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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Stowell of Beeston	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office and Department for Transport
Baroness Anelay of St Johns	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Baroness Altmann	Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Whip
Lord Bridges of Headley	Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change, Wales Office and Whip
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Whip
Lord Dunlop	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Whip
Lord Faulks	Minister of State, Ministry of Justice
Lord Freud	Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Deputy Chief Whip and Spokesman for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord Nash	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Lord O'Neill of Gatley	Commercial Secretary to the Treasury
Lord Price	Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Prior of Brampton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health
Baroness Shields	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture Media and Sport and Home Office
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Verma	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for International Development
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 13 July 2016

Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment

[HLWS86]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Rt. hon Friend the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change made the following statement:

I am today announcing the outcome of the Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment (*OESEA3*) regarding future offshore energy developments.

The Department has completed an Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment (OESEA) of a draft plan/programme to enable further offshore licensing/leasing for oil and gas, gas storage including carbon dioxide transport and storage as part of carbon capture and storage (CCS), and offshore marine renewables including wind, wave and tidal energy.

The renewable energy elements of the draft plan/programme cover the relevant parts of the UK Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the territorial waters of England and Wales; for hydrocarbon gas storage it applies to UK waters (territorial waters and the UK EEZ), and for carbon dioxide storage it applies to UK waters (the UK EEZ and territorial waters excluding territorial waters in Scotland) and for hydrocarbon exploration and production it applies to UK territorial sea and the UK Continental Shelf.

An 8-week public consultation on the *OESEA3* Environmental Report closed on 29th April 2016. All comments received on the draft plan/programme and the Environmental Report have been considered by the Department and a Post Consultation Report for OESEA3 has been prepared and placed on the GOV.UK website (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/offshore-energy-strategic-environmental-assessment-sea-an-overview-of-the-sea-process>). This summarises stakeholder comments and the Department's clarifications and responses to them. The Environmental Report and the comments received have informed the Department's decision on whether to proceed with the draft plan/programme.

The Department has decided to adopt the draft plan/programme, with the area offered restricted spatially through the exclusion of certain areas together with a number of mitigation measures to prevent, reduce and offset significant adverse impacts on the environment and other users of the sea. On the basis of the evidence set out in the Environmental Report, which discussed the alternatives to the chosen approach, and the comments received during consultation, the Department concludes that there are no overriding environmental considerations that would prevent the achievement of our draft plan/programme of offshore marine renewables leasing (wind, wave and tidal technologies), offshore oil and gas licensing, and offshore gas storage and carbon dioxide

storage leasing/licensing, provided appropriate measures are implemented that prevent, reduce and offset significant adverse impacts on the environment and other users of the sea. In all cases, the relevant competent authority should undertake any appropriate assessments(s) prior to awarding licences or leases, where screening shows this to be necessary. This meets the requirements of EU Council Directive 2009/147/EC on "the conservation of wild birds" and Council Directive 92/43/EEC on "the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora", and UK implementing regulations. Although the UK has recently voted in favour of leaving the European Union, there will be no immediate changes in the way the UK undertakes its obligations under EU legislation. The adoption of the draft plan / programme demonstrates we are continuing to deliver on our energy and climate change agenda.

The Environmental Report sets out the environmental considerations relevant to the plan/ programme in more detail and Section 6.1 includes recommendations that take into account these environmental considerations. The Post Consultation Report responds to comments made on a number of environmental considerations, which have also been taken into account.

The Department will monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan/programme, as described in section 6.2 of the Environmental Report.

OESEA3 paves the way for the Oil & Gas Authority to make preparations for further rounds of offshore licensing for oil and gas and to consider future licence applications for gas storage and carbon dioxide storage to ensure that the UK continues to have a diverse, affordable and reliable mix of energy sources as we continue to move towards a low carbon economy. The Oil & Gas Authority is currently an Executive Agency of the Department, but it is expected to become a Government Company later this year.

OESEA3 also paves the way for future leasing for offshore marine renewables, including wind, wave and tidal which will contribute to the UK renewable energy targets. The Environmental Report highlights that siting and consenting processes for offshore renewable energy developments must remain flexible to allow for technological innovation, including any mitigation measures.

Veterans' Healthcare

[HLWS87]

Earl Howe: My hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans (Mark Lancaster) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement

The Armed Forces Covenant is the Government's commitment to Service personnel, their families and veterans who have made enormous sacrifices on recent operations and to ensuring that those seriously injured receive the care and support they deserve. I would like to

update the House on some of the steps we have taken to enhance this provision.

The Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC) at Headley Court has long provided world-class rehabilitation and prosthetic support to our serving personnel. I am pleased to tell the House that a number of veterans with amputation-related complications can now also receive prosthetic support at Headley Court, through the recent establishment of a veterans' Complex Prosthetic Assessment Clinic (CPAC) at the DMRC. Access to the CPAC is being offered to veterans with the most complex needs on a case by case basis, after referral by and with the support of their NHS specialist. Early feedback has been good and the Government is working closely with BLESMA, the limbless charity, and other Service charities to ensure veterans and NHS clinicians are aware of this initiative and its benefits.

A small number of those referred to the CPAC might also meet the clinical criteria for the direct skeletal fixation (DSF) pilot, for which the Government announced £2 million of LIBOR funding in November 2015. The DSF pilot, which is due to run for another two

years, has already enabled some Service personnel and veterans to have potentially life-changing surgery in this country at public expense.

I can also announce a plan to improve the care received by the most seriously injured Service personnel and veterans. Currently such support is funded and delivered by a number of separate agencies, including the NHS, Ministry of Defence, Local Authorities and charitable organisations. A pilot, commencing in September will see care of this kind co-ordinated and delivered by a new Integrated High Dependency Care System (IHDCS), producing a joined-up and improved system of care for the individual. This will provide confidence for this small number of individuals, and their families, that their clinical, health and social support needs will continue to be met when they leave the Armed Forces and for the rest of their lives.

The Government and the nation will never forget the hard work, great bravery and sacrifice of all current and former Service personnel and I will ensure the House is kept informed of this continuing and vital work.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 13 July 2016

Atrial Fibrillation

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 13 June (HL459), why there will be a delay in publishing the final report of the National Institute for Health Research project HTA-14/141/01 on screening strategies for atrial fibrillation. [HL1004]

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 13 June (HL459), what impact the UK National Screening Committee expects the delay in publishing the final report of National Institute for Health Research project HTA-14/141/01 to have on the timescales for reviewing its recommendation on screening for atrial fibrillation in adults. [HL1005]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The project 'Screening Strategies for Atrial Fibrillation: A Systematic Review and Cost-Effectiveness Analysis' is being funded through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Health Technology Assessment programme. There were a larger number of studies than expected – around 260 - because of the broad population inclusion criteria and the active phase of the project has slightly overrun.

The UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) reviews the evidence for screening based on the best and most robust evidence available. The UK NSC is due to review the evidence for screening people aged 65 and over for atrial fibrillation in the financial year 2017/18. It is anticipated that the timing of the UK NSC review will not be affected by the delay to the publication of the NIHR's 'Screening Strategies for Atrial Fibrillation: A Systematic Review and Cost-Effectiveness Analysis'. The UK NSC will consider the timing of its review more closely in spring 2017.

British Indian Ocean Territory: Mauritius

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to maintain current relations with Mauritius, in the light of the intention of Mauritius to seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago. [HL941]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The United Kingdom value the historic relationship of trust and cooperation that we share with the Republic of Mauritius. It is therefore with great concern that we note the intention the Prime Minister of Mauritius expressed to the Parliament of Mauritius on 17 May to seek a referral by the UN General

Assembly to the International Court of Justice this autumn, in order to obtain an advisory opinion in relation to the British Indian Ocean Territory (Chagos Archipelago).

Referral of this matter to the International Court of Justice would cause lasting damage to Mauritius' bilateral relations and we have respectfully sought the Prime Minister of Mauritius' assurance that he does not intend to proceed with such action, and that he will return to a constructive path. Mauritius stands to benefit from friendly relations, including in relation to the British Indian Ocean Territory, where the UK and Mauritius are already engaged in talks that aim to implement the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea arbitral award of March 2015 and give due regard to Mauritius' interests in matters of marine conservation in the British Indian Ocean Territory.

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the timescale for ending the use of the Chagos Archipelago for defence purposes. [HL943]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government how long after the ending of the use of the Chagos Archipelago for defence purposes they expect to return that territory to Mauritius. [HL944]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The United Kingdom is committed to cede the territory to Mauritius when it is no longer required for defence purposes. The military facility located in the British Indian Ocean Territory continues to contribute significantly towards global security, and is central to efforts at countering regional threats, including those from terrorism and piracy. We do not envisage this position changing in the short-term and it is for the UK alone to determine when this position has been reached.

Bus Services

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that increased congestion is affecting bus journey times and the reliability of bus services. [HL952]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government recognises that congestion can affect the predictability and length of bus journey times and the reliability of buses. In 2015, the Department for Transport published its externally commissioned research into factors that influence bus journey times, which is attached for your ease of reference. This work included a literature review of the existing body of work in this area at the time the research was conducted.

The vast majority of local bus services operate on the local road network for which local authorities, rather than the Secretary of State, are responsible. Local traffic authorities have a duty under section 16 of the Traffic

Management Act 2004 to manage their road network so as to secure the expeditious movement of traffic, including bus services, on the network.

The Bus Services Bill recognises the important role local transport authorities have in this regard, providing them with new means to work in partnership with bus operators to achieve improvements to local bus services that benefit passengers and local communities.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Bus Journey Time Variability - Technical Report [HL0952 - bjtv-technical-report.pdf]

Bus Journey Time Variability - Pilot Study Report [HL0952 - bjtv-pilot-sudy-and-analysis-report.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-07-04/HL952>

Children in Care

Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to publish their care leaver covenant. [HL956]

Lord Nash: The care leaver covenant will allow public, private and charitable bodies to set out how, as members of civil society, they will make a commitment to support care leavers to thrive into adulthood.

We plan to launch the care leaver covenant during 'care leavers' week' in October 2016.

Gaza: Israel

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding the reduction of the permitted fishing zone off the coast of the Gaza Strip from nine to six nautical miles. [HL935]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We have not raised this issue with the Israeli authorities. We previously welcomed the easing of fishing restrictions, and continue to encourage the Israeli authorities to implement further measures to improve the situation on the ground in Gaza. The UK would like to see a permanent increase in the size of the fishing zone off the coast of Gaza, in line with the limit of twenty nautical miles stipulated in the Oslo accords.

Govia Thameslink Railway

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last held discussions with senior managers of Govia Thameslink Railway about train cancellations on their services. [HL994]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Secretary of State for Transport and the Rail Minister have been in regular contact with senior Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) managers to discuss GTR franchise matters. Officials are also in constant contact with representatives from GTR and frequently discuss the operation of the franchise.

Green Belt

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many changes to green belt boundaries have been made in the past five years. [HL1065]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Between 2010/11 and 2014/15, 24 local authorities adopted new boundaries for the designated Green Belt.

HIV Infection

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many individuals are diagnosed as having HIV in England and Wales, broken down by (1) age, and (2) gender. [HL1007]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The number of people newly diagnosed with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in England and Wales in 2014 by age is shown in Table 1; and gender is shown in Table 2. This is the latest year for which data is available.

Table 1: New HIV diagnoses by age group; England & Wales, 2014

Country	Age at diagnosis	2014
England	Less than 15	25
	15-24	666
	25-34	1,851
	35-44	1,429
	45-54	1,008
	55-64	388
	65+	192
	Not reported	0
	Total	5,559
Wales*	Less than 15	Less than 5
	15-24	20
	25-34	55
	35-44	46
	45-54	44
	55-64	13
	65+	Less than 10
	Not reported	0
	Total	189

Note: *Cells containing values between 1 and 4 in Wales have been masked using the notation Less than 5 and secondary masking has also been applied to avoid the risk of deductive disclosure.

Table 2: New HIV diagnoses by gender; England & Wales, 2014

Country	Gender	2014
England	Men	4,169
	Women	1,390
	Total	5,559
Wales	Men	138
	Women	51
	Total	189

HIV Infection: Drugs

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of individuals privately accessing the drug Truvada following the decision by NHS England not to make it available on prescription for pre-exposure prophylaxis to HIV. [HL1006]

Lord Prior of Brampton: No such assessment has been made.

Holloway Prison

Asked by Baroness Corston

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the most up to date commercial land market valuation for the Holloway Prison site. [HL965]

Asked by Baroness Corston

To ask Her Majesty's Government what decisions have been made about the future of the Holloway Prison site. [HL966]

Asked by Baroness Corston

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for the marketing of the Holloway Prison site. [HL967]

Lord Faulks: On 9 November 2015, the government announced a £1.3bn investment to reform and modernise the prison estate to make it more efficient, safer and focused on supporting prisoner rehabilitation.

The Secretary of State for Justice announced on 25 November 2015 that HM Prison and Young Offender Institution Holloway would be closed as the first stage of this programme. HMP Holloway was closed on 22 June. Once the prison has been fully decommissioned it will be handed over to the Ministry of Justice Estates Directorate for disposal.

No decisions have yet been taken on the future of the Holloway site. The Ministry of Justice will work closely with the local authority and others, on future options for the site. Once a decision is made, the MoJ and its advisors will engage with the market and other stakeholders. Any

valuation information is considered commercially sensitive and therefore cannot be released.

Asked by Baroness Corston

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to monitor the impact of the closure of Holloway Prison on the number of family visits to relocated prisoners. [HL968]

Lord Faulks: All women transferred from Holloway were carefully assessed as part of the prison's closure planning. The assessment sought to ensure that they were held as close to home as was practicable given their individual circumstances.

Housing Benefit

Asked by The Earl of Listowel

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of Discretionary Housing Payments made in each local authority area in England in 2015–16 were paid to care leavers up to the age of 25. [HL1106]

Asked by The Earl of Listowel

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the value of Discretionary Housing Payments made to care leavers up to the age of 25 in each local authority area in England in 2015–16. [HL1107]

Asked by The Earl of Listowel

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many care leavers under the age of 25 in each local authority area in England received Discretionary Housing Payments in 2015–16. [HL1108]

Lord Freud: The information requested is not available.

International Court of Justice

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have plans to make greater use of the advisory function of the International Court of Justice. [HL942]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The United Kingdom will continue to consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether to support any properly formulated request for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on legal questions from duly authorised bodies, in accordance with Article 96 of the UN Charter.

Israel: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they plan to take regarding the reported use of sponge-tipped bullets against Palestinians by Israeli forces. [HL936]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Our officials in Tel Aviv have not raised this specific issue of the use of

sponge-tipped bullets with the Israeli authorities. We do, however, raise our concerns with them about the manner in which the Israel Defence Forces police non-violent protests, including the use of lethal and non-lethal ammunition.

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel following reports of the use of rubber bullets and gas canisters, and the confiscation of vehicles, by the Israeli Defence Forces during a raid on Bil'in village on 16 June. [HL937]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We have not made any representations to the Israeli authorities on this issue. However, our Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises concern over the excessive use of force with the Israeli authorities including the use of non-lethal ammunition during non-violent protests.

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the weekly non-violent protests against illegal Israeli settlements by the village of Bil'in, and whether they plan to hold discussions with that village's Popular Struggle Committee. [HL938]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Whilst we have not made any assessment of the non-violent protests by the village of Bil'in, officials from our Consulate General in Jerusalem met Abdullah Abu Rahmah (coordinator of Bil'in Popular Struggle Committee) in his capacity as Deputy Head of the Palestinian Authority Commission against the Wall and Settlements in 20 August 2015. The Consulate General worked with the Commission on a joint olive harvest campaign, and are looking to provide similar support to Palestinian communities in the future.

Abu Rahmeh has been arrested by the Israel Defence Forces multiple times for taking part in non violent resistance and has been designated a human rights defender by the EU. UK officials attended his court hearing on 8 February 2015, with representatives from other EU Missions.

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding the reported continuing restrictions on a Palestinian farmer in accessing his land at Mantiqat Shib al Butum. [HL940]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We have not made any representations to the Israeli authorities on this specific issue.

Migrant Workers: EU Nationals

*Asked by **Lord Cromwell***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of reports that non-UK EU citizens are reconsidering job

offers from UK companies, what assessment they have made of whether prospective employers in the UK will have access to a more limited pool of skills. [HL1009]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: As my Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister has said, there will be no immediate changes as a result of the EU referendum, including in the circumstances of non-UK EU citizens working in the UK. The Government is committed to ensuring that the UK remains open for business and continues to grow and thrive. Ensuring our new relationship with the EU works for employees and employers will be important in the months ahead.

Motor Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions

*Asked by **The Countess of Mar***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether it is possible for members of the public who encounter a motor vehicle producing visible emissions to report the matter and if so, to whom should they report. [HL1139]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Members of the public can report excessively smoky lorries and buses to the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency through their website (<https://www.gov.uk/report-smoky-vehicle>). There is no similar reporting system for cars or other vehicles. However all vehicles must meet strict standards before they enter service, as well as standards which must be maintained at all times while a vehicle is in service. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle meets the necessary limit requirements at all times.

New Businesses

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk that leaving the EU could negatively affect the growth of startup companies in the UK. [HL1067]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: There will be no immediate changes to the UK's relationship with the EU, in the way goods can move or services can be sold.

The Government is committed to ensuring that the UK remains open for business and continues to grow and thrive.

NHS: Finance

*Asked by **Lord Mawhinney***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many, and what percentage of, NHS providers have signed up to the first round of proposed control totals; and how they plan to respond to those providers who (1) have not signed up, or (2) refuse to do so. [HL1043]

*Asked by **Lord Mawhinney***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the membership of those NHS provider boards that do not

achieve financial balance by the end of 2016–17 will be replaced. [HL1044]

Asked by Lord Mawhinney

To ask Her Majesty's Government by how much they estimate the deficit of NHS providers will have been reduced by the end of the 2016–17. [HL1045]

Lord Prior of Brampton: NHS Improvement continues to work with those providers who have not been able to agree control totals by the end of July. At present, 213 of 238 providers (89.5%) have an agreed a control total. Those providers who have been unable to agree a control total will not be able to access the sustainability and transformation fund.

NHS Improvement is currently consulting on a new oversight regime, which details proposals on how providers will be monitored in future and this will set out how variance from financial plan or control total will be managed.

NHS Improvement does not intend to replace the boards of those providers who do not achieve financial balance by the end of 2016/17. The organisation's new oversight regime also sets out in detail how it proposes to monitor and support providers.

The Government's Mandate to the NHS 2016-17, a copy of which is attached, confirms that the National Health Service must ensure that it balances its budget, including commissioners and providers living within their budgets. To support this, £1.8 billion of NHS England's budget for 2016-17 will be allocated through the Sustainability and Transformation Fund to support providers, in particular emergency services, payable through commissioning or as other support.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

NHS England Mandate 2016-17 [NHSE_mandate_16-17_22_Jan.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-07-06/HL1043>

Occupied Territories: Housing

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they intend to take in response to the government of Israel's recent announcements of additional settlements on the West Bank and what representations they have made to that government about the impact of those announcements on the viability of a two-state solution. [HL960]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: On 5 July, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood), issued a Statement expressing deep concern about the announcement of new settlements units in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

Whilst officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv have not yet raised this issue with the Israeli authorities, Mr Ellwood said in his statement "Settlements are illegal under international law. As noted in the report issued by the Middle East Quartet on 1 July, steps like this also make a two state solution more difficult to achieve."

Official Cars: New Palace Yard

Asked by Baroness Whitaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have instructed Government Car Service drivers to turn off their engines while waiting in New Palace Yard to reduce air pollution, and if not, whether they intend to do so. [HL1155]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Government Car Service drivers are regularly reminded of the need to turn off the engine when parked to reduce air pollution and save fuel. A new reminder will be sent out immediately with particular reference to New Palace Yard and the Parliamentary Estate.

Personal Independence Payment: Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Asked by The Countess of Mar

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Altmann on 16 June (HL502), what provision is made for claimants suffering severe myalgic encephalomyelitis or chronic fatigue syndrome who are housebound or bedbound and who are unable to attend a face-to-face consultation. [HL871]

Baroness Altmann: A home consultation can be offered where a claimant is unable to travel to a consultation as a result of their health condition or impairment.

Situations where a claimant may need a home consultation can include where a person's diagnosis suggests a significant disability that may make travel extremely difficult or the claimant provides evidence from a health professional that they are unable to travel due to their health condition or impairment.

Postgraduate Education: Career Development Loans

Asked by Lord Freyberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many postgraduate students in England applied for Professional Career Development Loans to study (1) applied art and design, (2) art and design, (3) drama, (4) media, film or TV, (5) music, (6) dance, (7) performing arts, and (8) design and technology, in (a) 2009–10, (b) 2010–11, (c) 2011–12, (d) 2012–13, (e) 2013–14, (f) 2014–15, and (g) 2015–16; how many of those

applications were successful; and what was the average loan given in each instance. [[HL1020](#)]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: Professional and Career Development Loans are open to UK citizens who seek financial support for a wide range of tertiary education provision.

In recent years, nearly 7/10 of the typical 7000-8000 loans per year have been taken out by those participating

in postgraduate study. Nearly 90% of loans are taken out by residents of England.

It has not been possible to split applied art and design from art and design. Categorisation is a result of the government's interpretation of the course title. The following table illustrates the number of recipients studying certain postgraduate provision and the average loan value.

Category	2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
Art and Design	317	£6,712	292	£6,989	335	£7,606
Dance	23	£7,350	16	£6,766	18	£8,325
Design & Tech	96	£6,369	97	£7,226	104	£7,604
Drama	14	£7,144	27	£6,722	17	£6,927
Media, Film or TV	213	£7,345	171	£7,023	169	£7,657
Music	82	£7,058	71	£7,726	89	£7,678
Performing Arts	39	£7,010	31	£6,229	37	£7,728

Category	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
Art and Design	270	£7,703	301	£7,970	248	£7,921	213	£7,907
Dance	21	£7,687	27	£7,253	28	£7,471	17	£8,469
Design & Tech	97	£8,242	93	£7,585	97	£7,602	63	£7,518
Drama	23	£8,360	20	£7,026	21	£7,873	26	£8,012
Media, Film or TV	140	£7,746	144	£8,153	120	£7,887	82	£7,439
Music	104	£8,074	112	£8,173	92	£8,442	86	£8,065
Performing Arts	29	£8,356	37	£8,122	42	£8,386	25	£8,098

Private Rented Housing: Fees and Charges

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to limit the number of times a person applying to rent a home would be subject to fees for administration and immigration checks. [[HL1000](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We have no plans to limit the number of times a person applying to rent a home may be subject to fees for administration and immigration checks. However, letting agents are required to be fully transparent about their fees and publicise a complete tariff of fees in their offices and on their website. The Government believes that full transparency gives consumers the information they need. We intend to carry out a review later this year into how well this approach is working. Not all letting agents do charge fees for right to rent checks and when right to rent was rolled out in the West Midlands, it was found that the majority

of letting agents were not charging a fee for conducting the right to rent immigration checks.

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of administrative and immigration check fees on those on low incomes seeking to rent a home. [[HL997](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Not all letting agents charge fees for right to rent checks and when right to rent was rolled out in the West Midlands, it was found that the majority of letting agents were not charging a fee for conducting the right to rent immigration checks. Letting agents are required to be fully transparent about their fees and publicise a complete tariff of fees in their offices and on their website. The Government believes that full transparency gives consumers the information they need. We intend to carry out a review later this year into how well this approach is working.

Public Transport: Subsidies

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the various levels of subsidy available for travel on public transport and the effect such variations have on inequality; and whether they plan to modify their policies as a result of that assessment. [HL955]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Under the Bus Subsidy Operators Grant (BSOG) system, the Government pays out some £250m a year to bus operators and local authorities to support bus services outside London.

BSOG plays an important role in protecting services, especially in rural areas. Department for Transport analysis indicates that BSOG has helped extend the rural bus network by 13%, equivalent to an additional 38 million kilometres to the network, providing residents with vital links to local services.

Ultimately, however, it is for individual authorities to decide which services are most appropriate for support in their respective areas and deliver the greatest benefits for their residents. We believe it is right that such decisions should be made locally.

Research: Finance

Asked by Lord Trees

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the result of the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU and the possible consequences of that result for research funding in the UK, what priority they intend to give to research funding in the forthcoming negotiations. [HL1073]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The UK economy is fundamentally strong and UK research and innovation are world leading. The Government will continue working with the research community to make the strongest possible case for higher education, research and innovation in the coming negotiation.

Road Works

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to encourage the wider use of lane rental schemes, as introduced in London in 2012. [HL954]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are determined to deliver better journeys for drivers and cut congestion. Lane rental enables councils to charge utilities companies for carrying out works on the busiest roads at the busiest times, to encourage them to keep disruption to a minimum on the local road network.

Regulations and guidance were introduced in 2012 and led to the introduction of pioneer schemes by Transport for London in 2012 and Kent County Council in 2013. Charges were also applied under these schemes to the

highway authority's own maintenance works. The Department for Transport published an independent evaluation of the schemes in March 2016, which is attached for ease.

The report is being used by the Department alongside other information to formulate options for the future of lane rental schemes. These are likely to be subject to consultation during 2017.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Street Works Lane Rental Evaluation Report [HL0954 - ecorys-lane-rental-report.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-07-04/HL954>

Schools: Vocational Guidance

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what additional qualifications are required to teach Careers Education in schools. [HL1032]

Lord Nash: We want schools to build the skills and expertise required to plan strategically for the provision of careers education and guidance, embedding careers and employability skills in the curriculum and engaging external partners in the delivery of high quality, inspirational support. The careers strategy, to be published later this year, will set out further details of how we will support schools to achieve this. The strategy has been developed in consultation with key partners across the education and careers sectors.

Pupils can gain confidence and motivation from the opportunity to explore career ideas through individual, face-to-face discussions with a range of people. The careers statutory guidance sets out the main qualifications for careers professionals: the Qualification in Career Guidance (QCG) (which replaced the earlier Diploma in Careers Guidance) and the Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development. The statutory guidance also provides information about the register of careers professionals, developed by the Career Development Institute, which schools can use to search for a career development professional who can deliver a particular service or activity.

Silver: Hallmarking

Asked by Lord Stevenson of Balmacara

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received about the decision of Birmingham Assay Office, pursuant to the Legislative Reform (Hallmarking) Order 2013, to open an office in Mumbai on 18 July that will use a mark for silver to be imported into the UK that is similar to the established anchor mark used for domestic production; and whether they will publish any assessment they have made of the prospective impact of that decision on the Birmingham silversmithing trade. [HL1084]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: Hallmarks are not an indication of geographic origin and are already applied widely to articles manufactured in places other than the location of the four UK Assay Offices, including to articles manufactured outside the UK.

Government has received four representations expressing concern about the decision of Birmingham Assay Office, pursuant to the Legislative Reform (Hallmarking) Order 2013, to open a sub-office in Mumbai.

An impact assessment of the costs and benefits of removing the restrictions on overseas hallmarking was published alongside the government consultation on the proposals in 2012, and covered the whole of the hallmarking sector. The Impact Assessment estimated that there would be a benefit to business of £3.44 m. A copy of the impact assessment can be found on the Parliament website accompanying the Legislative Reform (Hallmarking) Order 2013.

Small Businesses

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risks that companies may delay investment and hiring new staff in the UK in the light of the result of the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU. [HL893]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: My Rt hon Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, my Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Governor of the Bank of England have been clear that although there is uncertainty ahead, the UK is very much open for business and investment.

Since the referendum, the Government has been actively engaged with businesses of all types and in all sectors to understand their concerns. In the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, my Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State and other ministers are holding a series of roundtables with business organisations and with CEOs and senior representatives from many of our biggest employers. The Secretary of State also chairs the new business engagement inter-ministerial group, which brings ministers across Government together to discuss issues and challenges facing business, including creating opportunities for investment and trade.

Southern

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for restoring a reliable service by Southern Rail. [HL984]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The first issue is for GTR to provide a reliable, consistent train service, which is what its revised timetable is designed to do. Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) will keep the situation regarding traincrew availability under review every week

and will take decisions about restoring services on that basis.

We also urge the union in the strongest possible terms to sit round the table with the operator to bring this unjustified action, which is harming passengers, to an end.

Southern: Standards

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they will take to prevent further deterioration of Southern Rail services. [HL1074]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Prior to the start of the industrial action by the RMT on Southern, the performance on this route was improving; we urge the union in the strongest terms to get round the table and end this unjustified action which is harming passengers.

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance the operator of Southern Rail services is given on the safe passenger loading capacity for Sussex Coastal services. [HL1075]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Transport safety is a key objective of the Government and the UK has one of the safest railways in Europe. Each operator is responsible for the safety of their staff, passengers and services. The Office of Rail and Road's duty is to ensure that those responsible for keeping Britain's railways safe for passengers, and providing a safe place for staff to work, do so.

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to give guidance to the operator of Southern Rail services on ensuring passenger safety when short formation services are in use. [HL1076]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Each operator is responsible for the safety of their staff, passengers and services. The Office of Rail and Road's duty is to ensure that those responsible for keeping Britain's railways safe for passengers and providing a safe place for staff to work do so.

Sudan: Religious Freedom

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of continued reports of the imprisonment of Christians, increased restrictions on refugee churches, closure and destruction of other churches, and the ongoing bombing campaign against the Nuba region which has a large Christian community, what steps they are taking to ensure that the right to freedom of religion or belief is respected in Sudan. [HL919]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Freedom of religion or belief in Sudan continues to be an area of deep concern to the British Government. Along with international partners, we regularly attend court cases on freedom of religion or belief and raise related cases with the Government of Sudan. Through our project work we also seek to support lawyers who take on cases addressing important human rights issues, such as freedom of religion. More broadly, we also continue highlight our concerns about the conflict in South Kordofan, most recently via a joint statement with our Troika partners on 27 May. We welcome the Government of Sudan's announcement of a cessation of hostilities on 17 June and urge all sides to respect this.

Syria: Asylum

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to encourage Gulf States to accept Syrian asylum seekers. [HL996]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We recognise and welcome the substantial and continued contribution made by Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to the humanitarian aid response for Syria and the large numbers of Syrians already in the Gulf. The Gulf states are now home to almost one million Syrians, and Gulf states have pledged more than \$3 billion in humanitarian assistance. Kuwait co-hosted the London Donor Conference in February 2016 where Gulf states pledged \$739 million.

Syria: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to discuss with the government of Turkey the opening of safe routes across the frontier of Syria to allow relief supplies to reach displaced people in and near Afrin. [HL990]

Baroness Verma: The UK plays a key role in opening up humanitarian access in Syria. Over 300 convoys of cross-border aid have been delivered because of the UK co-sponsored UN Security Council Resolutions 2165, 2191 and 2258, which enable aid to be delivered to those in need in Syria without the consent of the regime. British officials regularly raise issues relating to the management of the border with Syria in their discussions with the Turkish authorities.

Turkey: LGBT People

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 4 July (HL763), why the pride flag was not flown over the British Embassy in Ankara when the pride flag has been flown over embassies in Paris, Oslo, Tel Aviv and Santiago. [HL977]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Rainbow flag was previously flown at some United Kingdom Diplomatic missions. Since 2015, following the implementation of a simple, clear and consistent flag flying policy, United Kingdom Diplomatic missions have only flown the Diplomatic, Union or Consular flag, the flags of the constituent countries of the UK on their respective national days and in certain countries, the European flag. United Kingdom Diplomatic missions do not fly any other flags.

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 4 July (HL763), why they have not discussed with the government of Turkey the use of rubber bullets and tear gas against LGBT people on the streets of Istanbul. [HL978]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: I refer the noble Lord to my answer of 4 July 2016 in response to his question of 20 June 2016 (HL763). This stated that we regularly underline the importance of all fundamental freedoms as part of our broader dialogue with the Turkish government, including freedom of assembly. We have expressed concerns over the disproportionate use of rubber bullets and tear gas by Turkish authorities.

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 4 July (HL763), when they plan to raise with the government of Turkey the use of tear gas and rubber bullets against LGBT people on the streets of Istanbul. [HL979]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: I refer the noble Lord to my answer of 4 July in response to his question of 20 June 2016 (HL763), in which I stated that we regularly underline the importance of all fundamental freedoms as part of our broader dialogue with the Turkish government, including freedom of assembly. We have expressed concerns over the disproportionate use of rubber bullets and tear gas by Turkish authorities.

UK Withdrawal from EU

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the relationships between Norway and the EU, and Switzerland and the EU, could be used as models for the UK's relationship with the EU after leaving that Union. [HL892]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Government provided an assessment of alternative models that the UK could pursue in its paper "Alternatives to membership: possible models for the United Kingdom outside the European Union", which was presented to Parliament in March this year. It will be for the next Prime Minister to

determine, along with their Cabinet, the right approach to take and the right outcome to negotiate.

Wheels to Work Schemes

*Asked by **Baroness Thomas of Winchester***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether local authorities will be able to bid for resources from the Department for Transport's Access Fund for Sustainable

Travel to support or develop Wheels 2 Work schemes within their areas. [[HL1071](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Department for Transport welcomes applications to the Access Fund from local transport authorities in England (except London) that support or develop Wheels 2 Work schemes in their area which increase cycling and improve access to work, skills, education or training.

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