delivering Carrier Strike, published on 16 March 2017, what steps his Department is taking to set out arrangements for long-term leadership and oversight of Carrier Enabled Power Projection capability.

Harriett Baldwin:

We already have in place robust governance processes that reflect the strategic importance of the Carrier Enabled Power Projection Programme. These governance arrangements are being continuously refined to ensure that this strategic capability is directed and employed appropriately.

Mr Kevan Jones:[\[68472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraph 22, page 13 of the National Audit Office report, Delivering Carrier Strike, published on 16 March 2017, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of that report's recommendation.

Harriett Baldwin:

We welcome the National Audit Office's recognition of the progress we have made towards delivering the Carrier Strike capability. We will examine the recommendations and report back progress against them in accordance with normal process.

Mr Kevan Jones:[\[68473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraph 19, page 12 of the National Audit Office report, Delivering Carrier Strike, published on 16 March 2017, what steps he is taking to address the long-standing skills gaps in his Department's contract management teams.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence is ensuring that the thousands of personnel operating in the defence acquisition system have the necessary skills and competences, including those in commercial roles. In particular, our Commercial Professionalism Programme is currently aiming to increase the professional skills of the commercial function, enabling us to grow and retain our own talent. We have already developed training specifically targeting the skills gaps identified in contract management, with 30 courses scheduled per year on the subject.

Mr Kevan Jones:[\[68474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraph 1.9, page 16 of the National Audit Office report, Delivering Carrier Strike, published on 16 March 2017,

whether he plans to procure additional helicopters to increase the number of Crownsnest radar-enabled aircraft available.

Harriett Baldwin:

There are no plans to procure additional helicopters at this time.

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[68487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Royal Navy personnel are currently training alongside the US military to maintain aircraft carrier skills.

Harriett Baldwin:

As of 21 March 2017, there are 27 Royal Navy personnel in training alongside the US military to maintain aircraft carrier skills, under the Long Lead Specialist Skills Programme.

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[68490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to tackle the shortage of engineers needed to support Royal Navy carrier strike capability.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Royal Navy employs a range of mechanisms to attract and develop engineers including apprenticeship schemes and staged remunerative awards, as well as an active engagement in a University Technical Colleges affiliation programme aimed at assisting in the development of technically able young people.

■ **Armed Forces: Labour Turnover**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[68488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to retain Royal Navy and RAF pilots.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Naval Service and Royal Air Force, like many employers in the UK aviation sector, utilise a combination of remunerative and non-remunerative measures to aid the retention of pilots within the Service.

■ **Army**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[68814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which units and elements of units are currently attached to 3rd (UK) Division.

Mike Penning:

The Regular and Reserve units that form the Order of Battle for the 3rd (United Kingdom) Division are provided below:

HQ 20 ARMOURED INFANTRY BRIGADE

Royal Dragoon Guards

4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Queen's Royal Hussars

1 Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

5th Battalion The Rifles

HQ 1 Armoured Infantry Brigade

Royal Tank Regiment

4th Battalion The Rifles

Household Cavalry Regiment

Royal Wessex Yeomanry

1st Battalion The Mercian Regiment

1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers

HQ 12 Armoured Infantry Brigade

1st Battalion The Scots Guards

1st Battalion The Royal Welsh

The King's Royal Hussars

The Royal Lancers

1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment

HQ 101 Logistic Brigade

1 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

3 Armoured Close Support Battalion Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers

3 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

4 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

9 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

10 Queen's Own Gurkha Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

27 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

HQ 20 ARMOURED INFANTRY BRIGADE

4 Armoured Medical Regiment

5 Armoured Medical Regiment

156 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

154 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

157 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

151 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps

1 Armoured Medical Regiment

4 Armoured Close Support Battalion Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers

6 Armoured Close Support Battalion Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers

103 Battalion Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers

105 Battalion Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers

■ **Army: Reorganisation**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[68812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which units will be disbanded under Army 2020 Refine in order to free up personnel.

Mike Penning:

I refer the hon. Member to the written statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 15 December 2016 (HCWS367).

Attachments:

1. Strategic Defence and Security Review- Army [Hansard Extract - 15 December 2016 HCWS367.docx]

■ **HMS Queen Elizabeth**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[68489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on what date the inaugural sailing of the first Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carrier is planned to take place.

Harriett Baldwin:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 7 February 2017 to Question 62463 to the hon. Member for Portsmouth South (Flick Drummond).

Attachments:

1. 62463 - WQnA extract on HMS Queen Elizabeth [62463_WQnA_extract_on_HMS_Queen_Elizabeth.pdf]

Douglas Chapman:

[\[68788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the cost is of applying thermal metal coating on the landing areas of HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Harriett Baldwin:

The total cost of applying thermal metal spray to the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers includes the development and build of application equipment, preparation of the flight deck surface and application of the coating.

I am withholding the detailed cost information, as its disclosure at this time would prejudice the commercial interests of the Ministry of Defence.

■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

Steven Paterson:

[\[68430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what contingency provision his Department has made for changes in the cost to the UK of Lightning II jets as a result of changes in the number of orders for such aircraft worldwide.

Harriett Baldwin:

We remain committed to the F-35 programme and, as per the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015, we plan to buy 138 Lightning aircraft over the life of the programme. The Department has appropriate contingency in place to ensure that the F-35 programme delivers on time and to the approved cost.

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[68436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether plans exist to increase the number of Royal Navy and Royal Air Force F-35 pilots trained in the US above the numbers already planned.

Harriett Baldwin:

There is no requirement at this time to increase the planned numbers of UK F-35 Lightning pilots being trained in the US.

EDUCATION

■ Children: Behavioural Disorders

Ben Howlett:

[\[68064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance her Department makes available to teachers on supporting children who display behavioural problems resulting from phenylketonuria.

Edward Timpson:

We know how important it is that children with medical conditions are supported to enjoy a full education. That is why we introduced a new duty to require governing bodies to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions and have provided statutory guidance outlining schools' responsibilities in this area.

The Department has also issued advice on behaviour and discipline for schools. This advice is clear that schools should assess the needs of pupils who present with persistently difficult behaviour. We make clear that schools should consider whether the continuing disruptive behaviour is a result of unmet educational or other needs. At this point, the school should consider whether a multi-agency assessment is necessary.

■ **Children: Protection**

Mr David Lammy:

[\[68772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many staff her Department seconded to local authorities to support in the assessment of needs of children in families who are seeking section 17 of the Children Act 1989 in 2016.

Edward Timpson:

Our statutory guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015), is clear that where a local authority undertakes an assessment under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 such an assessment will be carried out by a social worker.

Department for Education (DfE) officials take up a range of secondment opportunities, including in some instances to local authority children's services, as part of gaining experience of frontline services to aid the development of better policy. However, DfE has not seconded any staff to local authorities in order to support the assessment of children's needs under section 17 and the Department does not anticipate that any DfE officials would be directly involved in supporting such assessments.

Department officials do support local authorities to deliver improvements to children's social care services. Such support may be provided in order to respond to inadequate performance in local areas or to help develop and deliver innovative new approaches to delivering such services.

Mr David Lammy:

[\[68779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on how many occasions officials in her Department supported local authorities in assessing children's needs in families who are seeking Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 in 2016.

Edward Timpson:

Our statutory guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015), is clear that where a local authority undertakes an assessment under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 such an assessment will be carried out by a social worker.

Department for Education (DfE) officials take up a range of secondment opportunities, including in some instances to local authority children's services, as part of gaining experience of frontline services to aid the development of better policy. However, DfE has not seconded any staff to local authorities in order to support the assessment of children's needs under section 17 and the Department does not

anticipate that any DfE officials would be directly involved in supporting such assessments.

Department officials do support local authorities to deliver improvements to children's social care services. Such support may be provided in order to respond to inadequate performance in local areas or to help develop and deliver innovative new approaches to delivering such services.

■ Children: Sanitary Products

Tracy Brabin:

[\[68295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance her Department has issued to schools on the provision of sanitary products for children from a low income background.

Edward Timpson:

The Department has not issued any guidance on the provision of sanitary products in schools.

Schools have discretion over how they use their funding and if they wish to make these products available to disadvantaged pupils they are free to do so.

■ Citizenship: Education

Andrew Stephenson:

[\[68492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of the inclusion of citizenship education in Key Stages 3 and 4 of the National Curriculum on understanding of democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld.

Nick Gibb:

The Citizenship programmes of study were revised to focus on the core knowledge of citizenship such as democracy, Government, and how laws are made and upheld. They are designed to prepare pupils to play a full and active part in society. The Department has not made a formal assessment of these changes.

When inspecting schools, Ofsted considers the breadth and balance of the curriculum, including provision for pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This includes how pupils develop and demonstrate knowledge and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain. Ofsted have strengthened their inspection frameworks so that inspectors assess how well all schools protect pupils from the risks of extremism and radicalisation, and promote fundamental British values. High quality citizenship teaching can help schools to meet their obligations to protect pupils from radicalisation and promote fundamental British values. It can also help schools build pupils' resilience to extremism through knowledge of important issue to enable them to question information, weigh arguments, and make reasoned judgments.

■ Class Sizes

Stephen Timms:

[68733]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average pupil to teacher ratio was in (a) primary and (b) secondary schools in (i) the UK, (ii) Greater London and (iii) the London Borough of Newham in each year since 2010.

Nick Gibb:

The following table provides the average pupil to teacher ratio in state funded primary and state funded secondary schools in England[1], Greater London and London Borough of Newham in November each year from 2011 to 2015.

	PRIMARY			SECONDARY		
	England	Greater London	London Borough of Newham	England	Greater London	London Borough of Newham
2011 [2]	20.5	20.2	19.1	14.9	14.1	14.6
2012	20.5	20.2	18.9	14.9	14.0	14.3
2013	20.5	19.7	17.8	15.0	14.0	13.4[3]
2014	20.4	19.4	17.7	15.0	14.0	13.93
2015	20.5	19.5	17.4	15.3	14.3	14.1

SOURCE: SCHOOL WORKFORCE CENSUS

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

[1] The Pupil Teacher Ratios for England and Greater London are calculated by dividing the total FTE number of pupils on roll in schools in each year by the total number of FTE teachers in schools in each year. Where schools are not open on Census (January) they are excluded. Schools that do not provide either pupil or teacher figures are also excluded. See School Workforce Census methodology document for further information: Methodology: SFR21/2016

[2] Figures prior to 2011 are not available in a comparable format.

[3] The 2013 figure for the London Borough of Newham is based on 17 out of the 19 open schools. The 2014 figure for the London borough of Newham is based on 19 out of 20 open schools. All other figures for London Borough of Newham are based on the full set of schools that were open at the time.

■ Class Sizes: York

Rachael Maskell:

[\[68496\]](#)

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

Nick Gibb:

The following table provides the average pupil to teacher ratio in state funded primary and state funded secondary schools in York and England[1] as reported by schools in each year in November from 2011 to 2015.

	PRIMARY		SECONDARY	
	York	England	York	England
2011 [2]	21.9	20.5	16.1	14.9
2012	21.2	20.5	14.4	14.9
2013	25.4[3]	20.5	15.0	15.0
2014	21.6	20.4	15.3	15.0
2015	25.9	20.5	17.0	15.3

SOURCE: SCHOOL WORKFORCE CENSUS

[1] the england figures are calculated by dividing the total fte number of pupils on roll in schools in each year by the total number of teachers in schools in each year. where schools are not open on census day, for both the school workforce census (november), and the school census (january) they are excluded. schools that do not provide either pupil or teacher figures are also excluded. see school workforce census methodology document for further information: [methodology: sfr21/2016](#)

[2] figures prior to 2011 are not available in a comparable format.

[3] this figure is based on 50 out of the 52 open schools in york in 2013. all other figures for york are based on the full set of schools that were open at the time.

■ Education Funding Agency

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

[\[68657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that the Education Funding Authority receives value for money when purchasing sites for new schools.

Edward Timpson:

Costs are controlled very carefully when purchasing sites for free schools and we consider the specific needs of the schools on a case by case basis when allocating

funding. The Education Funding Agency does not pay in excess of what a site is worth or purchase expensive sites if there are better value for money alternatives in the area. The Department is establishing an arm's length body, LocatED, to provide additional commercial expertise in securing value for money sites for free schools. Value for money is judged on the whole development cost of a free school, including the site purchase and the subsequent construction or conversion of an existing building.

■ Education: Standards

Mr Peter Bone:

[68212]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to improve academic achievement in (a) Northamptonshire and (b) England and Wales.

Nick Gibb:

The Government is committed to ensuring that all pupils, regardless of their background, receive a high quality education. We are, therefore, working with local authorities, teaching schools, and academy trusts to ensure that schools are receiving appropriate support. As part of that support, Regional Schools Commissioners have a remit to tackle poor performance in schools and where necessary, move them into strong multi academy trusts.

I have met hon. friends from Northamptonshire, Martin Post as Regional Schools Commissioner for North West London and South Central region, and the Director of Children's Service for Northamptonshire to discuss education standards in Northamptonshire's schools.

In England, we have identified and are providing support for coasting schools that require it. We have recently consulted on proposals to enable more good school places to be created in the consultation document 'Schools That Work for Everyone'. In addition, we have announced a new £140 million Strategic School Improvement Fund for academies and maintained schools, which will ensure that we target school improvement resources and support from teaching schools and National Leaders of Education where it is most needed.

■ Educational Institutions: Defibrillators

Neil Coyle:

[68267]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans her Department has to ensure the provision of defibrillators in educational establishments.

Edward Timpson:

The government knows how important swift access to defibrillators can be in cases of cardiac arrest, which is why we are encouraging schools to purchase a defibrillator as part of their first-aid equipment. To help enable schools to do so, the Department for Education have negotiated a deal with NHS Supply Chain to offer defibrillators to schools at a reduced cost, and have published advice on installing and maintaining defibrillators on school premises.

Since the scheme was launched in 2014, 1982 defibrillators have been purchased through this route. We continue to work with the sector to raise awareness of the scheme and to refine our guidance to schools on installing and maintaining these devices.

■ Educational Institutions: Mental Health Services

Grahame Morris:

[68596]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support her Department has made available to schools, colleges and universities to provide access to mental health services to students (a) throughout the academic year and (b) at exam times.

Edward Timpson:

Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing is a priority for this Government and we know that schools, colleges and universities can play an important role in promoting good mental wellbeing at all times during the academic cycle.

To support schools we have provided a range of information, support, advice and guidance. This includes guidance on how to ensure school-based counselling services achieve the best outcomes for all students, including vulnerable children and young people www.gov.uk/government/publications/counselling-in-schools ; guidance on teaching about mental health within their PSHE curriculum www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources?ResourceTypeID=3 ; and providing teachers with access to free on-line support on a range of mental health issues via MindEd www.minded.org.uk.

However schools and colleges are not mental health specialists and need support from mental health services. Many schools and college already work closely with local services. To help develop these links further we are extending our joint training pilot for education and mental health professionals in up to 1200 more schools and colleges across 20 areas.

We are also undertaking a programme of randomised control trials of promising preventative programmes that support positive mental health, as well as launching a programme of activity on peer support. In addition, we are working closely with the Department of Health, which is funding the provision of 'Mental Health First Aid' training to all secondary schools over the next 3 years.

Higher Education Institutions are autonomous bodies, independent from the Government. There is a great deal of guidance and support available to institutions, and many offer advice and counselling services and adopt local systems to help identify students who may be finding it hard to cope. The Universities UK's 'Wellbeing in Higher Education' programme focuses on the need for a whole university approach to mental health and wellbeing. This programme is already underway, working in partnership with Public Health England, the Higher Education Funding Council for England, expert voices from student services and activist charities such as Student Minds.

Examinations are an important part of education and a vital stepping-stone to future success in life, whatever route young people choose to take. Excellent teaching is the key to ensuring pupils feel fully prepared and ready for exams, and schools should have strong pastoral support in place to help pupils deal with any worries they might have throughout the year. Teachers know when young people are doing well and if there is an issue, and they are best placed to work with young people and their families to respond to signs of stress and to help them access the appropriate support.

■ Female Genital Mutilation

Michael Gove:

[68103]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to protect girls from female genital mutilation.

Edward Timpson:

The Department for Education's vision statement, Putting Children First, published in July 2016, set out our commitment to protecting children from all forms of abuse, including female genital mutilation (FGM). The Children and Social Work Bill, currently before Parliament, will help us to deliver the change needed to secure a system that meets children's needs.

As well as that wide-ranging work on safeguarding, we are currently funding two voluntary sector organisations working to safeguard girls from FGM. The Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development (FORWARD) and the Midaye Somali Development Network have been allocated a total of over £600,000 for work from December 2016 until March 2018.

On 1 March the Secretary of State made a statement to this House announcing her intention to put Relationships and Sex Education on a statutory footing. There will be a comprehensive programme of engagement, followed by full public consultation, and I know that those campaigning on issues such as FGM will want to contribute to that discussion.

■ Free School Meals

Rachael Maskell:

[68510]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children in (a) York, (b) North Yorkshire, (c) Yorkshire and the Humber and (d) England received free school meals in each year since 2005-06.

Edward Timpson:

Data for the number of pupils eligible for free school meals in each school in England are available in the underlying data in each of the annual 'Schools, pupils and their characteristics' statistical releases.[1]

The number of pupils attending schools in York, North Yorkshire, Yorkshire and the Humber and England who were known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals in each year since 2006 is given in the below table.

YEAR	YORK LOCAL AUTHORITY	NORTH YORKSHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITY	YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	ENGLAND
2006[2]	2,176	5,914	120,070	1,119,220
2007 ²	2,104	5,947	115,680	1,089,030
2008[3]	2,037	5,951	117,700	1,103,310
2009 ³	2,095	6,047	119,450	1,124,720
2010	2,242	6,999	129,171	1,215,423
2011	2,394	7,083	132,120	1,262,855
2012	2,483	7,187	136,581	1,286,318
2013	2,461	7,133	140,467	1,311,496
2014	2,289	6,534	138,613	1,261,899
2015	1,946	6,449	131,119	1,195,641
2016	2,023	5,920	126,580	1,142,043

Source: School Census, January of each year

[1] www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-and-pupil-numbers - click on the relevant year and then 'underlying data.' The data are contained in files with 'Schools_Pupils' in the title.

[2] Excluding special schools and pupils in alternative provision.

[3] Excluding pupils in alternative provision.

■ Free School Meals: Pendle

Andrew Stephenson:

[68703]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children in Pendle were eligible for free school meals on the latest date for which figures are available.

Edward Timpson:

Data for the number of pupils eligible for free school meals in each school in England are available in the underlying data in the annual 'Schools, pupils and their characteristics' statistical release. The most recent figures, from January 2016, are published at:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2016

The data are contained in the underlying data file, with 'Schools_Pupils' in the title.

■ Free Schools and University Technical Colleges: Closures

Lucy Powell:

[67037]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which (a) free schools and (b) university technical colleges have closed since 2010; what the cost to the public purse was of each of those closures; and what each of those sites had been used for since each such closure.

Edward Timpson:

Since 2010, six free schools and three university technical colleges (UTC) have closed. Please see list below for details of these confirmed closures and how the site has since been used.

The primary objective of the department when making a decision to close a school is to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for pupils and to secure value for money for the taxpayer. The department's published accounts explain any assets that were written off because they could not be reused or recovered.

SCHOOL NAME	TYPE	DATE CLOSED	DETAILS OF HOW SCHOOL SITE HAS BEEN USED SINCE CLOSURE
Discovery New School	Primary	3/4/2014	The site was acquired from Crawley Borough Council on a peppercorn lease. This site is now being subleased to another school, TBAP Residential Broadfield Park, which is part of TBAP Multi-Academy Trust.
The Durham Free School	Secondary	27/3/2015	The temporary site for the school was acquired from Durham County Council on a peppercorn lease. Following closure the site was returned to Durham County Council.
Black Country UTC	UTC	28/8/2015	The site was acquired from Walsall Council on a peppercorn lease. Following closure the site was returned to Walsall Council.
Stockport Technical School	Secondary	28/8/2015	The site was acquired from a private vendor. Since the closure of Stockport Technical School the EFA has been exploring options to sublease the site.

SCHOOL NAME	TYPE	DATE CLOSED	DETAILS OF HOW SCHOOL SITE HAS BEEN USED SINCE CLOSURE
Dawes Lane Academy	Alternative Provision	28/8/2015	A site was not acquired for the school. Dawes Lane Academy offered alternative provision for pupils attending schools in the wider trust, School Partnership Trust Academies (SPTA). This provision was based in the trust's existing buildings.
Hackney University Technical College	UTC	28/8/2015	The site was acquired from Hackney College on a peppercorn lease. The site is currently being used as a temporary site for The Olive School Hackney.
St Michael's Catholic Secondary School	Secondary	31/8/2016	The site was acquired from Cornwall Council. The site is now being used by the Cambourne International and Science Academy.
Central Bedfordshire UTC	UTC	31/8/2016	The site was acquired from Central Bedfordshire Council on a peppercorn lease. The site is currently being used by Bedford College for former UTC students to complete their studies and by the Academy of Central Bedfordshire to expand its Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).
Southwark Free School*	Primary	31/3/2017	The temporary site was acquired from Southwark Council on a peppercorn lease. The temporary site was returned to Southwark Council. The permanent site was acquired from a private vendor and will be used for educational purposes from 2018.

* We have included Southwark Free School in this list. Formal closure is expected to be finalised at the end of this month and there are no pupils remaining at this school.

■ Free Schools: Construction

Angela Rayner:

[68176]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much her Department has spent on land purchases for new free school sites in each fiscal year since 2010-11.

Edward Timpson:

There are currently 430 open free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges. When at full capacity, these schools will create over 225,000 new school places. The Department provides new free school sites on either a lease or purchases basis, depending on the local market and specific requirements of each school, to ensure value for money. Up to August 2016, the Department spent £863 million on the purchase of 175 freehold sites.

For reasons of commercial confidentiality the capital costs of individual schools, including individual land purchase costs, are not disclosed before completion and overall costs are finalised. Capital funding for open free schools, UTCs and studio schools, where costs have been finalised, are published on Gov.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-funding-for-open-free-schools>.

Additional finalised capital data is due to be published in the coming months.

GCE A-level**Grahame Morris:**[\[68555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that students taking reformed A-Level courses have access to resources and revision material to prepare for exams.

Nick Gibb:

Access to resources and revision material to help pupils prepare for exams is a matter for schools and colleges. It is for teachers and schools to decide which resources to use or recommend to their pupils.

Offences against Children**Michael Gove:**[\[68083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many serious case reviews commissioned in 2015 have not been published in full.

Michael Gove:[\[68084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many serious case reviews were published in full in 2016.

Michael Gove:[\[68088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many serious case reviews commissioned in 2014 have not been published in full.

Edward Timpson:

Where a serious case has occurred (in which abuse or neglect is known or suspected, and either a child has died, or a child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way local agencies have worked together to safeguard the child), it is the responsibility of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards

(LSCB) in a local authority area to decide whether or not to initiate a serious case review (SCR).

Ofsted collects and publishes data on notifiable incidents, and of these, data on the initiation of serious case reviews (SCRs).

Information on the publication and non-publication of SCRs is not available in the format requested. However, the following latest statistics are provided in the third report of the national panel of independent experts on Serious Case Reviews, which advises Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) on the initiation and publication of SCRs:

PERIOD	COMPLETED SCRs RECEIVED BY PANEL	SCRs WHERE PANEL CONSIDERED CASE FOR NON- PUBLICATION	SCRs WHERE PANEL AGREED WITH CASE FOR NON- PUBLICATION	SCRs WHERE PANEL DISAGREED WITH NON- PUBLICATION	SCRs WHERE PANEL AGREED TO ANONYMOUS PUBLICATION ON NSPCC WEBSITE	SCRs WHERE PANEL AGREED TO A SUMMARY PUBLICATION
01/07/13 to 30/06/14	74	7	4	0	2	1
01/07/14 to 30/06/15	80	16	8	4	3	1
01/07/15 to 30/06/16	110	17	4	9	3	1

Under the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)*, LSCBs should complete an SCR within six months. The current statutory guidance does not specify a timescale for publication of the SCR report.

■ Overseas Students: Loans

Mrs Anne Main:

[\[67722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 65926, on overseas students: loans, for what reasons 4.8 per cent of borrowers residing in the UK are not required to repay their student loans.

Joseph Johnson:

Student loan borrowers who are liable to repay their loan and known to be in the UK can be categorised as 'status that does not require repayment at this point' for a number of reasons. Most typically these are borrowers who were known by Student Loans Company to have been resident in the UK and had confirmed they were not working, or HMRC or DWP advised that they had been receiving benefits.

Further information on how the repayment statuses are categorised can be found in the 'Notes for Users' section of the Statistical First Release.

<http://www.slc.co.uk/media/7594/slcsfr012016.pdf>

■ Primary Education: Sports

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[68369]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the allocation of PE and Sport Premium funds to primary schools in the 2015-16 and 2016-17 academic years; and if she will make a statement.

Edward Timpson:

We want all pupils to be healthy and active. This is why since 2013 the government has provided ring-fenced funding through the Primary PE and Sport Premium to help improve the quality of PE provision.

The funding allocations for the premium for academic years 2013-14 to 2016-17 are listed in the table below:

YEARS	FUNDING
2013-14	£158.9m
2014-15	£159.1m
2015-16	£159.8m
2016-17	£160.6m

From September 2017 revenue from the soft drinks industry levy will be used to double the funding to £320 million a year, enabling schools to further improve the quality and breadth of PE and sport that they offer.

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[68370]

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

Edward Timpson:

The Department does not hold that information, as the Government does not set a target for how much curriculum time schools must dedicate to Physical Education (PE) or specify the sports and activities that must be taught in schools.

PE remains a compulsory subject at all four key stages in the national curriculum, and we have given schools the freedom to deliver a diverse and challenging PE curriculum that best suits the needs of their pupils.

The Chief Medical Officer has stated that children should be active for 60 minutes a day (of which 30 minutes should be during school time), and we are supporting this through a number of initiatives, including the primary PE and sport premium.

Since 2013, we have invested over £600 million to improve PE and school sport in primary schools through the primary PE and sport premium. In an independent evaluation, 84% of schools reported an increase in pupil engagement in PE during curricular time and in the levels of participation in extra-curricular activities. Research has also shown that primary schools are on average now delivering almost two hours of PE to pupils each week since the introduction of the premium.

But we know there is more to do, which is why we will also be doubling the premium from £160m to £320m per year from September 2017, using money raised by the sugar soft drinks industry levy.

■ Primary Education: Teachers

Mr Philip Hollobone:

[68626]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will work with the Department for Education to draw up and enact an action plan to recruit and retain more male teachers in primary schools.

Nick Gibb

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

Recent figures show that between 2011/12 and 2015/16 the number of male primary teachers (FTE) has increased from 28,000 to 33,400. As a percentage, this has increased from 14.1% in 2011 to 15.3% in 2015.

The proportion of male entrants to primary postgraduate initial teacher training has remained broadly stable since 2010/11.

There is more to do, and we have a range of measures in place to attract and retain excellent teachers, no matter what their gender, including:

Offering a range of bursaries and scholarships worth up to £30,000 tax free to trainees in 2016/17.

Introducing pay flexibilities and putting schools in charge of teacher training through School Direct.

Expanding Teach First into every region of the country.

Supporting schools to retain good teachers by making significant policy interventions in areas such as improving pupil behaviour and tackling unnecessary workload for teachers.

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

■ Pupils: Dyslexia

Grahame Morris:

[\[68647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will provide additional funding to schools to support students with dyslexia.

Edward Timpson:

All schools are provided with funding to support children with special educational needs, including those with dyslexia.

In addition to funding through the Dedicated Schools Grant, since 2010, the Government has invested over £19 million to develop the capacity, skills and knowledge of the special educational needs and disability workforce, in schools; and £6 million specifically to train teachers working with children with dyslexia. This funding also supported the establishment of a robust framework to ensure these specialist teachers have the right training; and a National Scholarship Fund, which enabled staff to further develop their practice for supporting children with Special Educational Needs.

From April 2016 until March 2018, we are providing the British Dyslexia Association with £1.25m to deliver training to teachers' to support early identification of learning difficulties, including dyslexia.

■ Schools: Asbestos

Rachel Reeves:

[\[68404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the Education Funding Agency plans to carry out asbestos surveys where further investigations are warranted ahead of the purchases of new school buildings.

Edward Timpson:

Where management or other prior surveys are available, the Education Funding Agency (EFA) will consider these before acquisition. Depending on the type and scale of works, the EFA will also carry out more intrusive surveys, where landlord's consent can be obtained.

■ Schools: Hospitals

Stuart Andrew:

[\[68495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure regional funding equality in the provision of education for children who are in hospital and requiring statutory entitlement to education.

Edward Timpson:

We have been consulting on a national funding formula for high needs, to be implemented in 2018-19. As part of consultation, we have confirmed that for the time being we will continue to distribute funding for the education of children in hospital on

the basis of local authorities' current spending. These amounts are included in the high needs block of the dedicated schools grant that local authorities receive from the Education Funding Agency.

We are exploring with representatives from hospital schools and others how to devise a fairer distribution of funding for hospital education in future. In the meantime, we will continue to make any funding adjustments needed from year to year to reflect recent or forthcoming changes in hospital provision for children. The Education Funding Agency is currently finalising the hospital education adjustments that will be included in local authorities' dedicated schools grant allocations for 2017-18.

■ Schools: South Cambridgeshire

Heidi Allen:

[68233]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to close the deprivation attainment gap in South Cambridgeshire constituency.

Edward Timpson:

We are committed to making this a country where everyone has a fair chance to go as far as his or her talent and hard work will allow. The pupil premium provides schools with significant additional funding - £2.5bn this year alone – to raise the achievement of their disadvantaged pupils and so close the attainment gap. Our guarantee to maintain current per-pupil funding levels for the rest of this Parliament will ensure schools continue to have the support they need to improve disadvantaged pupils' outcomes.

This year, disadvantaged pupils in South Cambridgeshire will benefit from £2.6 million in pupil premium funding.

■ Schools: Sports

Stephen Timms:

[68461]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much has been allocated in PE and Sport Premium funds to schools in (a) Greater London and (b) the London Borough of Newham in each year since they were introduced.

Edward Timpson:

We want all pupils to be healthy and active. This is why since 2013 the government has invested over £600m of ring-fenced funding to primary schools to improve PE through the Primary PE and Sport Premium.

Since it was introduced, the Department has published online premium allocations received by each school for each financial year.

Information relating to FY 2016-17 can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pe-and-sport-premium-funding-conditions-for-2016-to-2017#history>

Information relating to FY 2015-16 can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pe-and-sport-premium-conditions-of-grant-for-2015-to-2016>

Information relating to FY 2014-15 can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pe-and-sport-premium-allocations-for-2014-to-2015>

Information relating to FY 2013-14 can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pe-and-sport-grant-2013-to-2014-allocation-breakdown>

Justin Tomlinson:

[68493]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how her Department plans to allocate the additional Sport Premium funding announced in Budget 2016.

Edward Timpson:

We want all pupils to be healthy and active. This is why since 2013 the government has invested over £600m of ring-fenced funding to primary schools to improve PE through the Primary PE and Sport Premium.

As announced in Budget 2016, from September 2017 revenue from the soft drinks industry levy will be used to double the funding for the Premium to £320 million a year, enabling schools to further improve the quality and breadth of PE and sport that they offer.

We are currently reviewing how best to allocate the doubled funding for September 2017 onwards, and will announce further details in due course.

■ Students: Grants

Tracy Brabin:

[68401]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if her Department will make an assessment of the effect of the abolition of maintenance grants in 2016 on the (a) emotional and (b) financial wellbeing of students.

Joseph Johnson:

Students starting full-time courses in the 2016/17 Academic Year on the lowest incomes have benefited from an additional 10.3% of upfront living costs support when compared to the previous academic year. A full equality analysis of changes to higher education student finance for 2016/17, including the switch from maintenance grants to loans, was published on GOV.UK in November 2015. [Higher Education Student Finance Equality Analysis](#)

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Chemicals: Hazardous Substances

Mrs Anne Main: [\[68400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the European Commission on the status of phthalates; and what steps her Department plans to take to recognise DEHP, DIBP, DBP and BBP phthalates as endocrine-disrupting chemicals for human health.

Mrs Anne Main: [\[68459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the implications for her Department's policies of the EU REACH process identification of four synthetic chemicals, DEHP, DIBP, DBP and BBP, as endocrine-disrupting chemicals for human health; and if she will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The European Commission has now recognised the four substances as endocrine-disrupting chemicals for human health. This scientific assessment was supported by the UK and is in line with our policy approach towards chemicals management.

■ Glyphosate: Safety

Victoria Atkins: [\[68413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the scientific evidence on the safety of glyphosate to humans and its continued use in farming.

George Eustice:

In November 2015, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) reassessed glyphosate to take into account scientific developments since it was approved and identified no safety concerns. UK experts agree that glyphosate meets the safety standards required to be approved for use in farming.

■ Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011: Reviews

Jim Fitzpatrick: [\[68633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 15 July 2016 to Question 42492, on Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011, when her Department will begin the five-year review of those regulations.

George Eustice:

Defra began its review of the Trade in Animals and Related Products (TARP) Regulations 2011 with formal and informal consultation with customers in October 2015. We now anticipate completion in Spring 2017.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE■ **Agriculture and Water: Israel****Rebecca Pow:**[\[68364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent cooperation his Department has had with Israel on agriscience and water science; and how the UK has benefited from Israeli innovation in that area.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK has a strong relationship with Israel with regards to science and innovation. Our Science and Innovation Team in our Embassy in Tel Aviv are aiming to hold two symposia on water and agri-sciences in the coming year, and are exploring fellowships and lectureships in these fields.

■ **Andargachew Tsege****Kerry McCarthy:**[\[68719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the merits of negotiating Andy Tsege's return to the UK.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

[Holding answer 24 March 2017]: We currently consider calling for his release would risk the progress we have made in his case, including legal access and our own access to him. Our consular priorities continue to be Mr Tsege's wellbeing, his access to legal representation, and to ensure that the death sentence is not carried out. We keep our case strategy under regular review.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Overseas Workers****Emily Thornberry:**[\[68750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many members of staff his Department employs overseas in roles requiring an ability to speak the local language; in which countries such staff are based; and in which languages such staff are required to be proficient.

Boris Johnson:

As of February 2017, the FCO has 648 speaker slots across 111 countries. Officers in speaker slots complete a period of full time language training in advance of taking up their role overseas. This training enables officers to reach C1 Operational level (equivalent to degree level) in the language spoken in the country to which they are posted.

Currently 65 per cent of full-time language training is in 5 languages (Arabic, French, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish). In addition, along with Farsi, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Turkish, which are the other priority languages in our Priority Skills Statement, the figure increases to 80 per cent. Full-time language training is also provided in a further 36 languages.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[68751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many members of staff his Department employs overseas in roles based in the Middle East and North Africa region in each year since 2010; and how many such staff were in roles requiring an ability to speak a local language.

Boris Johnson:

The following numbers of UK-based staff were employed in overseas roles in the Middle East and North Africa region in each Financial Year since 2012/13. As reported in the 2012/13 FCO Annual Report and Accounts at page 29 in February 2013, the FCO realigned previous staffing figures to better reflect guidance issued by the Office of National Statistics, for example it excluded all staff working for the UK Border Agency (UKBA) overseas, and staff working for Wilton Park and FCO Services. This means that we are unable to provide reliable comparable figures prior to this date.

UK based staff positions in Middle East and North African posts:

2012/13	219
2103/14	197
2014/15	181
2015/16	219
28 Feb 2017	239

The numbers of speaker positions is as follows:

March 2015	78
March 2016	95
March 2017	93

Emily Thornberry:

[\[68753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many members of his Department's staff employed in overseas roles were based in the Russian and Eastern Europe region in each year since 2010; and how many such staff were in roles requiring the ability to speak a local language.

Boris Johnson:

The following numbers of UK-based staff were employed in overseas roles in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region (including Russia) in each Financial Year since 2012/13. As reported in the 2012/13 FCO Annual Report and Accounts on page 29 in February 2013, the FCO realigned previous staffing figures to better reflect guidance issued by the Office of National Statistics, for example it excluded all staff working for the UK Border Agency (UKBA) overseas, and staff working for Wilton Park and FCO Services. This means that we are unable to provide reliable comparable figures prior to this date.

2012/13	89
2013/14	74
2014/15	74
2015/16	76
2016/17	77

The number of designated language speaker slots in this region was as follows.

2014/15	50
2015/16	57
2016/17	61

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Procurement**

Jon Trickett:

[\[67755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many contracts procured by his Department and its arms-length bodies are covered by TUPE regulations in each of the last three financial years.

Sir Alan Duncan:

In the FCO, Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations (TUPE) are included as standard in commercial contracts. Clauses are excluded only if the specific contract does not require it and this is agreed between the parties. In the last three years, we are only aware of TUPE regulations being applicable in five major contracts (defined as those with a whole life cost of over £15m).

In the last three years, FCO Services are only aware of TUPE being active in four major contracts (defined as those with a value of more than £2m) , two of which have since expired.

TUPE has been included as a clause within an additional five major (>£2m) contracts accessed through Crown Commercial frameworks, two of which have since expired.

Since April 2014, one contract was procured for the British Council in the UK for catering, where TUPE regulations apply.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Staff

Emily Thornberry:

[\[68749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many of his Department's staff passed a language examination at (a) Extensive, (b) Operational, (c) Functional and (d) Confidence levels in each year since 2010.

Boris Johnson:

In 2013, the FCO designated all speaker slots across the network as minimum C1 Operational level. This is equivalent to degree level. Officers no longer take exams at Functional/ Intermediate or Confidence levels.

The number of officers who have passed the exams at the requested levels is as follows:

	C1/C2	FUNCTIONAL	CONFIDENCE
2010	100	57	119
2011	96	57	118
2012	111	78	108
2013	90		
2014	126		
2015	121		
2016	154		

■ Iran: Baha'i Faith

Bob Blackman:

[\[68221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on Baha'i-owned shops being sealed by government authorities in the city of Alborz, Iran in November 2016 and remaining closed; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Government regularly raises human rights concerns with the Iranian government, including the continued persecution of religious minorities and the treatment of the Baha'i community. We are aware that the Iranian authorities shut down a number of Baha'i businesses in response to their closure to observe Baha'i holy days in November 2016. This forms part of a worrying trend of persecution of the Baha'i faith in Iran. We call on Iran to cease harassment of all religious minorities and to fulfil its international and domestic obligations to allow freedom of religion to all Iranians.

■ Israel: Deportation

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[68766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Government (a) has raised or (b) plans to raise with the Government of Israel the issue of deportations from Israel of activists who support a boycott of illegally occupied Palestinian territories.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

[Holding answer 24 March 2017]: We are seeking clarification from the Israeli government on the potential impact on British nationals. We have updated our travel advice to highlight this issue.

However, ultimately, Israel's immigration policy is a matter for the Israeli government. Israeli immigration officials, as mentioned in our travel advice, have the right to deport or refuse entry to anyone they wish. The UK's immigration policies and controls are similarly protected.

■ Royal Yacht

Patrick Grady:

[\[68551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to his contribution on 13 March 2017, to the debate on Budget Resolutions (HC Deb, col 84) and pursuant to the Answer of 18 October 2016 to Question 47643, whether he has held discussions with the Department for International Trade on the effect of a privately-funded royal yacht on securing trade deals.

Alok Sharma:

[Holding answer 23 March 2017]: The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) has not had any formal discussions with the Secretary of State for Department for International Trade, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for North Somerset (Dr Fox) on the effect of a privately-funded royal yacht for securing trade deals.

Patrick Grady:

[\[68552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to his contribution on 13 March 2017, to the debate on Budget Resolutions (HC Deb, col 84), whether he has had discussions with the private sector on the construction or commissioning of a new royal yacht.

Alok Sharma:

[Holding answer 23 March 2017]: There have been no formal discussions between the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) and the private sector on the construction or commissioning of a new royal yacht. A new royal yacht is not on the Government's agenda. If private money is raised, we wish donors well.

■ Serbia: Visits Abroad**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[68384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 22 February 2017 to Question 64051, on Serbia: visits abroad, whether the British Embassy in Belgrade was (a) informed prior to that visit and (b) involved in the planning and organisation of that visit.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The British Embassy in Belgrade was informed of the Foreign Secretary's visit in advance, and was involved in the planning and organisation of the visit.

HEALTH**■ Anorexia****Jim Shannon:**[\[68920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have been diagnosed with anorexia when aged (a) between 12 to 20, (b) between 21 to 30, (c) between 31 to 50 and (d) over 51 years of age in each of the last five years.

Nicola Blackwood:

The information is not held in the format requested.

■ Antibiotics: Drug Resistance**Mrs Theresa Villiers:**[\[68795\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what contingency plans the Government has made in the event of an anti-microbial resistance pandemic; and if he will place a copy of those plans in the Library.

Nicola Blackwood:

The United Kingdom Government has plans in place for responding to pandemic influenza and other infectious diseases. Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is not a single infectious disease as defined for the purposes of pandemic planning.

AMR is recognised as a long term risk and the numbers of infections complicated by it might rise markedly over a period of 20 years. It is in the National Security Risk Assessment which sets out the top risks likely to pose a threat to the UK in the next five to 20 years.

The Government is taking strong cross-government action to tackle AMR through the UK Five Year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy published in 2013. The strategy represents an ambitious programme to slow the development and spread of AMR taking a "One-Health" approach spanning people, animals, agriculture and the wider environment. This includes an ambition to halve inappropriate prescribing in the UK by 2020, mitigating the risks of increased resistance.

Antimicrobial resistance is a global problem. The Government's global leadership has helped secure a United Nations declaration on AMR and a commitment from the G20 to look at solutions to the market failure on the development of new antimicrobials.

■ Cardiovascular System

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[68687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the Government plans to establish an independent taskforce on lung health.

David Mowat:

There are no plans for the Government to establish an independent taskforce on lung health. However NHS England is continuing to work with clinicians, professional organisations and third sector organisations, including the British Lung Foundation and Asthma UK, to improve outcomes for patients suffering from common lung diseases including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, pneumonia and asthma.

■ Colorectal Cancer

Rebecca Pow:

[\[68366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the report of Bowel cancer UK on Lynch syndrome, published in February 2017, what steps have been taken to (a) identify people who have Lynch syndrome and (b) manage the risk to those people once they come under surveillance.

Rebecca Pow:

[\[68380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the implications for his policies on the identification and management of people with Lynch syndrome are of the findings of Bowel Cancer UK's report, entitled Lynch syndrome: Who's responsible, published in February 2017.

David Mowat:

In current NHS England commissioning practice, testing for Lynch syndrome in people with colorectal cancer is targeted using criteria based on family history and age of cancer onset to determine people at high risk.

New National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance recommends extending this offer to all people with colorectal cancer when they are first diagnosed. Offering tests to all people with colorectal cancer will need to be considered by NHS England as part of its policy development process. Each year, a number of new drugs, medical devices, tests and treatments in specialised services are put forward to NHS England. The promising proposals are considered by experts in the field, including doctors, public health experts and lay people. These groups, established by NHS England, are known as Clinical Reference Groups (CRGs). The CRGs make detailed assessments of the new treatments, tests and devices through Policy Working Groups.

The NICE guidance has been sent to the Genetic Medicine CRG and they have been asked to submit a Preliminary Policy Proposal and to identify a Clinical Lead for progressing the proposal.

The commissioning of services for people already diagnosed with Lynch Syndrome, including surveillance, generally sits with clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). CCGs are best placed to commission services to meet the needs of local populations, taking into account the best available evidence.

■ Department of Health: Freedom of Information

Andrew Gwynne: [\[68717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, on how many occasions his Department took longer than 30 working days to respond to a Freedom of Information request in each month since July 2016.

David Mowat:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 24 March to Question [68045](#).

■ Doctors

Grant Shapps: [\[68560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of reforming the General Medical Council's licensing rules to increase the general supply of doctors in public hospitals.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The General Medical Council (GMC) is consulting on proposals to introduce a United Kingdom Medical Licensing Assessment. This consultation closes in April. The Department will consider whether changes to the GMC's rules are required in light of the outcome of the consultation.

■ Domestic Accidents: Children

Kate Hollern: [\[68692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what information his Department holds on the number of injuries and mortalities caused by falls over child stair gates in the home in the last 12 months.

Nicola Blackwood:

Data on falls over child stair gates in the home are not centrally collected.

■ General Practitioners: Overseas Workers

Tom Brake: [\[68485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many and what proportion of GPs have left the UK to work abroad within (a) one, (b) two and (c) three years of completing their training in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The information requested is not held by the Department.

The General Medical Council (GMC) is the independent regulator of doctors in the United Kingdom. The GMC has confirmed that although it holds data on the number of doctors who have applied for a certificate of current professional status to work abroad, it does not hold data on the number of doctors registered to practise in the UK who actually go abroad to work in medicine.

■ General Practitioners: Surveys**Richard Fuller:**[\[68506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost to the public purse was of carrying out the GP Patient Survey in each of the last three years.

David Mowat:

The GP Patient Survey is conducted by an independent contractor on behalf of NHS England. The current contract (2016-19) is being delivered by Ipsos MORI, as was the previous contract (2013-16). It is not appropriate to provide the precise costs paid to the survey provider, as this is commercially sensitive information. Over the contract period 2013-16, the budget of the GP Patient Survey was approximately £4 million per year. For the current contract, which began in July 2016, the budget is approximately £3.5 million per year.

■ Intramedullary High Tibial Osteotomy**Jim Shannon:**[\[68923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether there are plans to make intramedullary high tibial osteotomy available on the NHS.

David Mowat:

Intramedullary high tibial osteotomy (IMHTO) is a new procedure used to treat early-stage knee arthritis. The procedure involves inserting metal nail in the tibia and extending it with a remote-controlled magnet to realign the bone to relieve pressure on the knee.

IMHTO is currently being trialled in a European-wide research study. Its wider availability would be subject to it having demonstrated its clinical and cost effectiveness in this trial and any further trials deemed necessary to assess whether it is safe and effective to use.

■ Meningitis**Fiona Bruce:**[\[68640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much the NHS spends each year on treatment of meningococcal B disease.

Nicola Blackwood:

This information is not collected centrally.

■ Mental Health Services: York**Rachael Maskell:** [\[68572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many full-time equivalent NHS (a) consultants, (b) junior doctors, (c) nurses, (d) other clinical staff and (e) staff in total were employed at NHS mental health units in the 2012 City of York council area in each year since 2012.

Rachael Maskell: [\[68576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many full-time equivalent NHS (a) consultants, (b) junior hospital doctors, (c) nurses and midwives, (d) other clinical staff and (e) staff in total were employed at York hospitals, excluding mental health units in each year since 2005.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The information is not available in the format requested.

It is not possible to define those employed at National Health Service mental health units because the delivery of services by NHS staff is only captured at trust level, not hospital or site level.

■ Neuromuscular Disorders**Stuart Andrew:** [\[68782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether Neurosciences centres fulfil the NHS England service specification for neurological care.

David Mowat:

The compliance level for the neurosciences specification is very high with only a small number of services requiring a provider action plan or commissioner action.

■ NHS: Reorganisation**Dr Sarah Wollaston:** [\[68688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which sustainability and transformation plans contain no mechanism for engaging schools and colleges as active stakeholders.

David Mowat:

This information is not held centrally. Local areas are responsible for engaging with the staff, patients and the public, as well as organisations which may include schools and colleges, to further develop their plans.

■ Ophthalmic Services**Nusrat Ghani:** [\[68349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the opportunities for improvements in ophthalmology departments as a result of sustainability and transformation plans.

Nusrat Ghani:

[68365]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether there are guidelines for the inclusion of the delivery of eye services within sustainability and transformation plans.

David Mowat:

The Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) are intended to be strategic proposals for how areas will deliver the Five Year Forward View, and the financial, health and wellbeing, and care and quality challenges in their locality. They are therefore high level, and do not address the delivery of every service.

STP footprints are not new, statutory organisations, but a new way of working. They do not change the existing accountabilities of National Health Service trusts, commissioners or local authorities. As such, existing commissioning arrangements remain in place for ophthalmology. It is expected that, where possible, individual clinical commissioning groups will commission services in a way that will ensure they are aligned to the goals of their wider STP.

The commissioning guidance for ophthalmic services can be accessed on the NHS England website:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/spec-services/npc-crg/group-d/d06/>

■ Pain

Richard Burden:

[68678]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent steps his Department has taken to encourage (a) understanding and (b) effective treatment of people with chronic pain conditions within the NHS.

David Mowat:

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; education in self-management techniques to aid symptom control may also be appropriate for some patients.

It is important that patients with the most serious pain management issues are able to access specialist care. In such circumstances a patient may be referred to a specialised pain management service where they can be cared for by an expert multidisciplinary team, access specialised pain management programmes and receive 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, back pain and neuropathic 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.

■ Trigeminal Neuralgia**Jim Shannon:**[\[68973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have been diagnosed with trigeminal neuralgia in the last 12 months.

David Mowat:

This information is not collected. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance estimates that the annual incidence of trigeminal neuralgia is four per 100,000 population.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Department for International Development: Brexit****Maria Eagle:**[\[68520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 6 March 2017 to Question 65645, on Department for International Development: Brexit, what (a) EU agencies and other organisations are within her Department's remit, (b) staff time was spent on engagement with those bodies and (c) financial resources were spent on engagement with those bodies in 2015-16.

James Wharton:

DFID works with the European Investment Bank (EIB), the EU's financial institution, on its external lending.

While we do not have a record of staff time spent on engagement with the Bank, my department does currently support two Seconded Experts within the EIB.

■ Developing Countries: Manufactured Goods**Mr Nigel Evans:**[\[68475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department plans to use some of the UK's aid budget to support the creation of processing plants to allow start-to-finish manufacture of chocolate and coffee in countries that provide the base products for fair-trade food items.

Rory Stewart:

The UK currently invests in supply chains through programmes like the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund and the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme. Support for in-country processing of basic commodities is a way to add value and support livelihoods in developing countries.

In the Economic Development Strategy launched in January 2017, DfID committed to take an increasingly dynamic approach to agriculture, including boosting agri-business and financing agricultural infrastructure, to provide strong foundations for inclusive growth. The specific support we provide to different countries and sectors will be tailored to local needs and priorities.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ UK Trade and Investment

Nicky Morgan:

[\[68381\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the methodology is by which the jobs estimates referred to in the reports by his Department and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, published in March 2017, as UK Trade and Investment Highlights were collated.

Greg Hands:

UK-US Trade & Investment Highlights is a report demonstrating the depth of the current commercial relationship between the UK and the US in each of the 50 states. For each state, an estimate of the value of goods and services exported to the UK was derived by combining (a) manufacturing exports data from the US Census Bureau, (b) agricultural output data from the US Department of Agriculture, (c) services exports data from the US Bureau of Economic Analysis and (d) data on the geographical concentration of services exporters from Moody's Analytics. Estimates of direct and indirect jobs tied to these exports were then estimated using industry-specific employment survey data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

■ UK Trade and Investment: EU Countries

Nicky Morgan:

[\[68379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether analogous estimates to those used to arrive at the statistics published in the reports by his Department and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in March 2017 as UK Trade and Investment Highlights have been made for EU member states.

Greg Hands:

Data on the value of trade between the UK and EU member states are available from publicly-available sources such as the Office for National Statistics, Eurostat and UN Comtrade.

JUSTICE

■ Crimes of Violence: Ambulance Services

Andrew Stephenson:

[\[68567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average length of sentence was for people convicted of attacks on ambulance workers in England in each of the last five years.

Andrew Stephenson:

[\[68568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people were (a) prosecuted and (b) convicted of attacking ambulance workers in England in each of the last five years.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Information held centrally by the Ministry of Justice does not specifically identify people convicted of attacks on ambulance workers. The information requested could therefore only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Domestic Violence**Christina Rees:**[\[60547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the effect of the eligibility criteria for family legal aid funding on the number of litigants in person in domestic violence cases.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The Government is absolutely clear that victims of domestic violence must have access to the help that they need, including access to legal aid.

We are currently reviewing the arrangements for providing legal aid to victims of domestic violence in private family law disputes. The findings of this review will be used to develop regulations underpinned by evidence. While we consider longer-term options we have more than doubled the time limit for evidence. We have introduced a provision that will allow the Legal Aid Agency to grant legal aid if satisfied that an application demonstrates financial abuse.

For those seeking urgent protection from domestic violence via court injunctions, such as non-molestation orders or prohibited steps orders, we have made sure legal aid continues to be available to the full extent of the proceedings when such application is granted.

Personal Independence Payment: Appeals**Grahame Morris:**[\[68615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many appeals have there been in (a) the UK, (b) the North East and (c) Easington constituency against personal independence payments decisions in each year since its introduction.

Grahame Morris:[\[68617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many appeals have been successful in (a) the UK, (b) the North East and (c) Easington constituency against personal independence payments in each year since its introduction.

Sir Oliver Heald:

Information about the volume and outcomes of appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Social Security and Child Support) is available in national statistics on gov.uk.

The table below provides a further breakdown of this information.

PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT ¹ - UK

Year	Receipts ²	Appeals In favour ³
2013/14	1017	21
2014/15	20899	3571
2015/16	61529	30236
2016/17	69825	33028

Personal Independence Payment ¹ - North East

Year	Receipts ²	Appeals In favour ³
2013/14	215	~
2014/15	2817	393
2015/16	8856	3664
2016/17	10891	4521

Personal Independence Payment ¹ - Sunderland venue ⁴

Year	Receipts ²	Appeals In favour ³
2013/14	9	~
2014/15	141	23
2015/16	515	195
2016/17	555	233

SSCS appeals are normally registered to the venue nearest to the appellant's home address. We cannot retrieve data based on the appellant's actual address, but can produce reports detailing the numbers of cases that were dealt with at one of our Regional centres or venues

¹ Personal Independence Payment (New Claim Appeals) which replaces Disability Living Allowance was introduced on 8 April 2013, also includes Personal Independence Payment (Reassessments).

² Receipts - Appeals received and attributed to a venue, normally the venue nearest the appellant's home address

Data excludes void appeals (these are appeals which have been entered onto the system in error).

³ Appeals In Favour Appeals - where the decision was found in favour of the appellant.

⁴ Sunderland venue: appeals are attributed to the hearing venue nearest to the appellant's home address. For those living in Easington this is the Sunderland venue.

The symbol ~ denotes a small value less than five

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the details are subject to inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale case management system and are the best data available.

Data are taken from a live management information system and can change over time. The data provided are the most recent available and might differ slightly from any previously published information.

■ Prison Officers: Mental Health

Grahame Morris:

[\[68499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what support she has made available to prison offices experiencing mental health issues as a result of their employment.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

NOMS is committed to providing safe, decent and secure places of work and takes the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees extremely seriously. The Ministry of Justice is investing an extra £100m annually to boost the frontline by 2,500 officers.

NOMS also recognises that the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of employees is paramount to attracting and retaining staff that will build a strong and capable organisation. All NOMS staff have access to an occupational health service and employee assistance programme. This includes 24 hour, 365 days a year access to signposting and counselling; trauma support services; a wide ranging health promotion website and personal wellbeing zone.

As well as access to comprehensive occupational health services and self-referral for confidential counselling, specialist counselling such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) is also available to staff who have experienced trauma. Fast track referrals to see an occupational health nurse are encouraged for staff who have experienced trauma and where staff are absent as a result of a mental and behavioural disorder an immediate referral to occupational health is recommended.

Care teams, comprising of prison service staff, provide an immediate source of peer support and signpost staff to all of the services available.

■ Prisons: Crimes of Violence

Grahame Morris:

[\[68471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps she is taking to reduce violence against prison staff.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

We are committed to improving safety and decreasing violence across the prison estate. We do not underestimate the challenges faced by everyone working in prisons and will continue to support our staff to help them maintain safe and secure prisons.

We are taking immediate action which includes tackling the use of drugs, mobile phones and drones, while strengthening the frontline by recruiting an additional 2,500 staff. We are also providing over 3,400 body-worn cameras across the estate, alongside training to improve staff interactions with prisoners.

The increase in staff will provide the capacity for prison officers to play a dedicated officer role and build constructive relationships with prisoners, reduce levels of frustration and, ultimately, reduce levels of violence.

Violence in prison is a crime. Prisoners who assault our hard working staff should feel the full force of the law. We are working closely with the Police and Crown Prosecution Service to ensure that offenders face swift justice and that courts have full evidence of the harm caused, in order to impose the strongest possible punishment.

Grahame Morris:**[68592]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many incidents of prisoner-on-prisoner violence have been recorded in each of the last 10 years.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Government publishes statistics on safety in custody quarterly, and updated detailed tables annually. They can be viewed here <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2016>. Statistics for prisoner on prisoner assaults in each of the last ten years are published in Table 4 of the 'Safety in Custody summary table to September 2016'. The statistics will be next updated and published on 27 April 2017.

Improving safety and decreasing violence is an urgent priority for this Government. We are taking immediate action to strengthen the frontline by recruiting around 2,500 more prison officers which will help us deal with emerging threats and so improve safety.

SCOTLAND■ **Scotland Office: Brexit**

Maria Eagle: [\[68526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to the Answer of 6 March 2017 to Question 65649, on Scotland Office: Brexit, what (a) EU agencies and other organisations are within his Department's remit, (b) staff time was spent on engagement with those bodies and (c) financial resources were spent on engagement with those bodies in 2015-16.

David Mundell:

There are no EU agencies or organisations within my Department's remit.

TRANSPORT■ **Air Traffic Control**

Henry Smith: [\[68729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to reform airspace policy.

Mr John Hayes:

On 2nd February the Government launched a consultation on UK Airspace Policy. The consultation period began on 2nd February and will run until 25th May 2017

The Government wishes to support airspace modernisation in order to deliver benefits for the UK economy, passengers and communities affected by aircraft noise. The proposals in this consultation aim to strike a balance between unlocking the economic and social benefits of modernised airspace, and addressing the local impacts of aviation.

The Government is also working on a new Aviation Strategy that will set out the Government's vision for the wider aviation sector. This will replace the 2013 Aviation Policy Framework (APF) and will be subject to a separate consultation process. The consultation on UK Airspace Policy forms a key pillar in the development of the Aviation Strategy.

■ **Luton Airport: Railways**

Mr Gavin Shuker: [\[68732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what account his Department has taken of the volume of air passengers from London Luton Airport in its work to define the scope of the forthcoming East Midlands rail franchise consultation; and what assessment he has

made of the potential (a) economic, (b) social and (c) environmental benefits to that airport from improved rail services related to that franchise.

Paul Maynard:

The Department is currently undertaking a process of information gathering to develop the specification for the next East Midlands rail franchise. All options for future East Midlands services are subject to analysis of the potential benefits and consultation with stakeholders. We are considering the case for additional services to Luton Airport and are working collaboratively with Luton Airport to understand their proposals. Any outcome will seek to secure the best value for money for the taxpayer and be in the best interests of passengers.

We are due to begin a formal public consultation soon to inform the specification and I would strongly encourage the honourable member to make his views known through the consultation process when it opens.

■ **Volkswagen**

Mary Creagh:

[\[68777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many meetings have taken place between Ministers of his Department and Volkswagen's UK representative since December 2016 to discuss Volkswagen's manipulation of emissions tests; and how many cars affected by that scandal had been rectified at the date of each of those meetings.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government takes the actions of Volkswagen extremely seriously and we continue to press them to resolve issues including compensation and a warranty for UK consumers.

I have held two meetings with representatives from the company since December 2016 and written to them on four separate occasions. On 16 January I met with Paul Willis, Managing Director of VW UK, and on 6 February I met with Dr Garcia Sanz, a member of the Volkswagen Management Board, and VW UK representatives. By the time of the January meeting Volkswagen had applied 'fixes' to 350,000 affected vehicles in the UK and by the time of the February meeting this was 402,000.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ **Equality and Human Rights Commission: Dismissal**

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[68757\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, pursuant to the Answer of 16 March 2017 to Question 67623, whether she plans to make representations to the Equality and Human Rights Commission on the dismissal of those 10 employees or take any other steps in relation to those dismissals.

Caroline Dineneage:

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is an independent body that makes its own decisions about staff deployment and redundancies, and I have no plans to make representations to it on this matter. I understand that the Commission will continue to provide support to those who are redundant, including through its redeployment networks and use of the Civil Service Jobs website and related contacts.

WORK AND PENSIONS■ **Brexit****Richard Arkless:**[\[909481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the policy implications for his Department of the UK leaving the EU.

Damian Hinds:

We are currently preparing for a smooth and orderly exit from the EU and are confident we will be able to secure a deal that works in the mutual interests of both the UK and the rest of the European Union. We are considering various policy options and it would be wrong to set out further positions at this stage.

■ **Occupational Pensions****David Simpson:**[\[68353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment his Department has made of the views of employers and employees on auto-enrolment workforce pensions.

Richard Harrington:

Automatic enrolment is a policy that works. Over 7.5 million individuals have been automatically enrolled into a workplace pension by more than 465,000 employers. I am now conducting a review of the policy in order to build on that achievement.

On 8 February 2017 I published a set of initial questions on the main themes, including coverage, engagement and future contributions and invited views and evidence to help inform our considerations. The deadline for responses was 22 March and we are now considering the responses. We are also engaging extensively with stakeholders, and an advisory group of external experts is providing insight, challenge and guidance.

The success of automatic enrolment has been based on a partnership approach and our approach to the review will enable us to understand the views of all stakeholders, including employers and employees.

Towards the end of 2017 we will publish a report to Parliament.

■ Pensions: Females

Thangam Debbonaire:

[\[909494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps the Government is taking to encourage more women to enrol in pensions at a younger age.

Richard Harrington:

Automatic enrolment was designed specifically to help those underrepresented in pension saving - including women.

And encouragingly, in 2015 for the first time the proportion of eligible women (70%) participating in private sector workplace pensions was greater than the proportion of eligible men (69%).

■ Personal Independence Payment: Appeals

Grahame Morris:

[\[68616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the cost of the appeals process for personal independence payments in each year since its introduction.

Penny Mordaunt:

We are unable to provide data for the years 2013/14 and 2014/15.

In 2015/16 DWP's operating costs for PIP appeals to the First-tier Tribunal were £7,046,850. In the first nine months of 2016/17 they were £7,432,033.

■ State Retirement Pensions: Females

Maria Caulfield:

[\[909488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the financial effect on women of recent changes in the pension age

Richard Harrington:

Women reaching State Pension age in 2016/17 are estimated to receive more State Pension on average over their lifetime than women ever have before.

By 2030, over 3 million women stand to gain an average of £550 per year through the introduction of the new State Pension.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ BEIS Non-Departmental Public Bodies

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Greg Clark):
[\[HCWS554\]](#)

I would like to inform the House that the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) has today announced its decision to terminate its contract with Cavendish Fluor Partnership (CFP) for the management and decommissioning of 12 redundant Magnox sites (including 2 research sites) which, together with the Calder Hall reactor on the Sellafield site, formed the UK's first fleet of nuclear power stations.

The NDA ran a £6.1 billion tender process from April 2012 which resulted in a 14 year contract being awarded in September 2014 to the Cavendish Fluor Partnership – a joint venture between the British firm Cavendish Nuclear, a subsidiary of Babcock International, and the US company Fluor Inc. This decision was approved by the then Department for Energy and Climate Change and HM Treasury.

CFP started work on the Magnox estate on 1 September 2014. There then started a process to ensure that the scope of the contract assumed in the 2012 tender matched the actual status of the decommissioning to be done on each site – a process known as consolidation.

It has become clear to the NDA through this consolidation process that there is a significant mismatch between the work that was specified in the contract as tendered in 2012 and awarded in 2014, and the work that actually needs to be done.

The scale of the additional work is such that the NDA Board considers that it would amount to a material change to the specification on which bidders were invited in 2012 to tender.

In the light of this, the NDA Board, headed by a new Chair and Chief Executive, has concluded that it should exercise its right to terminate the contract on two years' notice. The contract will be terminated in September 2019, after 5 years rather than its full term of 14 years. This termination is made with the agreement of CFP.

Dealing safely with the UK's nuclear legacy is fundamental and non-negotiable. It is important to emphasise that this termination is no reflection on the performance of Cavendish Nuclear or Fluor, and work on decommissioning at all the sites will continue with the management of CFP for a further two and a half years.

During this period, the NDA will establish arrangements for a replacement contracting structure to be put in place when the current contract ends. This work will be led by the NDA's new Chief Executive, David Peattie.

I have every confidence that CFP will continue to deliver to high standards during the remainder of the contract.

Although this decision is one made by the Board of the NDA, it requires the consent of myself, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Accounting Officer of my Department. That consent has been given.

We have a responsibility to ensure that the NDA's decisions reflect its legal obligations, including under procurement law, that further risks to taxpayers' money are contained and that robust arrangements are put in place to deliver this essential decommissioning programme.

In addition I can announce today that the NDA has settled outstanding litigation claims against it by Energy Solutions and Bechtel, in relation to the 2014 Magnox contract award.

The NDA was found by the High Court in its judgment of 29 July 2016 to have wrongly decided the outcome of the procurement process.

As part of the settlements, NDA has withdrawn its appeal against the judgment. While these settlements were made without admission of liability on either side, it is clear that this 2012 tender process, which was for a value of up to £6.1 billion, was flawed. The NDA has agreed settlement payments with Energy Solutions of £76.5m, plus £8.5m of costs, and with Bechtel of \$14.8m, plus costs of around £462,000 – approximately £12.5m in total.

These are very substantial costs and had the potential to rise much further if the case had proceeded to trial.

Taxpayers must be able to be confident that public bodies are operating effectively and securing value for money. Where this has not been achieved such bodies should be subject to rigorous scrutiny.

I am therefore establishing today an independent Inquiry into the conduct of the 2012 procurement process and the reasons why the 2014 contract proved unsustainable. These are separate issues but both need to be examined thoroughly by an authoritative and independent expert.

I have asked Mr Steve Holliday, the former Chief Executive of National Grid to lead the Inquiry. The Inquiry will take a 'cradle to grave' approach beginning with the NDA's procurement and ending with the contract termination.

The Inquiry will also review the conduct of the NDA and of government departments and make any recommendations it sees fit – including what further investigations or proceedings, for example possible disciplinary proceedings, may be required as a result of its findings.

The terms of reference for Mr Holliday's Inquiry will be placed in the libraries of both Houses. Mr Holliday will report jointly to me and to the Cabinet Secretary, and his report will be made available to this House, including to the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committee.

This was a defective procurement, with significant financial consequences, and I am determined that the reasons for it should be exposed and understood; that those responsible should properly be held to account; and that it should never happen again.

HOME OFFICE

■ Justice and Home Affairs pre-Council statement

The Minister of State for Fire and Policing (Brandon Lewis): [\[HCWS556\]](#)

The first formal Justice and Home Affairs Council of the Maltese Presidency will take place on 27 and 28 March in Brussels. The Home Secretary, the Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP and I will represent the UK.

Interior day (27 March) will begin with a discussion on IT Measures Related to Border Management. The Presidency will provide a progress update on negotiations on the European Travel and Information Authorisation System (ETIAS) proposal and the Entry/Exit System (EES) proposal. The Government recognises the importance of increasing the security of the EU's external borders, however as the UK is not part of the border control aspects of the Schengen agreement it will not take part in either proposal. This item will be followed by a progress update from the Presidency on the implementation of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex). Again, the UK will not take part in the new Agency. However, we will continue to provide support to its operations on a voluntary basis, as we have done with its predecessor.

Interior day will continue with a debate on the EU's Returns policy. The Commission will present an Action Plan to improve the effectiveness of returns from EU Member States to third countries, and a recommendation for enhanced implementation of the Returns Directive. The UK does not participate in the Returns Directive but welcomes the Commission Communications, and the Home Secretary is likely to intervene to share UK experience and best practice in the area of returns to third countries.

Over lunch, Ministers will discuss implementation of the EU Migration policy. I expect the Presidency to reiterate its calls for Member States to meet commitments made under Relocation measures, which the UK did not opt in to, and to increase support to the European Asylum Support Agency. The Home Secretary will confirm the UK's existing commitment to deploying asylum and border experts to support Greece.

The afternoon session will start with a short item to update on the recent activities of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). The UK is supportive of the work of the RAN to bring together practitioners, civil society and policy makers to help develop tools to tackle radicalisation.

The Council will then discuss external aspects of EU Migration policy, including follow up to actions contained in the Malta Declaration and the Valetta Action Plan. The UK supports the Malta Declaration and ongoing efforts to stabilise Libya. The Home Secretary will press for concerted action to tackle organised immigration crime into and within the EU, and stress the importance of using regional partnerships, specifically the Khartoum Process, to drive forward work under the Malta Declaration.

Under 'Any Other Business', there will be an update from Austria on the "Managing Migration Challenges Together" Conference. The Commission will update on follow-up to the December 2016 EU-Internet Forum, specifically the outcomes of Commissioner Avramopoulous' visit to the United States to discuss actions that internet companies are taking to counter terrorist propaganda and extremist content online. The Presidency will also provide an update on EU responses to the European Court of Justice's TELE2-WATSON judgment on data retention, ahead of a substantive discussion on Justice day. The Home Secretary will emphasise the importance of law enforcement experts being engaged in identifying appropriate responses.

The final substantive item of Interior day will cover a progress report from the Presidency on negotiations on the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). The UK has not opted in to the majority of these measures, and is unlikely to intervene on this item.

Justice day (28 March) will begin with an update from the Presidency on its proposal to convene a Friends of the Presidency group to facilitate a common reflection process at EU level on the impact of the TELE2-WATSON judgment on data retention. The UK is committed to working with other Member States to understand the potential risks this judgment poses to investigating crime and protecting the public. I will emphasise the need to develop a common understanding on the necessity of data retention in relation to law enforcement and public safety.

On Criminal Justice in Cyberspace, the discussion will focus on strengthening and further aligning the legal frameworks and practical processes that allow access to, and the transfer of, electronic communication data to support the prevention and prosecution of crimes. I will intervene to support efforts to improve and coordinate Member States capabilities in this area.

There will then be a policy debate on the criminal justice response to Foreign Terrorist Fighter Returnees. This will involve a discussion about policy recommendations made by the European Counter Terrorism Coordinator to tackle the threat from returning foreign fighters. I will highlight the work the Foreign Secretary is leading focused on the collection of evidence that can later be used to convict returning foreign fighters.

On combating financial crime and terrorist financing, the Presidency will provide an update on the progress made at the working groups for the Directive on countering money laundering by criminal law and the Regulation on mutual recognition of freezing and confiscation orders. The UK is currently considering whether or not to participate in these measures.

The morning will end with an update on the progress of the negotiation of the Directive on certain aspects concerning contracts for the supply of digital content. The UK is broadly supportive of the objectives of the proposal.

The final agenda item on Justice day will be a lunch discussion on the protections afforded to 'whistleblowers'. The UK will share information on its system for protecting 'whistleblowers' in response to Presidency questions on the matter.

TRANSPORT**■ Bus Services Bill: English Votes for English Laws**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Andrew Jones):
[[HCWS555](#)]

I am pleased to announce the publication of analysis of English Votes for English Laws in relation to Government amendments made at report stage to the Bus Services Bill.

The English Votes for English Laws process applies to public bills in the House of Commons. To support the process, the Government has agreed that it will provide information to assist the Speaker in considering whether to certify that Bill or any of its provisions for the purposes of English Votes for English Laws. Bill provisions that relate exclusively to England or to England and Wales, and which have a subject matter within the legislative competence of one or more of the devolved legislatures, can be certified.

This analysis reflects the position should all the Government amendments be accepted.

The memorandum can be found on the Bill documents page of the Parliament website at: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/busservices/documents.html> and I have deposited a copy in the Libraries of the House.

Attachments:

1. Bus Services [170327 - Bus Services - EVEL Memo Commons Report.pdf]
2. Bus Services [170327 - Bus Services - Government Amendments at Report.pdf]

■ Rail Franchising

The Secretary of State for Transport (Chris Grayling): **[[HCWS553](#)]**

I am pleased to inform the House that following a rigorous competition I intend to award the South Western rail franchise to First MTR South Western Trains Limited pending the successful completion of a standstill period of at least 10 days.

The House will know that this Government is determined to transform the way that the railways work to deliver a revolution in services for passengers. In December 2016, I set out my vision for achieving this through a new era of joined up working between train operators and Network Rail. Earlier this month my Department announced a consultation on the South Eastern franchise which explained our ambition for bringing together the operation of track and train, so that one team of people is focussed on providing the best service to passengers. Today's announcement that First MTR South Western Trains Limited has been awarded the South Western franchise means we are a step closer to achieving that ambition.

The new franchise will see closer partnership working between track and train. A railway that is predominantly run by an integrated local team of people with a commitment to the smooth operation of their routes, improving services and performance is at the heart of my vision for the network, and First MTR South Western Trains Limited expects to work even closer with Network Rail with the shared aim of giving passengers exactly that. The joint teams will work to drive higher performance, achieve greater productivity in

operations, improve maintenance delivery and infrastructure renewals, and support infrastructure improvement delivery, all for the benefit of passengers across the South Western network.

The new franchise will run for seven years from 20 August 2017 to 18 August 2024, with an extension of 11 railway periods callable at my discretion.

This is the thirteenth franchise award since 2013: a rapid programme of renewal which represents the Government's determination to transform the travel experience for rail passengers across the country. In the last twelve months alone, new franchise agreements have released private funding for brand new trains in the North and the East of England. The new South Western franchise will also see investment in brand new and refurbished trains.

This Government is funding the biggest investment in rail since Victorian times, and the award of this new franchise is the latest step in making journeys better: simpler, faster and more reliable. Passengers across the South Western network will see improvements to their journeys, whether travelling into central London, or between the towns and cities in the southern and south-western counties of England. The new franchise will support the communities and boost economic growth in the regions it serves.

Passengers, local authorities, businesses and other stakeholders across the area contributed to a highly demanding and challenging specification for the new South Western franchise. Bidders were invited to demonstrate how they would meet this specification, and I am delighted that First MTR South Western Trains Limited set out an exciting plan for the franchise that will not only meet but significantly exceed these expectations.

First MTR South Western Trains Limited will oversee a £1.2 billion investment programme to improve services for passengers on all parts of the network from London to the South West. There will be 22,000 extra seats into London Waterloo each morning peak and 30,000 extra seats out of Waterloo each evening peak, and a fleet of 90 new trains will provide more space for passengers on Reading, Windsor and London routes.

The plans were designed to make optimum use of our major investment to increase platform capacity at London Waterloo. First MTR South Western Trains Limited will use the experience of one of its major shareholders MTR, who operate the busy Hong Kong metro, to deliver smooth and rapid journeys for passengers travelling around London's suburban network. Faster journeys will be delivered through a consistent fleet of new suburban trains offering a regular, metro-style service. Passengers can look forward to more space, ensuring that the railway can support London's growth.

The train journey is only one part of the passenger experience, so we were very pleased with First MTR South Western Trains Limited's plans for significant investment in station improvements. They will deliver at least 1,500 new car park spaces, refurbished waiting rooms, more seats and new waiting shelters. There will be investment to make Southampton Central station a destination fit for the community it serves, with a new entrance canopy, improved retail, and better facilities for passengers.

The use of smart cards will be expanded, and there will be a new smart card product, automatically offering the cheapest walk-up single or day return fare. A new flexible season ticket will benefit people working fewer than five days a week, there will be a discount offered for people buying twelve consecutive monthly season tickets, and new discounts for student travel. Season, single and return tickets will be made available on smart cards across all of the franchise.

I am pleased to announce also that the new South Western franchise will introduce new Delay Repay compensation, including for delays of 15 minutes or more, and with automatic claims for smart card season tickets and advance purchased tickets bought through their digital channels.

There will be better information for passengers, so that they can make more informed decisions about their journeys. Real time information will be available on screens on trains and at stations, as well as on the website, and through the new customer app. Station staff will also be well informed through innovative use of smart devices so they can better help passengers, especially during times of disruption. There will also be live information about seating availability and crowding levels, so that passengers know the best place to stand to board the train.

Reflecting the Government's commitment to create 30,000 apprenticeships across all transport modes by 2020, First MTR South Western Trains Limited will offer more than 100 apprenticeships each year. Their plans also include funding to support Community Rail Partnerships, Station Adoption Groups, and to encourage community use and regeneration of available station space. The franchisee will reduce energy use at stations and depots by over 40%, and water use by over 18%.

This Government has set a clear vision for the future of rail travel and is investing to deliver on that vision for passengers across the country. Over the past few years the franchise renewal programme has resulted in significant new investment and exciting innovations for passengers. The new South Western franchise represents the next chapter in that journey and we look forward to working closely with First MTR South Western Trains Limited and Network Rail to ensure that passengers receive the improvements they have demanded as we transform their rail travel experience.