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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

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Costs

Greg Mulholland:

[\[49773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 15 September 2016 to Question 45581, when his Department expects to be able to provide a breakdown of the costs incurred in the creation of his Department.

Margot James:

The Department will provide a breakdown in the Annual Report and Accounts 2016-17.

■ Department for Energy and Climate Change: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Jack Dromey:

[\[49802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the expected cost is of the merger of the Department for Energy and Climate Change with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Mr Nick Hurd:

A breakdown of transition costs will be provided in the Annual Report and Accounts 2016-17.

■ Energy Companies Obligation

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[49422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his policy is on the Government maintaining its EU climate obligations after the UK leaves the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The UK remains firmly committed to tackling global climate change. This commitment is enshrined in our domestic legislation via the Climate Change Act 2008. In line with this, we recently set the UK's fifth domestic carbon budget in law. The UK remains a member of the European Union and existing rules apply.

■ Non-tariff Barriers

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[49380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to protect UK industry from non-tariff barriers in the event of the UK leaving the single market.

Margot James:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is currently working closely with the Department for Exiting the EU to understand the impacts that withdrawal from the EU will have on businesses, consumers and other economic actors. As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has said, we will work hard to get the best deal for Britain.

■ **Pharmacy: Closures**

Tom Brake: [\[49185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made on small businesses of the potential closure of independent pharmacies; and what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health on that effect.

Margot James:

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy regularly discusses a range of issues with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health.

Funding for the contractors providing NHS pharmaceutical services is determined by the Department of Health.

CABINET OFFICE

■ **Cancer: Diagnosis**

Jim Shannon: [\[49128\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people have been diagnosed with neck and head cancer in each of the last five years.

Chris Skidmore:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Letter to Member - Head and Neck Cancer [PQ_49128_final.pdf]

■ **Childcare Implementation Taskforce**

Lucy Powell: [\[49176\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many times the Childcare Implementation Taskforce has met since its creation; and what the full attendance was at each such meeting.

Chris Skidmore:

Information relating to the proceedings of Implementation Taskforces, including when and how often they meet is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

The Government published a list of Cabinet Committees and Implementation Taskforces and their members on 18 October 2016. This can be found at the following web address: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-cabinet-committees-system-and-list-of-cabinet-committees>

■ Databases

Chi Onwurah: [49758]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent progress his Department has made on its work on an open address register.

Chris Skidmore:

The 2016 Budget announced that government would develop options for an authoritative address register that is open and freely available. It is critical that we make wider use of more precise address data and ensure it is frequently updated to unlock opportunities for innovation.

Since the Budget, officials from across government have been exploring a range of potential options for the creation of an Open Address Register and I will look to update the House once this work has been concluded.

Chi Onwurah: [49759]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent estimate his Department has made of the social and economic value to the economy of the open registers being built by the government data programme.

Chris Skidmore:

Open registers will provide significant value across the public sector and the wider economy by transforming how government uses data to drive benefits to citizens, focusing on accuracy, transparency and accessibility of data. Open registers will stimulate and support a wide marketplace of open data products and services, built on high-quality open government data.

Similar programmes of work in Australia and Denmark have driven significant social and economic benefits; the development of an open address register in Denmark has seen a return on investment in excess of 3000%. We expect that the development of open registers will aid our international competitiveness and help grow our digital economy.

The Government Digital Service has already delivered a country register with the FCO, with a complementary Territory register also in development. We have just published a Local Authority England register with DCLG. There is a pipeline of additional registers being created that have been prioritised after discussion with government departments and based on the most pressing user need.

TREASURY■ **Annuities****Julian Knight:**[\[49517\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what research his Department has carried out into the potential for widening of the secondary annuity market.

Simon Kirby:

At March Budget 2015 the government announced proposals to remove the current restrictions on selling existing annuities, and to create the conditions for a secondary market in annuities to develop. The intention was that pensioners would be able to sell the income they receive from their annuity in return for a lump sum.

The government undertook extensive consultation with industry and consumer groups to understand the conditions that would be necessary for there to be a vibrant market and to achieve good outcomes for consumers. However, it became increasingly clear that creating the conditions to allow a competitive market to emerge could not be balanced with sufficient consumer protections.

It also became clear that there would be insufficient purchasers to create a competitive market. This means there was a high risk of significant consumer detriment as consumers would be likely to get poor value for their annuity income streams and incur high costs for selling. Furthermore, the steps that the government would have needed to take to create purchasing demand in the market would have undermined important consumer protections.

In these circumstances the government concluded that it would not be in consumers' interests to continue with this policy.

■ **Concentrix****Gill Furniss:**[\[49512\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy for HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to keep records of the (a) number of people who have their tax credits erroneously suspended by Concentrix, (b) number of people who subsequently have those tax credits reinstated and (c) length of time it takes HMRC to subsequently process those payments.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) collects a wide range of data in order to process a claim. However, this data is not currently held in a form that is accessible for bulk requests without incurring disproportionate costs. For that reason, HMRC is currently focused on resolving outstanding Concentrix cases, but will be preparing analysis which will be made available in due course.

■ EU Grants and Loans

Diana Johnson: [\[49256\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether UK projects earmarked for EU funding in 2019-20 under the EU's 2014-2020 budget cycle will continue to receive such funds should the UK formally leave the EU in 2019.

Mr David Gauke:

The Treasury has provided a guarantee for multi-year funds that may carry over after exit where they meet UK priorities and value for money criteria.

The Treasury has also guaranteed all direct, competitively bid projects between UK organisations and the European Commission signed before we leave the EU, and the current level of direct payments to farmers until 2020.

■ Personal Income

Mr David Crausby: [\[49302\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect on family incomes of the withdrawal of tax credits as a result of the introduction of the national living wage.

Jane Ellison:

The introduction of the National Living Wage in April 2016 marked an important step towards building an economy that works for everyone. At £7.20, it represented a 50p increase on the National Minimum Wage, and a pay rise for over a million low paid workers across the UK.

A family's entitlement to tax credits depends on a number of factors including the level of income they receive. The introduction of the National Living Wage and the consequential adjustment to a family's award will be dependent on individual circumstances. The first tax credits income threshold is £6,420, so once a household's earnings reaches this income threshold, their tax credit award is removed at a rate of 41p for each pound of income above the threshold.

■ Retail Trade: Internet

Gareth Thomas: [\[49166\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential benefit of a transaction levy on internet retailers; and if he will make a statement.

Jane Ellison:

Online retailers pay a wide range of taxes, including corporation tax and accounting for VAT on their relevant sales. The Government is also taking action to tackle tax avoidance to ensure overseas sellers pay the right amount of VAT.

■ Taxation: Company Cars

Mary Glendon: [\[49782\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the value of salary sacrifice company cars to employers in the public sector for (a) recruiting and (b) retaining for staff.

Mary Glendon: [\[49809\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of taxation rules applied to company cars on incentivising the take-up of low and ultra-low emission vehicles.

Mary Glendon: [\[49810\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on basic rate taxpayers who drive low and ultra-low emission company cars of proposals contained in the HM Revenue and Customs' consultation on salary sacrifice for the provision of benefits in kind.

Mary Glendon: [\[49811\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of basic rate taxpaying company car drivers who will potentially pay more tax as a result of proposals in the HM Revenue and Customs' consultation on salary sacrifice for the provision of benefits in kind.

Jane Ellison:

The Government has recently consulted on proposals to limit the range of benefits in kind, such as company cars, that attract income tax and National Insurance Contributions advantages when they are provided as part of salary sacrifice arrangements. Responses have been received from a wide range of interested parties and the Government's response will be published in due course.

The Government is committed to encouraging company car drivers to take-up the driving of ultra-low emissions vehicles. A separate consultation published on 10 August sets out proposals to incentivise the take up of low and ultra-low emissions company cars.

■ Welfare Tax Credits: Child Arrangements Orders

Gill Furniss: [\[49171\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will amend his Department's official guidance to allow court-granted child arrangement orders to be used by HM Revenue and Customs as evidence of children's living arrangements when assessing applications for tax credits.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) already accepts a court-granted child arrangement order as evidence when deciding who has main responsibility for a child but need to consider this alongside any other evidence provided before making a decision. HMRC

has amended its guidance in the Tax Credits Technical Manual to refer to child arrangement orders.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Business Rates Review Steering Group

Gareth Thomas:

[49179]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many times and on what dates the Business Rates Review Steering Group has met; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Local Government Association and Department for Communities and Local Government jointly chair the Business Rates Retention Steering Group which was established to consider the mechanisms needed to set up and run the new business rates system, as well as the timetable and implementation of the reforms. It oversees the work of a set of technical working groups, each looking at particular aspects of the reforms. The Group usually meets on a monthly basis and has done so on 6 occasions since April 2016. All papers for meetings are published here:

<http://www.local.gov.uk/business-rates>

■ Devolution: Greater London

Gareth Thomas:

[49069]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will devolve (a) tax raising powers, (b) business and skills funding, (c) housing and planning, (d) transport, (e) health and (f) policing and criminal justice to the Mayor of London and London Assembly; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Percy:

Our devolution agenda is making huge strides in putting decision making powers in the hands of local people. London has been the trailblazer for that and already has significant powers across a range of policy areas including housing, transport and policing. We remain open to exploring opportunities to devolve further powers to local areas that may approach with such proposals, including London.

■ Floods: EU Grants and Loans

Mr Jamie Reed:

[49807]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how his Department plans to distribute money awarded by the European Solidarity Fund to flood-affected communities in the event that funds are awarded.

Andrew Percy:

The Government will determine how best to use any additional benefit received from the European Union Solidarity Fund once the amount of any award is known.

■ Help to Buy Scheme: Shared Ownership

Mr Peter Bone: [\[49761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will extend the Help to Buy scheme to shared ownership housing association tenants.

Gavin Barwell:

The Government has recently launched the new Help to Buy: Shared Ownership scheme which enables people to purchase an initial 25% to 75% of a new home and pay rent on the remainder with the option to purchase more later. It is open to those with a household income below £80,000 in England or £90,000 in London. The Government has no plans to combine this with Help to Buy: Equity Loan.

■ Homelessness Reduction Bill

John Healey: [\[49757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to the oral evidence of the Minister of State for Local Government to the Communities and Local Government Committee on 14 September 2016, at Questions 84 to 87, HC635, whether he plans to publish an estimated cost of the draft Homelessness Reduction Bill before its Second Reading.

Mr Marcus Jones:

One person without a home is one too many. This is why on Monday 24 October the Government announced its support for Mr Blackman's Homelessness Reduction Bill.

The Bill will significantly reform England's homelessness legislation, ensuring that more people get the help they need to prevent a homelessness crisis in the first place.

The Government will fund any additional costs in line with the longstanding 'new burdens' arrangements.

■ Local Authorities: EU Grants and Loans

Gareth Thomas: [\[49191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if Ministers of his Department will meet with the European Investment Bank to discuss access to loan finance for local authorities after the UK leaves the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Consideration of local authorities' financial relationship with the European Investment Bank will form part of our approach to exiting the EU. As this government has already stated, we will not give a running commentary on Brexit negotiations.

■ Local Government Services

Gareth Thomas: [\[49068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the effect of demographic changes in the last ten years on the demand for local authority services, and if he will make a statement.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Spending Review took account of the demographic pressures facing local authorities and set out a sustainable basis for local authorities to discharge their functions over this parliament.

The Department is also conducting the Fair Funding Review which is a thorough assessment of the relative needs and resources of local authorities. The treatment of demographic changes is a key part of this. The Review will determine the funding baselines for individual local authorities under 100% business rates retention.

■ Non-domestic Rates

Gareth Thomas: [\[49070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what his policy is on changing the apportionment of business rate income between district and county local authorities once business rate income is fully devolved; and if he will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas: [\[49165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will release some revenue support grant funding for local authorities to help councils affected by sudden increases in need once 100 per cent of business rates income is devolved to local authorities; and if he will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas: [\[49178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the potential income for each local authority in England from 100 per cent receipt of business rates; what effect the extension of small business rate relief and the uprating of the multiplier by the Consumer Price Index will have on that estimate; and if he will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas: [\[49190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential level of volatility of local authority income once business rates income is fully retained by local authorities; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Marcus Jones:

We recently conducted a consultation on our approach to the implementation of 100% Business Rates Retention. This consultation included questions on how to take account of changes in need over time, how to manage volatility in business rates income and how to distribute funding between different tiers of government. My officials are currently considering the 454 responses we have received to this consultation and we

will publish a summary of the responses and our proposed way forward in due course. In the meantime, we will continue close collaboration with the Local Government Association, other groups representative of local government, and individual local authorities, in taking this work forward.

■ **Non-domestic Rates: Appeals**

Gareth Thomas: [\[49193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what information his Department holds on how many businesses appealed against the amount demanded from them in business rates (a) in each English local authority area and (b) by region of England in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Information on the number of appeals in relation to business rates is held by the Valuation Office Agency. Data on appeals, including a breakdown by local authority area, are published online and are available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/valuation-office-agency/about/statistics.

■ **Voluntary Organisations: Hearing Impairment**

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[48709\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will take steps to encourage community groups and facilities used by them to improve hearing impairment facilities.

Mr Marcus Jones:

All members of the community should have access to their local facilities and whilst the Secretary of State will continue to encourage community groups to adapt to meet the needs of its members; it is for the owner of the facilities to assess and make reasonable adjustment.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ **Inheritance Tax and Nuisance Calls**

Jim Shannon: [\[49119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to (a) reduce nuisance calls and (b) give advice to companies on how to contact the public appropriately on inheritance tax issues.

Matt Hancock:

Companies who wish to make direct marketing calls must abide by the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR). The Government has already taken a number of steps to reduce the problem of nuisance calls with further measures to be implemented in the near future. In May 2016, the Government introduced a new requirement for all direct marketing callers to provide caller line identification. In

September 2016 we introduced a measure in the Digital Economy Bill that is currently going through Parliament that will make it a requirement for the Information Commissioner to issue a statutory code of practice on direct marketing, which will support the ICO in taking action against those who breach PECR. More recently, we announced the Government's intention to hold company directors to account for breaches of the PECR. In addition, the Government is considering extending the Information Commissioner's powers of compulsory audit to organisations that generate nuisance calls. This measure amongst other measures will provide better consumer protection, from unsolicited telephone calls.

The Gov.UK website, provides information about inheritance tax and the support available from the Inheritance Tax and Probate helpline. HMRC works with advisers to direct them and the public to this.

■ Mobile Phones: Radio Frequencies

Sir Greg Knight: [\[49547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 18 October 2016 to Question 48050, if her Department will make representations to Ofcom on introducing a cap on the amount of spectrum each mobile operator can hold.

Matt Hancock:

Ofcom is still considering the rules for the forthcoming auction. We will await their findings.

■ Television: South Wales

Chris Elmore: [\[49257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps are being taken to improve television reception in the South Wales valleys.

Matt Hancock:

Under a 2006 agreement, digital terrestrial, cable and satellite digital television services together cover practically all UK households, so that in all but the most exceptional of cases, everyone should be able to get free-to-air digital television, by one means or another.

DEFENCE

■ Syria: Armed Conflict

Brendan O'Hara: [\[49513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the oral contribution by the Secretary of State for Defence, of 18 January 2016, Official Report, column 1118 on how many occasions the Government has considered evidence from (a) non-governmental organisations, (b) Airwars, (c) White Helmets and (d) other organisations working in Syria on

the collection of data on civilian (i) casualties and (ii) injuries in Syria from 2016 to date; and on how many occasions the Government has considered such evidence as credible.

Mike Penning:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has reviewed four batches of information collated by Airwars in relation to possible civilian casualties in Syria and Iraq, where they wished to establish whether RAF aircraft might have been involved. There was no credible evidence that RAF aircraft were responsible in any of these incidents. MOD officials have also met Airwars to outline the process used by the UK to assess the outcome of RAF airstrikes.

All RAF airstrikes are subject to an assessment of their outcome. Whilst there can be no guarantees in a complex air campaign like this one, our airstrikes are planned meticulously with the objective of minimising the risk of causing civilian casualties. The MOD continues to be prepared to consider credible evidence on this issue from any source.

■ **Veterans: Employment Schemes**

John Spellar:

[\[49372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what support his Department is giving to the Royal British Legion Industries Lifeworks programme.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) recognises that the mobile nature of Service life can create a particular difficulty for working partners who often give up their own jobs to accompany Service personnel. The MOD's Partner Employment Programme (PEP) is therefore focused on addressing the barriers that hinder spousal employment, both in the UK and on overseas postings.

As part of our drive to support partners of Service personnel, the MOD's Armed Forces Covenant Team secured LIBOR funding for a two year period (2013-2015) to support The Royal British Legion Industries' (RBLI) Lifeworks for Families in the successful delivery of vocational assessment and employability courses to Service spouses and dependants.

Lifeworks for Families has now secured private funding for continuation until 2019 and the MOD continues to support the successful delivery of this work through continued engagement and publicity with our policy staff and the single Services. I am pleased that nearly 800 individuals have already benefited from this programme. Demand continues to be high and MOD officials are working with RBLI to deliver an additional bespoke workshop in spring 2017, which will support the families of serving personnel in Cyprus as they return to the UK.

In addition, RBLI Lifeworks for Veterans received £958,000 of LIBOR funds in March 2016 to deliver intensive employment support to long term unemployed veterans across the UK. This funding supports the continuation of the current five year programme until 2018. To date, over 600 Armed Forces veterans have benefited from the course, resulting in 83% of participants achieving paid employment.

■ War Widows

Mr David Crausby:

[49238]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make it his policy to restore compensation for war widows who remarried between 1973 and 2005.

Mark Lancaster:

There are currently no plans to restore War Widows Pensions to those who had surrendered it on re-marriage or cohabitation, however, I remain sympathetic to the circumstances of this group of widows and have asked Ministry of Defence officials to continue to consider potential options given the financial and legal considerations we are faced with.

EDUCATION

■ Boarding Schools: Disadvantaged

Royston Smith:

[49071]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of pupils on free school meals attend state boarding schools.

Edward Timpson:

0.16% of pupils eligible for free school meals attend a state-funded mainstream boarding school[1] according to the January 2016 school census.

The census is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2016>.

[1] Defined as a school with at least 1 boarding pupil, excluding independent schools, special schools and pupil referral units. There are 38 state funded mainstream boarding schools.

■ Children in Care

Royston Smith:

[49075]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will estimate the average cost to a local authority of placing a child in the care system.

Edward Timpson:

Estimating the average cost to a local authority of placing a child in the care system is complicated by a number of issues. For example, the costs relating to a particular child are determined by the length of time that they remain looked after. This will be, in part, determined by age on entry. Evidence shows that, proportionally, the number of children starting to be looked after aged 16 and over has been increasing in recent years: 16 percent of all children who started to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2015 were aged 16 or over. For the year ending 31 March 2016, the proportion was 18 percent.¹

Costs also vary across placement types. Evidence shows that the average costs per resident week for a local authority care home for children are around £3,000.² The cost of foster care for children is estimated at around £600 per child per week on average.

Local authorities are required to submit annual budget and outturn statements about their spending on children's services to the Secretary of State for Education.

The most recent annual outturn figures can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-251-outturn-2014-to-2015-data>

Total local authority expenditure on looked after children is broken down across a number of areas including, for example, total expenditure on residential care, fostering services, and leaving care support services.

This information can be combined with information on the numbers of looked after children in each local authority to gain insight into average local authority expenditure per looked after child. Table LAA1 of the "Children Looked After in England including adoption" Statistical First Release shows the number of looked after children at 31 March each year by local authority. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2015-to-2016>

Research supported by grants from Central Government and others present more detailed cost estimates.³ This estimates the costs of, for example, deciding a child needs to be looked after, care planning, placement finding, maintaining a placement, and transition to leaving care services. The estimated costs of these processes are published, broken down by classifications of different levels of need, by New Economy here:

<http://neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>

The Department for Education also publishes weekly unit costs of looked after children, fostering, and residential care in the Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT). This shows figures annually and by local authority.

It can be found here in the children's service finance section:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait>

Sources

¹ Children Looked After in England including adoption, Statistical First Release, table C1

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2015-to-2016>

² PSSRU (2015). Unit Costs of Health and Social Care 2015

<http://www.pssru.ac.uk/project-pages/unit-costs/2015/index.php>

³ Ward. H., Holmes. L., and Soper, J. (2008). Costs and consequences of placing children in care. Jessica Kingsley Publishers

■ Higher Education: Private Sector

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[48858]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that private higher education providers that have attained degree powers and university status provide an education of a sufficient quality.

Joseph Johnson:

Private higher education providers can obtain Degree Awarding Powers (DAPs) and University Title (UT) if they meet the criteria. The criteria are set out in departmental guidance, and are the same for publicly-funded and private providers. For DAPs they include criteria around Governance and Academic Management, and Academic Standards and Quality Assurance. For UT they include good governance criteria such as quality assurance and academic standards, and criteria on student numbers.

Higher education providers that are publicly funded can obtain DAPs on an indefinite basis. All other organisations, including private providers, can be granted DAPs for a fixed term period of six years. The decision to renew degree-awarding powers after each term rests with the Privy Council and is subject to the organisation meeting the criteria for the renewals set out in our guidance. All holders of DAPs are expected to subscribe to the Quality Assurance Agency and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

A change in control at the provider may trigger a review to check that the provider in question continues to meet the criteria for UT, and remains the same cohesive academic community that was granted DAPs.

The current departmental guidance is available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/higher-education-market-entry-guidance>

■ Offences against Children

Jeff Smith:

[48867]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make it the Government's policy to require local authorities to collect data on the number of children who have experienced abuse and neglect.

Edward Timpson:

The Government collects and publishes 'Characteristics of children in need' statistics annually. This includes data on the number of children in need where the primary need identified at assessment is abuse or neglect, the number of assessments undertaken by children's social care services where different types of abuse and neglect are a factor, and the number of children on child protection plans by different categories of abuse and neglect.

The statistics can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-children-in-need>.

■ Overseas Students: EU Nationals

Stephen Gethins: [47636]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to support EU students at UK universities after 2020 if the UK has left the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government announced on 11 October 2016 that EU students applying for a place at an English university or further education institution in the 2017/2018 academic year will continue to be eligible for student loans and grants - and will be for the duration of their course.

The decision will mean that students applying to study from 2017 to 2018 will not only be eligible for the same funding and support as they are now, but that their eligibility will continue throughout their course, even if the UK exits the European Union during that period.

The Government statement on student support for EU students can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/funding-support-for-eu-students>

■ Overseas Students: Fees and Charges

Dr Rupa Huq: [48537]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether prospective EU national students will not be subject to tuition fee increases for the academic years 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Joseph Johnson:

EU students wishing to start a higher education course in England in the 2017/18 academic year will be subject to the same maximum fees that apply to English domiciled students. This will apply in each year of their course and for the duration of the course.

The Government makes its decisions on higher education student support, including the maximum tuition fees, on an annual basis.

■ Research: EU Grants and Loans

Dr Rupa Huq: [48921]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department plans to retain access for UK universities to EU research programmes after the UK leaves the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government is committed to maintaining and enhancing the strength of the UK's research base. This is why it has protected the science resource budget in real terms from its 2015/16 level of £4.7 billion for the rest of the Parliament, as well as committing to invest in new scientific infrastructure on a record scale – £6.9 billion over the period 2015-2021.

HM Treasury's decision to underwrite the grants of competitively bid for EU research funding will give British participants and their EU partners the assurance and certainty

needed to plan ahead for projects that can stretch over many years. The Government will ensure that the UK continues to be a world leader in research and innovation.

■ Schools: Museums and Galleries

Diana Johnson:

[\[49335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the locations are of the museums supported by the museums and schools programme.

Nick Gibb:

The museums and schools programme operates in the following 10 areas:

- Kent
- Bristol
- London
- Peterborough
- Great Yarmouth
- Coventry
- Lincolnshire
- Yorkshire
- Blackburn and Lancashire
- Tees Valley

■ Students: Fees and Charges

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[48859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of changes to tuition fees on the breadth of course provision offered by universities.

Joseph Johnson:

The breadth of a higher education institution's course offering is a decision for the institution itself, rather than Government, though it will inevitably be constrained by the need to cover the cost of that provision. The cap on student tuition fees has been frozen since 2012, which has meant that the maximum fee providers can charge has fallen in real terms, from £9,000 to £8,500.

The Teaching Excellence Framework will mean that those providers who can demonstrate a suitably high standard of teaching quality will be able to maintain their fees in line with inflation.

This is expected to be worth over £1 billion per year to the sector, ensuring the sector can continue to provide a world leading and diverse higher education system that promotes social mobility and the country's economic success.

■ Universities: Admissions

Justin Tomlinson: [\[48950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to incentivise universities to attract more students to take courses in areas which are identified as having a skills shortage.

Joseph Johnson:

We want everyone with the potential to benefit from higher education to be able to do so. We will provide student finance for those studying part-time for a second degree in any Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subject. We also announced in the Autumn Statement of 2015 that we are introducing new part-time maintenance loans from the academic year 2018/19, in order to support the cost of living while studying on part-time courses.

To promote retraining and prepare people for the future labour market, we are also reviewing any further gaps in support for lifetime learning, including for flexible and part-time study. We are also supporting growth in degree apprenticeships and have made a £10m Development Fund available to help universities and partners, including further education colleges, to help higher education providers to meet employer demand.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Angling: Licensing

Mr Charles Walker: [\[49628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will take steps to mark the centenary of the birth of Richard Walker by ensuring that Clarissa the carp appears on the front of the 2017-18 fishing licence; and if she will make a statement.

George Eustice:

The images on the rod licence are currently produced under agreement with a specialist wildlife artist and have focused on fish in their natural environment. The exact image is determined the year before the licence goes on sale and the image for 2017/18 has already been determined. The design for 2018/19 will be determined during 2017. The Environment Agency is happy to consider the option of using Clarissa to mark the centenary of the birth of Richard Walker.

■ Circuses: Animal Welfare

Mr David Crausby: [\[49215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the Government will bring forward legislative proposals to ban wild animals from being used in circuses.

George Eustice:

A ban on the use of wild animals in travelling circuses is a manifesto commitment and will be introduced as soon as parliamentary time allows. In the interim, the welfare of

any wild animals still being used by travelling circuses in England is protected by the Welfare of Wild Animals in Travelling Circuses (England) Regulations 2012. Currently, 16 wild animals are licensed by Defra under the Regulations for use by two circuses.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Bayer CropScience and Syngenta**

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[48952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 12 October 2016 to Question 47328, if she will provide the information requested in the specified format.

George Eustice:

As previously stated, further information on Ministerial meetings with organisations is available on Gov.UK, as part of the quarterly transparency information.

Data on meetings with Departmental officials is not centrally recorded. Any further information could only be obtained by incurring disproportionate costs.

■ **Fish: Conservation**

Mr Charles Walker: [\[49454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much government funding is available for salmon and eel conservation in 2016-17; and how much such funding was available in 2009-10.

George Eustice:

In 2009/10, £9.4 million of Government funding was issued to the Environment Agency covering its fisheries specific duties, such as maintaining, improving and developing fisheries for migratory fish species, for both England and Wales.

Since 2010, the Environment Agency has received Government funding to deliver its environmental objectives through an integrated approach which does not allow disaggregation. Salmon and eel conservation has benefited from work on delivering the Water Framework Directive, funding for the community-led Catchment Based Approach for delivering water improvements, pollution prevention work and from areas such as monitoring and planning. In addition to this broad Government funding, migratory fish species benefit from the Environment Agency's charging activity work.

■ **Flood Control: Copeland**

Mr Jamie Reed: [\[49805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will visit Keswick to meet the Keswick Flood Action Group, the Keswick Town Council and the hon. Member for Copeland to discuss flood prevention.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

I visited Keswick on 9 August 2016 and met members of the Keswick Flood Action Group. I saw and heard about both the impact of the winter floods and the programme of work on flooding prevention and resilience enhancement.

I do not have another visit scheduled but I would be glad to meet the hon. Member for Copeland and Keswick representatives next time. Meanwhile, I am keen to support the good work that the Cumbria Flood Partnership and all local parties are doing on flood prevention and preparedness for the coming winter.

■ Neonicotinoids**Mr David Crausby:**[\[49293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the UK intends to maintain the EU ban on neonicotinoids after the UK leaves the EU.

George Eustice:

As part of the preparation for EU exit, we are considering future arrangements for pesticides. Our highest priority will continue to be the protection of people and the environment.

The Government remains of the view that decisions on the use of neonicotinoids and other pesticides should be based on a careful scientific assessment of the risks. Pesticides that carry unacceptable risks to pollinators should not be authorised. The Government keeps the developing evidence on neonicotinoids under active review, advised by the Expert Committee on Pesticides.

■ Pollinators: Conservation**Mr David Crausby:**[\[49239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to protect and support the populations of (a) bees and (b) other pollinators.

George Eustice:

Protecting our pollinators is a priority for this Government. They are an essential part of our environment and play a crucial role in food production. Our National Pollinator Strategy highlights the vital contribution we can all make to support pollinators.

The Strategy is a shared plan between Government and stakeholders, and builds on policies which support pollinators, including habitat creation, species conservation and honey bee health.

The Strategy includes actions to protect pollinators in the countryside including on farmland, as well as in towns and cities, and to strengthen the response to pests and disease risk. Earlier in the year, Bees' Needs week called for everyone, from window box gardeners to farmers, to take action to protect pollinators. Further details are available from www.gov.uk/government/news/bees-needs-food-and-a-home.

Defra supports the honey bee population through its Bee Health programme, delivered for England and Wales by the National Bee Unit. The programme aims to protect honey bees from pests and diseases, including tackling disease outbreaks and monitoring for exotic pests, including the Asian hornet. Inspectors carry out a total of over 6,000 apiary inspections each year during which free training is provided to beekeepers on how to keep their bees healthy.

■ Tree Planting

Edward Argar:

[\[49154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the tree-planting rates have been in England in each year since 2006.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Forestry Commission collect and publish National Statistics for England on the area, in hectares, of new woodland planting. It also estimates the number of trees planted, based on the average number of trees planted per hectare in the grant supported planting. In 2015-16 this average was 1,566 trees per hectare.

Table 1 below provides annual planting area published by the Forestry Commission since 2006 and its estimate of the number of trees planted.

In 2015-16 the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) supported 546 hectares of planting and it is estimated that 165 hectares of woodland was created, without RDPE support, bringing the total created during 2015-16 to 711 hectares.

In the period April 2016 to June 2016, a further 422 hectares of woodland was recorded as being planted with RDPE support.

The RDPE figures reflect the slow initial take up of Countryside Stewardship support for woodland planting. Planting is recorded at the time the grant is paid, which means that some planting will have taken place in the previous financial year to that in which it is recorded. Approximately 1,292,000 trees were planted in England with RDPE support since April 2015.

Table 1: New planting of woodland in England since 2005-06

FINANCIAL YEAR TO 31ST MARCH A) NEW PLANTING BY LAND AREA B) ESTIMATED NUMBER OF TREES

	Thousand hectares	Million trees
2005-06	3.7	4.1
2006-07	3.2	3.5
2007-08	2.6	2.9
2008-09	2.5	2.8
2009-10	2.3	2.5

FINANCIAL YEAR TO 31 ST MARCH	A) NEW PLANTING BY LAND AREA	B) ESTIMATED NUMBER OF TREES
2010-11	2.5	2.8
2011-12	2.7	3.0
2012-13	2.6	2.9
2013-14	3.3	3.6
2014-15	2.4	2.6
2015-16	0.7	0.8

Source: Forestry Statistics 2016 (Forestry Commission)

■ Wetlands

Sir Desmond Swayne:

[\[49314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Forestry Commission is taking to reduce potential conflicts of interest arising from contracts to carry out wetland restoration projects; and if she will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Potential conflict of interest is addressed by the existence of a formal partnership agreement which sets out the basis on which the Verderers of the New Forest, the Forestry Commission and the New Forest National Park Authority will work together to implement the Verderers' New Forest Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) Agreement. The partnership has appointed a project board to steer and oversee the implementation of the HLS agreement and the board's terms of reference enable it to address any potential conflicts of interest.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Meetings

Diana Johnson:

[\[49343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, pursuant to the Answer of 28 July 2016 to Question 43443, when his Department plans to publish its Quarterly Transparency Returns providing details of Ministerial meetings.

Mr David Jones:

Details of Ministers' meetings, gifts, hospitality and travel will be published on a quarterly basis as is standard practice.

■ UK Trade with EU: Non-tariff Barriers

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[49188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what steps his Department is taking to protect UK industries from non-tariff barriers after the UK leaves the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

My Department is considering the full range of possible non-tariff barriers to trade across all areas of importance to the UK economy, and assessing ways in which these might be addressed.

The Government is committed to securing an agreement which will give British businesses the best possible arrangements to trade with, and operate within, the European market.

As the Prime Minister has said, the UK will remain the most passionate, consistent and convincing global advocate of free trade. We will seize the opportunities of our departure from the EU to forge a new role for the UK in the world.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ China: Organs

Patrick Grady:

[\[49109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will issue a response to EDM 502, Forced Organ Harvesting in China.

Alok Sharma:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Westminster hall debate on forced organ removal in China, where the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Rutland and Melton (Sir Alan Duncan) spoke on 11 October 2016, *Official Report*, columns 17 – 21WH.

■ Colombia: Armed Forces

Jim Shannon:

[\[49122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with the government of Colombia on steps to integrate child soldiers back into that country's society.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Between 1999 and February 2015, the Colombian Government helped 5,730 minors to leave armed groups and rejoin Colombian society. The UK part-funds this process through the UN Trust Fund, to which the UK has given £4.2m. The UK welcomes the recent decision of the FARC that all minors would leave its camps. The UK is also helping to ensure that the needs of children are given consideration in the implementation of the peace accords. Through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund, the UK funds a

Colombian national expert to provide advice to Colombian Government negotiators on this issue.

■ **Commonwealth Secretariat: Accountability**

James Cleverly: [\[49147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what processes his Department has in place to hold to account the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Meetings of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Executive Committee (ExCo) and Board of Governors provide formal opportunities to engage with the Secretary-General and her team on the actions and activities of the Secretariat, including those outlined in the Annual Results Report, the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan and updates of mandates provided by Heads of Government at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Malta in November 2015. ExCo also considers the annual budget and the Secretariat's actions against recommendations provided by External Auditors of the accounts. In addition to these formal meetings, the UK's Commonwealth Envoy and other representatives of my department and the Department for International Development also meet regularly with the Secretary-General and her staff to review performance and identify progress against programme delivery.

■ **Commonwealth Secretariat: Buildings**

James Cleverly: [\[49148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had on the renovation of the official residence and offices of the Commonwealth Secretariat in London.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Secretary-General's official residence is fully maintained and allowance is made in the existing Secretariat budget to provide ongoing general maintenance. It is custom to refurbish the premises on the appointment of a new Secretary General thus giving a cycle of approximately eight years. The budget for the renovation of the official residence was agreed by the Board of Governors at its meeting in June 2015, before the appointment of Patricia Scotland. Nevertheless, we welcome the Secretary-General's statement that "any work on Hill Street must represent value for money and no extravagance."

We also welcome steps by the Secretary-General to create a Commonwealth Hub through the shared use of existing premises at Quadrant House. Incorporating the Commonwealth Games Federation, the Royal Commonwealth Society and the Commonwealth Local Government Foundation will help bring these organisations together alongside the Secretariat. It will also help the Secretariat to reduce overheads while obtaining value from existing resources and developing new partnerships to better deliver outcomes.

■ **Commonwealth Secretariat: Finance**

James Cleverly:

[\[49144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what contribution from the public purse has been made to the Commonwealth Secretariat in each of the last five years; and how much the UK is expected to so provide in each of the next five years.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK remains the largest financial contributor to the Commonwealth Secretariat, providing around 32% of the total budget. To establish a reasonable baseline, financial contributions to the Secretariat's general budget are based on scales agreed at the UN. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) assessed contributions for the last five years were as follows:

2011/2012 £5,168,586

2012/2013 £5,262,654

2013/2014 £5,326,331

2014/2015 £5,455,484

2015/2016 £5,469,640

UN scales of assessment 2016 - 2018 were agreed in New York in December 2015. They will form the basis for future FCO contributions to the Secretariat's general budget. Under existing Commonwealth guidelines, the budget is shared amongst the membership in accordance with three principles: Capacity to Pay, Equitable burden sharing and shared ownership and responsibility. This ensures that all members enjoy an equal voice within the organisation.

In addition to FCO assessed contributions, the Department for International Development also makes voluntary contributions to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation and a number of Commonwealth programmes.

James Cleverly:

[\[49145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the use of funding from the public purse provided to the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We support the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat, in particular around the promotion of democratic values and development. We expect the Secretariat to use any funding we provide efficiently and effectively in line with its agreed budget, financial procedures and priorities. In addition to being considered by external auditors, the Secretariat's budget is assessed by the Commonwealth's Executive Committee and Board of Governors at regular meetings. The UK is a member of both groups, represented by the UK's Commonwealth Envoy.

We are committed to supporting the Secretary General's efforts to reform and revitalise the Commonwealth Secretariat and to working with her and our Commonwealth partners to strengthen the organisation.

James Cleverly: [\[49146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent engagement his Department has had with the Commonwealth Secretariat over the efficient and transparent expenditure of funds received from the public purse.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Through regular attendance at meetings of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Executive Committee (ExCo) and Board of Governors (of which we are a member), the UK is fully engaged to ensure that UK funds are allocated and spent in an efficient and transparent manner. ExCo meets three times a year to review papers, including the budget, which is presented to the Board of Governors at its annual meeting. The role of ExCo is to receive and review reports from the Secretariat on the operations of individual funds; oversee budgets and audit functions; make policy recommendations to the Board of Governors with respect to the individual funds; and make recommendations, as appropriate, on any matter referred to it by the Board of Governors.

■ Commonwealth Secretariat: Public Appointments

James Cleverly: [\[49150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department had on the candidates for appointment for the post of Secretary-General of the Commonwealth before the most recent appointment to that post made at the Commonwealth Head of Government Meeting in November 2015.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We demand a lot of the Commonwealth and had high expectations for the new Secretary-General. The UK wanted the strongest possible candidate to steer the Commonwealth through reform, to ensure that it has a voice on the most pressing global challenges and to unite countries behind the Commonwealth's values such as the protection and promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. We assessed candidates for the position based on this criteria. We welcomed Patricia Scotland's appointment as Secretary General in November 2015.

James Cleverly: [\[49164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will disclose which candidate for Secretary-General of the Commonwealth the UK voted for during the Commonwealth Head of Government Meeting in November 2015.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Baroness Scotland was elected at a meeting to which only Heads of Government were invited. The Government never discloses how it votes.

James Cleverly:

[\[49194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has received since 2015 on the suitability of Baroness Scotland of Asthal for the role of Commonwealth Secretary-General.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Commonwealth leaders elected Baroness Scotland to be the Commonwealth Secretary-General from a field of candidates at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Malta in November 2015. She has made a strong start as Secretary-General, bringing vision, dynamism and new energy for reform. We are pleased that on taking office she immediately instigated a review of the Secretariat. We strongly support her efforts to make the Secretariat lean, effective and aligned to deliver where the Commonwealth adds real value. My noble Friend, the Rt Hon. the Baroness Anelay of St Johns, Minister for the Commonwealth, has met a number of London-based Commonwealth High Commissioners, many of whom are supportive of the Secretary-General and her reform agenda. Leading institutional reform is challenging, but it is vital to ensure the Commonwealth delivers value for money, operates effectively and remains fit for purpose.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Commonwealth Secretariat**

James Cleverly:

[\[49149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what meetings he has had with the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth in 2016; and if he will publish a summary of the content of such discussions.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Minister for the Commonwealth, The Rt Hon. Baroness Anelay of St Johns DBE, met with the Secretary-General in September for discussions on a wide range of Commonwealth-related issues. Topics discussed include the Secretary-General's policy and operational priorities, and UK plans for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2018. The UK's Commonwealth Envoy has also met the Secretary-General on a number of occasions.

■ **Horn of Africa: Counter-terrorism**

Mark Durkan:

[\[49625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will list the joint projects between the UK and Sudanese governments that are tackling extremism in the Horn of Africa region.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are not engaged in any joint projects with the Government of Sudan directly designed to tackle extremism in the Horn of Africa. We are, however, exploring options for cooperation in this area with relevant Sudanese Government bodies, as we believe the Government of Sudan has an important role to play in countering these threats.

■ Iran: Political Prisoners

Patrick Grady: [\[49686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will issue a response to Early Day Motion 448, on Death of political prisoners in Iran in 1988, tabled on 13 September 2016.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 17 October 2016 (PQs 47087, 47085 and 47084).

■ North Korea: Nuclear Weapons

Jim Shannon: [\[49123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his US and other NATO counterparts on the nuclear tests being conducted by North Korea; and what steps he is taking to help prevent North Korea's development of a nuclear arsenal.

Alok Sharma:

Following the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) conducting its fifth nuclear test on 9 September, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), made clear that the UK strongly condemned the test, which is a flagrant violation of binding UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions. The UK has worked closely with international partners for many years to respond to the nuclear weapons and missile programmes of the DPRK.

The UNSC agreed wide-ranging sanctions following the fourth nuclear test in January, which contained some of the strongest measures the UNSC has ever adopted. As I said on 23 September at the UN Security Council meeting, "there is now a need to work immediately on further significant measures." The UK is working with international partners on further significant measures the UNSC can take in response to the fifth test.

■ Qatar: Football

Andrew Gwynne: [\[49548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will meet his counterparts in the Qatari government to discuss the human rights situation and working conditions of foreign workers assisting that country in building stadia for the 2022 World Cup.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson), last spoke to Qatar's foreign minister on 7 September about preparations for the World Cup. He offered continued UK support in partnering with Qatar to deliver a successful event in 2022. We continue to raise the issue of workers' rights with the Government of Qatar; most recently on 15 September to offer UK expertise in addition

to support we already give. I am meeting my Qatari counterpart in Doha later this year and will raise this issue again then.

We support the steps that the Qatari Government has taken to respond to concerns about the treatment of migrant workers and we welcome the Government of Qatar's commitment to the ongoing, systematic reform of Qatar's labour laws.

■ Sudan: Counter-terrorism

Mark Durkan:

[\[49626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to tackle extremism in Sudan.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK has engaged directly with the University of Medical Sciences and Technology in Khartoum on counter extremism issues. This led to us supporting two parallel events in 2015 – one at the university in Khartoum and one in Manchester for alumni – which aimed to raise awareness and to engage staff, students and the graduate association on options for tackling the risks of radicalisation.

■ Yemen: Children

Alex Salmond:

[\[49720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to protect children in Yemen.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are very concerned by the impact the current conflict is having on children in Yemen. The UK is the fourth largest humanitarian donor to the Yemen crisis having pledged a total of £100m this year. This is helping to supply Yemenis with food, medical supplies, water, and emergency shelter. An enduring cessation of hostilities and peace talks remain a top priority in order to bring stability to Yemen and alleviate the suffering.

HEALTH

■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Greater Manchester

Mr David Crausby:

[\[49263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many doctors were employed by accident and emergency services in Greater Manchester in each of the last 10 years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The information is not available in the format requested. Such information as is available is in the following table.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS): HCHS doctors in Emergency Medicine, in NHS trusts in Greater Manchester, by organisation, as at the last day in each specified month, September 2009 to June 2016, full time equivalent

AS AT LAST DAY OF MONTH	SEPTEMBER 2009	SEPTEMBER 2010	SEPTEMBER 2011	SEPTEMBER 2012	SEPTEMBER 2013	SEPTEMBER 2014	SEPTEMBER 2015	SEPTEMBER JUNE 2016
All specified organisations	278	332	334	354	350	377	370	378
Bolton NHS Foundation Trust	23	35	38	37	32	35	32	36
Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	54	59	60	72	85	91	80	77
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	77	87	89	84	89	86	88	86
Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust	31	36	33	43	44	59	58	63
Stockport NHS Foundation Trust	24	27	24	27	23	20	24	26
Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	16	18	26	28	26	24	25	22
Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust	7	10	10	-	-	-	-	-
University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation	21	28	28	33	28	38	41	43

AS AT LAST DAY OF MONTH	SEPTEMBER 2009	SEPTEMBER 2010	SEPTEMBER 2011	SEPTEMBER 2012	SEPTEMBER 2013	SEPTEMBER 2014	SEPTEMBER 2015	SEPTEMBER JUNE 2016
Trust								
Wrightington, 25 Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust		32	27	30	24	25	22	25

Source : NHS Digital, Provisional NHS HCHS monthly workforce statistics.

Health and Social Care Information Centre. NHS Digital is the trading name of the Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Notes :

The data shown here are for doctors recorded as having a specialty of Emergency Medicine. Doctors with this specialty do not necessarily work in accident and emergency (A&E) and doctors that work in A&E do not necessarily have this specialty.

It is also known as Accident and Emergency within Workforce Data Standards.

Full time equivalent figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Following a public consultation in 2015, categorisation of trusts and staff groups has changed therefore restricting comparability with previous publications.

More details regarding these changes can be found in the outcomes of the consultation document available at the link below:

<http://digital.nhs.uk/hchs>

Data Quality

NHS Digital seeks to minimise inaccuracies and the effect of missing and invalid data but responsibility for data accuracy lies with the organisations providing the data.

Methods are continually being updated to improve data quality. Where changes impact on figures already published, this is assessed but unless it is significant at national level figures are not changed.

■ Asperger's Syndrome and Autism

Mrs Anne Main:

[49717]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people over the age of 18 diagnosed with (a) Asperger's syndrome and (b) autism there are in (i) St Albans, (ii) Hertfordshire and (iii) England; and what care his Department provides for people diagnosed with those conditions.

David Mowat:

Information on the number of people diagnosed with autistic spectrum conditions is not collected centrally.

Clinical commissioning groups are responsible for commissioning health services for their local population. In doing so, they should have regard to best practice and guidance such as the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guideline *Autism spectrum disorder in adults: diagnosis and management* and the Government's *Think Autism* strategy.

■ **Babies: Nutrition**

Alison Thewliss: [\[49561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department plans to (a) reprint and (b) revise the Start4Life leaflets covering breastfeeding, bottle feeding and early child nutrition.

Nicola Blackwood:

Public Health England will continue to reprint Start4Life leaflets on breastfeeding (in a simpler format) and bottle feeding, and will be revising the early child nutrition leaflet to incorporate new guidance from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition, when available.

■ **Body Dysmorphic Disorder**

Luciana Berger: [\[49756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people were treated for body dysmorphic disorder in (a) Liverpool Wavertree constituency, (b) Liverpool, (c) England and (d) each region in each year since 2010.

Nicola Blackwood:

This information is not available in the format requested.

■ **Defibrillators**

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[49423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of public-access defibrillators located in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[49425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of people who have taken part in NHS-delivered coronary pulmonary resuscitation training in the last year for which data is available; and if he will make a statement.

David Mowat:

No estimate has been made of the number of public-access defibrillators located in Coventry, the West Midlands and England or of the number of people who have taken part in coronary pulmonary resuscitation training delivered by the National Health Service.

We recognise that better provision of defibrillators and increasing the number of people trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation could help save more lives of those who have a cardiac arrest outside a hospital setting.

That is why the Chancellor announced in the budget in March that the Government is making available another £1 million to make public access defibrillators and coronary pulmonary resuscitation training more widely available in communities across England. This builds on last year's funding of £1 million, which provided almost 700 more publicly accessible defibrillators in communities across England and increased the numbers of people trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Details on how this second tranche of the funding can be accessed will be available in due course.

■ Dental Services: Young People

Mr Graham Allen: [\[49436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will estimate the annual cost to the public purse of extending free dental treatment to people under the age of 21.

Mr Graham Allen: [\[49437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will estimate the annual cost to the public purse of (a) extending free dental check-ups to people aged 60 and over and (b) exempting people aged over 60 from all dental charges.

David Mowat:

The table below shows the estimated cost of extending exemption to National Health Service dental charges for paying patients under the age of 21, age 60 and over and for examinations only for patients aged 60 and over.

AGE GROUP	ESTIMATED COST
People aged 18-21	£15.7 million
People aged 60 and over	£329.2 million
People aged 60 and over (for check-ups only)	£25.1 million

This data is based on FP17s submitted to the NHS Business Services Authority for general dentistry courses of treatment completed between April 2015 and March 2016. It shows the amount of patient revenue, based on 2016/17 charge levels, which would be foregone should the currently fee paying groups be made exempt.

Dentists are required to submit a form called an FP17 for every course of NHS dental treatment they provide. The figures assume no increase in the number of patients currently accessing NHS dental care, in reality additional patients may seek NHS treatment if they were to become exempt.

■ Fertility: Medical Treatments

Helen Hayes: [\[49067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 14 October 2016 to Question 46746, if he will make an assessment of the extent to which patient treatment is falling short of NICE best practice guidelines for financial reasons.

Nicola Blackwood:

There are no plans for such an assessment to be made.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines are often broad in scope and make a large number of recommendations spanning the whole pathway of care diagnosis, treatment and recovery. Because of their complexity and different local priorities they are not mandatory although, as best practice, we expect National Health Service organisations to take them fully into account, drawing upon clinical judgement.

■ General Practitioners: Fees and Charges

Luciana Berger: [\[49754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to set a limit on the amount GPs can charge patients for signing a debt and mental health evidence form.

David Mowat:

General practitioners (GPs) are independent contractors who hold contracts with NHS England to provide primary medical services for the National Health Service. Under the terms of their contract, GPs are required to provide certain medical reports or complete certain forms, such as those required to support a claim for incapacity benefit, free of charge to their registered patients.

Outside of contractual requirements, GPs also provide a variety of other services which successive governments have regarded as private matters between the patient and the GP providing these services. In such cases, decisions on whether to charge a fee and the level of the fee charged are at the GP's discretion. Where GPs intend to charge for services to patients, the British Medical Association advises them to forewarn patients, at the earliest opportunity, of the likely level of fees.

■ Haematological Cancer

Derek Thomas: [\[49047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans to review the decision no longer to fund second stem cell transplants for blood cancer patients.

David Mowat:

The commissioning of stem cell transplantation is managed as part of the overall system to deliver specialised services. To ensure that investment decisions are affordable and offer value for money, NHS England has established a defined prioritisation process. This involves assessment of all proposals based on clinical benefit and cost. On 2 August 2016, NHS England announced a re-run of the prioritisation process carried out earlier this year.

The Department is not planning to review the decision related to the commissioning of second stem cell transplants.

■ Health Services

Mr Jamie Reed: [49806]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department has given NHS trusts on the use of Office for National Statistics population projections for service planning.

David Mowat:

It is the responsibility of clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to commission services to meet the needs of their populations, which will include services provided by National Health Service trusts and foundation trusts in most instances.

The NHS Operational Planning and Contractual Guidance (authored by NHS England and NHS Improvement) provides guidance for CCGs to help commissioning. The Department would expect commissioners to take a range of information into account including population projections.

A copy of the NHS Operational Planning and Contractual Guidance can be found at the following address:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/NHS-operational-planning-guidance-201617-201819.pdf>

■ Liver Diseases

Mr George Howarth: [49658]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to increase the provision of (a) medical and (b) nursing training in hepatology.

Mr Philip Dunne:

It is the responsibility of the professional regulators such as the General Medical Council or the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) to set the standards and outcomes for education and training and approve training curricula to ensure newly qualified healthcare professionals are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to provide high quality patient care.

Hepatology is a medical sub-specialty of gastroenterology. In Health Education England's 2016/17 Workforce Plan for England, there are 450 training commissions proposed for gastroenterology, an increase from 431 in 2015/16.

Whilst the NMC does not recognise hepatology in its standards for specialist education and practice, the Royal College of Nursing has written a comprehensive competence framework which outlines the training, skills and competence required to develop and maintain a special interest in hepatology:

https://www2.rcn.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/641425/004-983_WEB.pdf

■ Liver Diseases: Screening

Mr George Howarth: [\[49657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what his Department's policy is on screening of high-risk patients for liver disease.

David Mowat:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has published guidance on the diagnosis and management of a number of conditions affecting the liver including alcohol use disorders, cirrhosis, hepatitis B and C and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

■ Liver Diseases: Transplant Surgery

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[49812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people are on NHS waiting lists to receive a liver transplant.

Nicola Blackwood:

As at 20 October 2016 there were 550 people on the active liver transplant list.

Waiting list figures can fluctuate daily as patients are removed or added to the transplant list as their condition improves or deteriorates.

■ Mental Health Services: LGBT People

Luciana Berger: [\[49755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure mental health services are accessible to LGBT people.

Nicola Blackwood:

Clinical commissioning groups are responsible for commissioning mental health services that meet the needs of their local populations and take into account the health inequalities that may be experienced.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for any health provider to discriminate against a person on the basis of protected characteristic, including sexual orientation. The Mental Health Act 1983 Code of Practice makes it clear that mental health providers must adhere to the Public Sector Equality Duty created by the Equalities Act 2010. The Duty requires National Health Service commissioners, NHS providers and local authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

We welcomed the recommendation in the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health to appoint a national Equalities Champion with a specific remit to tackle mental health

inequalities across the health system and through cross-Government action. We are working with our stakeholders to progress this recommendation.

We would also expect NHS commissioners and mental health providers to implement best practice guidance such the Joint Commissioning Panel for Mental Health guidance on commissioning public mental health services (2015):

<http://www.jcpmh.info/wp-content/uploads/jcpmh-publicmentalhealth-guide.pdf>

Public Health England also published an action plan to set out how it is tackling inequalities in gay and bisexual men, Public Health England action plan 2015-16: Promoting the health and wellbeing of gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/401005/PEMSMAActionPlan.pdf

■ Mental Illness: Young People

Jim Shannon:

[49129]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to assist young people experiencing anxiety and depression.

Nicola Blackwood:

Our Government is committed to delivering the vision set out in the Future in Mind report, which sets out the five-year vision of major system-wide transformation to improve access to high-quality mental health care for all children and young people when they need it and as close to home as possible. Since its publication in March 2015, working alongside our partners in Government and arm's length bodies, progress has been made on many of the key ambitions to improve access to high-quality support across the country.

The core delivery mechanism for this ambitious programme of transformation are Local Transformation Plans, which are publically available and should cover the full spectrum of need for children and young people who have existing or emerging mental health problems, including anxiety and depression.

To support this transformation, an additional £1.4 billion funding has been made available over the course of this Parliament. This will also enable the expansion and extension of the Children and Young People's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme so that high quality evidence-based interventions, including for anxiety and depression, can be delivered by children and young people's mental health services across England.

■ Neuroscience Clinical Reference Group

Mrs Cheryl Gillan:

[49799]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will list the members of the neuroscience clinical reference group of NHS England.

David Mowat:

Clinical Reference Groups (CRG) are currently undertaking a process of recruitment. Once all appointments have been made, a full list of members for each CRG will be published on NHS England's website. However, for the Specialised Neurosciences CRG, the Chair and Lead CRG Commissioner have been confirmed as Adrian Williams and Jacquie Kemp respectively.

■ NHS: Ethnic Groups

Kate Green: [\[49514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has assessed the merits of updating the NHS data dictionary to include the 2011 census ethnic group classification, which includes gypsy or Irish traveller.

Nicola Blackwood:

The NHS Equality and Diversity Council has an agenda to look at Data supporting equalities monitoring on the Equality Act 2010 'protected characteristics', of which Ethnicity is one. A decision is pending on whether to adopt the Ethnicity values from the 2011 census within the National Health Service; currently the NHS standard is to use the 2001 values, which do not include gypsy or Irish traveller. Until this decision is made, and a change to existing data standards is brought through the Standardisation Committee for Care Information process, the NHS Data Dictionary values cannot be updated.

■ NHS: Private Sector

Ben Howlett: [\[49352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of how much additional surgical and diagnostic capacity independent sector healthcare organisations are able to make available to NHS patients over the remainder of 2016-17; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

No assessment has been made. Decisions about whether to use independent sector capacity are generally made at local level. Use of the independent sector will depend on a range of factors including the needs of individual local health systems, patient choice and availability of suitable independent sector capacity.

■ NHS: Staff

Heidi Alexander: [\[49494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what purpose data on the nationality of NHS staff is recorded and published.

Heidi Alexander: [\[49495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what changes have been made in 2016 to the level of data recorded and published on the nationality of NHS staff.

Heidi Alexander:

[\[49496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether it is mandatory for NHS staff to report their nationality for NHS workforce data collection.

Heidi Alexander:

[\[49497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what data his Department (a) records and (b) publishes on the nationality of NHS staff.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department does not record or publish data on the nationality of staff working in the National Health Service. Data on nationality is published twice a year by NHS Digital and turnover data is published quarterly and available by nationality.

Nationality is a data item within the National Workforce Data set used with a range of other data items to support workforce planning, analysis of staff movement and equality monitoring. It is not mandatory, but self-declared.

In 2015 and 2016 requests for nationality data on NHS staff in England were published on the supplementary information part of the NHS Digital website, rather than as part of the routine Hospital and Community Health Services statistical publications. In 2016, following NHS Digital's public consultation, NHS Digital now routinely publish tables showing the self-declared nationality of staff in staff groups and regions, bi-annually, together with quarterly turnover statistics which show the nationality of joiners and leavers to and from the NHS in England.

The latest nationality data was published in March 2016 and the next set will be published in December 2016 showing the position at September 2016.

The latest turnover data published in September 2016 covers the 12 month period to 30 June 2016.

■ Organs: Donors

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[49808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has plans for an opt-out system for organ donation across the UK.

Nicola Blackwood:

There are currently no plans for an opt-out system for organ donation in England. Since 2008 donation in the United Kingdom has increased by 68% and transplants by 47%, by increasing the number of specialist nurses and strengthening the donation infrastructure. 2015/16 saw the highest ever deceased donor rate in the UK with 1,364 deceased donors resulting in 3,529 transplants.

We continue to support work to further increase donation and transplantation rates, particularly promoting collaborative working amongst organisations and raising awareness of donation in the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to become donors.

NHS Blood and Transplant launched a new UK-wide organ donation and transplantation strategy in July 2013. *Taking Organ Transplantation to 2020* identifies the action being taken to increase organ donation and transplantation.

■ Paramedical Staff: Recruitment

Mrs Anne Main: [\[49638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department has taken to encourage students to become ambulance service paramedics upon graduating.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The latest available data from NHS Digital NHS Hospital and Community Health Service monthly workforce statistics shows that there are now over 2,200 more paramedics in the National Health Service than in May 2010.

As set out in Health Education England's (HEE) 2016/17 Workforce Plan for England, planned paramedic training places have increased by 60%, to over 1,600. The workforce plan estimates that by 2020 there is likely to be an 11% growth in the available paramedic workforce.

HEE is partnering with the East of England Ambulance Service Trust, the University of East Anglia (UEA) and Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) to give aspiring paramedics the chance to gain the experience, skills and knowledge required to support applications for the Paramedic Science degree programme (BSc) at UEA and ARU for entry in September 2017.

■ Patient Choice Schemes

Ben Howlett: [\[49351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment the Government has made of the progress in implementing the commitment in the NHS Five Year Forward View to increase patient choice over where and how patients receive care; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Mandate to NHS England, which sets the Government's objectives for the provision of health services in England and any requirements for NHS England, includes an objective calling for the offer of meaningful choice in the National Health Service. This reflects the commitment in the Five Year Forward View. An assessment of the extent to which the Mandate objectives have been met is set out in my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State's Annual Assessment of NHS England, which is published at the end of the financial year.

■ Primodos

Stephen Kinnock: [\[49295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations he has received on evidence that was made available to the Government on the dangers of the pregnancy testing drug Primodos in 1967; and what steps he has taken as a result of those representations.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government has maintained an ongoing and close dialogue with campaigners over the course of the last eight years, involving face to face meetings and extensive correspondence. As a result of these discussions, the Government committed to an independent review of all the evidence relating to a possible link between hormone pregnancy tests and adverse effects on pregnancy. An ad-hoc Expert Working Group of the Commission on Human Medicines is conducting this review and has so far met on five occasions. It is anticipated that the review will be complete early in 2017, at which time a report of the Group's findings will be published.

The Government remains committed to open engagement on this important issue.

■ Psychiatry**Luciana Berger:**[\[49753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to regulate dance movement psychotherapy.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Government is committed to proportionate regulation of healthcare professions. Whilst statutory regulation is sometimes necessary where significant risks to users of services cannot be mitigated in other ways, it is not always the most proportionate or effective means of assuring the safe and effective care of service users.

Occupational and professional groups that are not subject to statutory regulation, such as Dance Movement Psychotherapists, may consider setting up a voluntary register. The Professional Standards Authority accredits those registers that meet its standards, providing patients, the public and employers with assurance about the standards and competence of registrants.

HOME OFFICE**■ Asylum****Keith Vaz:**[\[47127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people are currently subject to immigration restrictions which require that they report to an immigration reporting centre.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The number of people with immigration restrictions required to report to an immigration reporting centre fluctuates on a daily basis. We therefore cannot produce a number which would accurately reflect the current population.

■ Asylum: Children

Bridget Phillipson: [\[48721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2016 to Question 37587, what progress the Government has made on consulting local authorities to identified a specified number of children refugees to be resettled in the UK in the next year under subsection (1) of 67 of the Immigration Act of 2016.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[48722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2016 to Question 37587, how many child refugees are planned to be resettled in the UK in the next year in accordance with subsection (1) of 67 of the Immigration Act of 2016.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 24 October 2016]: Local authorities are already caring for more than 4,000 unaccompanied asylum seeking children. The Government has consulted widely and extensively with local authorities across the UK in order to assess their capacity to care for additional unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children.

The Home Office has also significantly increased the funding available to local authorities that are supporting unaccompanied children and offered additional funding to bolster regional structures for the National Transfer Scheme, which is the mechanism for ensuring there is a more even distribution of unaccompanied children across the UK.

Between 12 May and 1 October 2016 over 50 children who meet the criteria in the Immigration Act were accepted for transfer, of which over 35 have been transferred. We continue to work with the French, Greek and Italian authorities to establish the number of children who may be eligible and have seconded UK experts to France, Greece and Italy to support the commitment to transfer eligible children to the UK, where it is in their best interests.

■ Asylum: Housing

Chris Stephens: [\[49447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Compass contract in Scotland with Serco for asylum accommodation and the press notice issued by Serco on 21 September 2016, Compass contract in Scotland and Northern Ireland, which headings will be covered in the due diligence process.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 24 October 2016]: Serco are considering the acquisition of their sub contractor in Scotland and Northern Ireland region and are undertaking analysis of all pertinent matters. The due diligence activity is a matter for Serco.

■ British Nationality

Mr Geoffrey Cox:

[49207]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to review the rule preventing those who have acquired British nationality by descent under Section 2(1)(a) of the British Nationality Act 1981 from passing on citizenship to their children by descent in circumstances where their parents were on short-term secondment abroad at the time of their birth other than on Crown Service.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Children who are born overseas to British citizens by descent and do not acquire British citizenship automatically are able to apply for registration as a citizen where the family can demonstrate a close connection with the UK.

The child of a British citizen is also able to enter the UK under the Immigration Rules as the child of a settled parent.

There are no plans to change the law in this respect at the current time.

■ Entry Clearances: Married People

David T. C. Davies:

[47019]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have applied for spouse visas to marry a UK citizen from (a) India, (b) Pakistan, (c) Bangladesh, (d) Nigeria, (e) Australia, (f) New Zealand and (g) Jamaica in the last year for which figures are available.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Quarterly Home Office immigration statistics on entry clearance visas are available from the Home Office website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-statistics>

■ Homophobia: Hate Crime

Luciana Berger:

[49752]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she has taken to reduce homophobic hate crimes since January 2016.

Sarah Newton:

The Home Office was part of the steering group of an Equalities and Human Rights Commission project to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crime, which ended earlier this year.

As a result, we have committed to work with organisations such as the anti-violence charity Galop to develop resources that specifically meet the needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) communities. We are also sharing existing good practice, including across the LGBT Hate Crime Network which was established by the project and is made up of over 30 groups across the country.

The cross-Government Hate Crime Action Plan, developed following consultation with a number of LGBT groups, contains actions designed to tackle hate crime against LGB&T

people. This includes an assessment of the levels of homophobic bullying in schools, renewed CPS legal guidance on homophobic, biphobic and transphobic crime and funding for community groups who are working to tackle hate crime, including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crime.

■ Immigrants: Employment

Gill Furniss: [\[49172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the number of job offers made to people with 3C Leave and subsequently withdrawn by employers (a) unwilling to use and (b) unaware of the Employer Checking Service in the last 12 months.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We do not hold this information.

Gill Furniss: [\[49173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to promote use of the Employer Checking Service.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Employer Checking Service is promoted on GOV.uk. Employers are also directed to the service by the Preventing Illegal Work help line. The Employer Checking Service meet regularly with large employers to promote the service.

Gill Furniss: [\[49174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests for confirmation of the right to work in the UK were received by the Employer Checking Service in the last 12 months; and how many such requests were confirmed.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

81,642 checks were received by the Employer Checking Service between 1st September 2015 and 31st August 2016. 53,006 of these checks confirmed the subjects right to work in the UK.

■ Immigration: Applications

Alan Brown: [\[49376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many immigration applications were affected by the flooding incident at Leeds Royal Mail Depot on 15 December 2015; how many such applications have been resolved; what additional resources are being applied to resolve outstanding such cases; what the target timescales for completion of outstanding such cases are; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 24 October 2016]: The flood impacted 501 immigration applications. All customers impacted were advised that their individual application was involved in the incident. Once the impact of the flood had been dealt with the applications were

handled under our normal casework procedures and checks. To date 468 of the applications have been completed. The remaining 33 applications are still under consideration.

■ Immigration: EEA Nationals

Diana Johnson: [\[49261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the immigration status of European Economic Area citizens with permanent residence status in the UK will be affected by the renegotiation of the UK's membership with the EU.

Diana Johnson: [\[49262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many European Economic Area citizens in the UK have permanent residence cards; and how many applications for such cards there have been in each of the last 12 months.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Under EU law, European Economic Area (EEA) nationals qualify for a right of permanent residence in the UK provided that certain conditions are met. The Prime Minister has been clear that she wants to protect the status of EU nationals already living in the UK, and the only circumstances in which that would not be possible are if British citizens' rights in other EU Member States were not protected in return in the course of agreement with the EU.

For those EEA nationals who are in the UK and have a right of permanent residence, it is not mandatory to apply for documentation confirming that right. Statistics of decisions and grants of permanent residence documentation issued to EEA nationals are published quarterly in table ee_02_q of Immigration Statistics. The most recent edition is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-april-to-june-2016/list-of-tables#european-economic-area-eea>

■ Offenders: Deportation

David T. C. Davies: [\[49142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many foreign nationals serving prison sentences have been deported in the last year for which figures are available.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office publishes quarterly statistics on the number of foreign national offenders that have been removed from prison under the Early Removal Scheme within the Immigration Statistics release on the GOV.UK website at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=uk-visas-and-immigration&publication_type=transparency-data.

Please note that the data is published on a quarterly basis. The link provides access to historical data for each quarter for the financial year 2015 / 2016

■ Overseas Students

Royston Smith: [\[48771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how the proposed changes to university admissions for foreign students will be tailored to different (a) courses offered and (b) educational institutions.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Government will shortly launch a consultation on the proposals announced by the Home Secretary. The consultation will include looking at whether our student immigration rules should be tailored to the quality of the institution.

■ Paedophilia: Victims

Vicky Foxcroft: [\[48320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that family members who report paedophilia to the police are treated as victims instead of witnesses.

Sarah Newton:

Unless a person is the subject of the abuse or behaviour reported to the police then they are not a 'victim' for the purposes of a criminal investigation or prosecution. A person who makes a complaint where they have not themselves suffered abuse, or is the subject of a complaint made by others, is a 'witness' in terms of involvement or participation in the Criminal Justice System process.

However, the police recognise the vulnerability of witnesses from family environments in coming forward to report such crimes. The College of Policing have published Authorised Professional Practice (APP) to assist the police in managing complex child abuse investigations.

The APP provides that where there may be an impact on those associated with the victims then support groups are available "to provide counselling and advice to those who have been affected by allegations of abuse involving persons close to them, such as relatives and associates of victims, witnesses and suspects. Some specialist sexual violence and abuse support services may also be available locally, offering support for victims and others, including siblings and non-abusing parents or carers. Details of these support groups should be made available to those who may need them. Children's social care also has a role in taking account of any impact on the victims and others

■ Passports: Syria

Paula Sherriff: [\[49221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Syrian passports have been returned to the Syrian government on the basis that they have been reported stolen by that government.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office does not currently return Syrian passports to the Government of Syria.

Paula Sherriff:

[\[49222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many passports have been confiscated from Syrian citizens by UK officials in 2016 on the basis of being stolen.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

This information is not collated centrally. To collate this data would incur disproportionate cost.

■ **Police Custody: Mental Illness**

Oliver Colvile:

[\[49103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that police have better training for people in custody suites suffering with mental health issues.

Brandon Lewis:

[Holding answer 24 October 2016]: It is the role of the College of Policing to set the standards for training and professional development for police forces in England and Wales. The College has recently published Authorised Professional Practice on mental health. This guidance will support all police officers, including custody staff, in responding effectively to people suffering with mental health issues. It is the responsibility of Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners, to ensure officers and police staff receive appropriate training and that they have regard to this Authorised Professional Practice when discharging their responsibilities.

■ **Police: Pensions**

Mr Mark Prisk:

[\[49063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to establish equality of pension provision for surviving spouses of police officers across England and Wales.

Brandon Lewis:

On 18 January 2016, the Police Pensions Regulations 1987 and the Police (Injury Benefit) Regulations 2006 were amended to allow widows, widowers and civil partners of police officers in England and Wales who have died on duty and who qualified for a survivor pension after 1 April 2015 to continue to receive their survivors' benefits for life. There are no plans to extend this policy.

■ **UK Visas and Immigration: Staff**

Mr David Crausby:

[\[49294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many full-time equivalent staff UK Visas and Immigration employs on its North West MP Account Management Team.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The North West MP Account Management Team employs 9.8 full time equivalent (FTE). However, it relies on expertise and contributions from across the business to enable the service to provide comprehensive and helpful replies.

To try and quantify the full extent of UKVI work on Members' immigration enquiries alone, staff costs to collate this information would exceed the £850 threshold for answering Parliamentary Questions.

■ **Visas****Diana Johnson:**[\[48494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) have been refunded by UKVI; and how much has been allocated for such refunds in each year since 2009.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office does not refund a fee if someone applies for leave in a given category if they do not meet the requirements of the Immigration Rules or other relevant legislation for that category, nor does the Home Office issue a refund where an application is withdrawn and resource costs have been incurred.

However, the Home Office may receive applications for which there is no legal basis to keep the fee, for example where incomplete applications are received that cannot be processed, or where applications do not require the payment of a fee. Where an application cannot be processed due to being incomplete, the Home Office return any fee paid minus an administration charge. Should a customer make a payment when they are not required to do so, the amount paid will be returned in full.

The Home Office does not separately record such transactions. To compile a single record of all returns of visa payments for the period requested would require us look at each individual application, and could not be done except at disproportionate costs.

Mr David Crausby:[\[49223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for a visitor's visa have been (a) received and (b) refused in each of the last five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The information requested for the last 5 calendar years is published in table vi_01_q (visa data tables volume 1) in 'Immigration Statistics, April - June 2016', available from the Home Office website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-april-to-june-2016/list-of-tables#visas>

■ Visas: Married People

Mr David Crausby: [\[49218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for a spouse visa have been (a) received and (b) refused in each of the last five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The information requested for the last 5 calendar years is published in table vi_01_q (visa data tables volume 1) in 'Immigration Statistics, April - June 2016', available from the Home Office website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-april-to-june-2016/list-of-tables#visas>

Mr David Crausby: [\[49224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for a spouse visa have been refused by UK Visas and Immigration only to be overturned by appeal to the Immigration and Asylum Tribunal in each of the last five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The information on appeals is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Mr David Crausby: [\[49240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average time for a final decision on a spouse visa application was in each of the last five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The average processing time for resolving spouse visa applications in each of the last five years is contained in the attached table:

YEAR RESOLVED	AVERAGE DAYS TO RESOLVED
2011	40.97
2012	41.47
2013	45.59
2014	60.41
2015	34.91

Visit visas defined as those endorsements in the endorsement categories Family Partner and Family Partner Immediate Settlement.

Data only includes applications with a destination of UK or UK(BIVS).

Data extracted on 19 October 2016.

These statistics have been taken from a live operational database. As such, numbers may change as information on that system is updated. The latest quarterly Home Office immigration statistics on entry clearance visas are published in 'Immigration Statistics, available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-statistics>

■ Visas: Overseas Students

Diana Johnson: [\[49108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 17 October 2016 to Question 48003, if she will publish the visa refusal rates for (a) Cambridge University, (b) Oxford University, (c) Bath University, (d) Imperial College London, (e) Edinburgh University, (f) Glasgow University, (g) University of St Andrews and (h) Aberdeen University in each year since 2010.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 21 October 2016]: Visa refusal rate data is produced for internal use only and is not intended for publication. The data requested provides sensitive information about sponsors' compliance with their immigration requirements and by extension how likely they are to retain their sponsor licence.

As this information could potentially impact their reputation and ability to attract international students, and therefore their commercial viability, we are unable to provide the information requested on the basis of commercial confidentiality.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Afghanistan: Corruption

Mrs Madeleine Moon: [\[49421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what anti-corruption measures were agreed at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, held on 4-5 October 2016; what steps she plans to take to ensure the effectiveness of such measures; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

Helping Afghans to tackle corruption is a key priority for the UK's engagement in Afghanistan, where we focus first and foremost on anti-corruption efforts that contribute to the building of a stable and self-reliant state. Anti-corruption was a key theme of the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan. At the Conference, the Afghan government announced that the new Anti Corruption Justice Centre (ACJC) was operational. They also made a commitment that five revenue generating ministries will publicly report on implementation progress of their anti-corruption action plans in 2017.

The UK and the rest of the international community will continue to press the Afghan government to deliver on these commitments to ensure that core government functions

are transparent, accountable and consistent, and that violations are met with legal, timely and consistently applied sanctions.

■ Afghanistan: Mining

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[49419]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what (a) technical support her Department has offered and (b) political engagement with the Afghan government her Department plans in order to ensure that the Afghan government fulfils the commitment it made at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, held on 4-5 October 2016, on amendments to the mining law; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

The UK aims to reduce Afghanistan's dependence on aid and help make it a more prosperous safe and stable country.

The UK supports the extractives sector to accelerate economic development and revenue generation. Through the £10.3m Extractive Sector Support Programme, the UK has recommended revisions to the Minerals Law and provided support for the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum to incorporate amendments.

The Mining Advisory Council is currently reviewing the amendments. Following this review, the amendments will go to the Ministry of Justice, the Council of Ministers, Parliament and finally the President for enactment. The UK remains committed to working closely with the Government and other stakeholders in support of this process.

■ Afghanistan: Overseas Aid

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[49420]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what funds for which purposes the Government pledged at the Brussels conference on Afghanistan, held on 4-5 October 2016; what measures she has put in place to monitor how those funds are (a) distributed and (b) spent; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

On 2 October the Secretary of State announced that the UK would spend up to £750m in ODA to Afghanistan to 2020, depending on Afghan government performance and security conditions. UK support will help build a safer, more stable and prosperous Afghanistan through increased state capacity and legitimacy; it will support increased economic growth and self-reliance and decreased poverty and vulnerability. It will be delivered via multi-donor trust funds and contracts with commercial providers of good and services, UN agencies and UK, Afghan, and international NGOs, and monitored by both internal and external mechanisms.

■ Developing Countries: Forests

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[49674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether the Government plans to maintain funding to prevent deforestation in developing countries; and whether the UK provides any funding to help prevent large-scale forest fires in developing countries.

James Wharton:

Preventing deforestation is a key priority for the UK. More than one billion people depend on forests for their livelihoods, and forests are vital resources which support economic growth in developing countries. At the Paris climate change conference in 2015, the UK Germany and Norway collectively committed to providing up to US\$1 billion per year by 2020, or over \$5 billion in the period 2015-20, to prevent deforestation and ensure that forests are managed sustainably.

■ Developing Countries: Older People

Patrick Grady: [\[49681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to support the needs and rights of older people in developing countries; and whether ageing will be reinstated as a responsibility under her Department's Inclusive Societies policy.

Rory Stewart:

Many DFID programmes reach and include older people, supporting their needs and rights. These include programmes to strengthen health systems and eye care, and specific programmes for the poorest including supporting slum dwellers in Tanzania and supporting widows resulting from the Genocide in Rwanda. Ageing features in DFID country level poverty analyses as a key factor in understanding poverty. In addition DFID is taking a global leadership role to achieve better quality and use of age disaggregated data to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals leave no one behind. DFID's Inclusive Societies Department in Policy Division holds policy responsibility for ageing.

■ Developing Countries: Renewable Energy

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[49815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what plans her Department has to increase investment in decentralised renewable energy in developing countries.

James Wharton:

The UK Government is playing a leading role in improving energy access in developing countries. DFID has a range of programmes which are working with developing countries to ensure renewable energy markets work effectively as well as supporting energy businesses to grow, and providing consumers with access to funding to buy solar goods. For example, our Energy Access Ventures programme is investing in off-grid electric and we are delivering green mini-grid solutions across Africa.

Through the UK Government's Energy Africa campaign we are working with solar firms to help them access the finance they need to expand their businesses, create jobs and help reach millions of people in Africa without electricity access

■ Iraq: Armed Conflict

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[49706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what (a) material and (b) humanitarian assistance the Government is providing to assist civilians fleeing the city of Mosul; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

The UK has been one of the earliest and largest donors to the UN's Mosul Flash Appeal, focused on preparing for the humanitarian consequences of Mosul military operations. This includes £40 million announced by my right Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development, at the UN General Assembly in September. With this, our partners will provide assistance, including shelter and support kits for 66,000 people, comprising vital equipment for any displaced family, such as blankets, plastic sheets, buckets and other containers for water, cooking items and soap. It will also provide emergency healthcare for 42,000 people, through four mobile medical teams, upgraded emergency medical surgeries, three ambulances and two health facilities with equipment, medication and light rehabilitation.

This brings the UK's total humanitarian commitment to £90 million in 2016, and £169.5 million since summer 2014.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Trade Agreements

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[49813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage UK nationals with expertise in trade negotiations to return to the UK from other EU countries to act as negotiators.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[49814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to increase the number of skilled trade negotiators in British embassies, consulates and high commissions overseas.

Greg Hands:

The Department for International Trade has already established a strong and capable trade policy team with significant negotiating experience. The team has more than doubled in size since 23 June and is still growing. We will continue to hire the brightest and best talent from within the UK civil service and from elsewhere in order to deliver the best outcomes for the UK.

■ Trade: European Economic Area

Diana Johnson: [\[49255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many and what proportion of (a) existing trade deals and (b) trade deals under negotiation by the EU will be available to countries in the European Free Trade Area.

Greg Hands:

Countries in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) are not party to any EU trade deals, either existing or under negotiation.

■ World Trade Organisation

Diana Johnson: [\[49260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the Government plans to re-apply for World Trade Organisation membership upon leaving the EU; and what assessment he has made of the length of time it would take for such an application to be successful.

Greg Hands:

The UK is already a member of the WTO in its own right and will not need to re-apply upon leaving the EU.

JUSTICE

■ Arrest Warrants

Mr David Hanson: [\[48951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 17 October 2016 to Question 47082, if she will provide a breakdown by region of the figures provided in that Answer.

Sir Oliver Heald:

THE NUMBER OF ARREST WARRANTS ISSUED FOR DEFENDANTS WHO FAILED TO ATTEND COURT IN ENGLAND AND WALES, BY REGION, FOR THE PERIOD 2010 TO 2014 (THE LATEST DATA AVAILABLE) CAN BE VIEWED IN THE TABLE BELOW:

NUMBER OF FAILURE TO APPEAR (FTA) WARRANTS RECEIVED ⁽¹⁾ BY REGION IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 2010- 2014.

Region ⁽²⁾	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
North West	16,061	15,440	12,448	11,817	11,779
North East	6,098	5,765	4,878	5,106	5,056
Yorkshire and	11,973	10,480	9,420	8,271	7,851

THE NUMBER OF ARREST WARRANTS ISSUED FOR DEFENDANTS WHO FAILED TO ATTEND COURT IN ENGLAND AND WALES, BY REGION, FOR THE PERIOD 2010 TO 2014 (THE LATEST DATA AVAILABLE) CAN BE VIEWED IN THE TABLE BELOW:

NUMBER OF FAILURE TO APPEAR (FTA) WARRANTS RECEIVED ⁽¹⁾ BY REGION IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 2010- 2014.

Humberside

West	6,963	6,580	3,205	2,812	2,914
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Midlands ⁽³⁾

East	6,213	5,930	5,518	5,457	5,858
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Midlands ⁽⁴⁾

East of England	8,999	8,267	6,876	5,638	5,284
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South East	10,825	10,674	9,257	9,304	9,716
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London	13,146	12,407	9,942	10,752	11,107
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South West	7,732	7,617	5,874	5,851	6,010
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Wales	5,463	5,628	5,401	5,217	4,441
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England & Wales	93,473	88,788	72,819	70,225	70,016
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(1) Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from live systems used by police forces principally for operational reasons. As such, they are subject to change over time. For these reasons, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

(2) Defined as comprising the following police force areas: **East of England** - Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, and Essex. **East Midlands** - Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire. **London** - City of London, Metropolitan police. **North East** - Cleveland, Durham, Northumbria. **North West** - Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Cheshire, Greater Manchester. **South East** - Sussex, Thames Valley, Hampshire, Surrey, Kent. **South West** - Dorset, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Avon and Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. **Wales** - Gwent, South Wales, Dyfed-Powys, North Wales. **West Midlands** - West Midlands, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia. Yorkshire and Humberside - North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Humberside. (3) West Midlands constabulary are unable to supply any FTA warrant data from 1 April 2012. (4) Lincolnshire Police were unable to supply any data for Q4 of 2014 because of technical issues related to the introduction of a new warrant management system. Procedures for supplying the Ministry of Justice with data relating to FTA warrants have been revised to ensure that in future these data are captured. Data

THE NUMBER OF ARREST WARRANTS ISSUED FOR DEFENDANTS WHO FAILED TO ATTEND COURT IN ENGLAND AND WALES, BY REGION, FOR THE PERIOD 2010 TO 2014 (THE LATEST DATA AVAILABLE) CAN BE VIEWED IN THE TABLE BELOW:

NUMBER OF FAILURE TO APPEAR (FTA) WARRANTS RECEIVED ⁽¹⁾ BY REGION IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 2010- 2014.

presented are for the first three quarters of 2014 only. Note: These data are reported to the Ministry of Justice by police forces. As such, they are not directly comparable with other data presented in the Criminal Statistics bulletin, which are returned directly from administrative data systems used by magistrates' courts and the Crown Court.

■ Court Orders

Liz Saville Roberts: [R] [\[48898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will review the allocation of new court orders for supervision between the National Probation Service and community rehabilitation companies.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

We are currently conducting a comprehensive review of the probation system. The review will consider the allocation of cases between the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies but public protection is our top priority. We will not hesitate to take the necessary action to make sure our vital Transforming Rehabilitation reforms are being delivered to reduce reoffending, cut crime and prevent future victims.

Liz Saville Roberts: [R] [\[48899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of new court orders were made by the courts and subsequently allocated to (a) community rehabilitation companies and (b) National Probation Service in England and Wales, for the most recent period for which figures are available.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, 89 per cent of offenders sentenced to a community order or suspended sentence order were allocated to a Community Rehabilitation Company and 11 per cent to the National Probation Service.

■ Offenders: Wales

Liz Saville Roberts: [R] [\[48897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the annual cost is of supervising an individual offender in Wales by Working Links for the most recent financial year for which figures are available.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Working Links provides individual tailored rehabilitation programmes to the specific requirements of the offender.

These are unique to the individual and therefore the cost of each rehabilitation programme varies.

We have given providers the flexibility to use both innovated and mandated programmes to do what works to reduce reoffending, and support offenders.

■ **Prisoners' Release: Wales**

Liz Saville Roberts:

[R] [\[48896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what resources are provided for the supervision of people released from jail following a sentence of 12 months or less in Wales.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

All prisoners sentenced to 12 months or less in custody receive through the gate services from the Wales Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), whilst they are in prison. This includes support with securing employment, finding accommodation, debt and finance advice and resettlement to their community. On their release prisoners will then be supervised by the Wales CRC or National Probation Service, dependent upon their risk of harm.

■ **Probation: Wales**

Liz Saville Roberts:

[R] [\[48892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will review the contract awarded to Working Links for the delivery of probation services in Wales.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Contracts with the 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) in England and Wales commenced in February 2015, and are of seven years duration. The Wales CRC is continuing to provide services in accordance with its contract, and is being robustly managed by our contract management team to make sure they fulfil their contractual obligations in relation to service delivery, reducing reoffending, protecting the public and providing value for money to the taxpayer.

Liz Saville Roberts:

[R] [\[48894\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether Working Links are in dispute with staff unions of the probation services in Wales and on what issues.

Liz Saville Roberts:

[R] [\[48900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether Working Links in Wales plan probation staff redundancies.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

All Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) are contractually required to maintain a professional and appropriately skilled workforce to deliver the services set out in their

contracts. We robustly contract manage each CRC to make sure they fulfil their contractual commitment to maintain service delivery, reduce reoffending, protect the public and deliver value for money for taxpayers.

Liz Saville Roberts:

[R] [[48902](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many offices Working Links has in Wales for the administration of probation services; and what the locations are of those offices.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The administration of probation services across the Wales Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) is changing. There will be three operational hubs located in Swansea, Cardiff and Colwyn Bay. Frontline delivery office locations will exist across Wales and the Wales CRC are establishing community hubs to provide and deliver collaborative partnership working.

All CRC providers set out an agreed operating model within their bid during the Transforming Rehabilitation competition. We are robustly managing the contracts to make sure the providers deliver services which reduce reoffending, protect the public and provide value for money to the taxpayer.

■ Reoffenders: Wales

Liz Saville Roberts:

[R] [[48895](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the re-conviction rate is of offenders supervised by Working Links in Wales during the first 12 months following such supervision.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

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

■ Repossession Orders

Jim Shannon:

[[49118](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps she is taking to assist families who are in a position to lose their homes as a result of county court judgements.

Sir Oliver Heald:

If a person finds that a county court judgment has been entered against them and they did not owe the money, they can apply to the court to have the judgment 'set aside'. The Ministry of Justice is working with other government departments to check that creditors are using accurate address details when making money claims.

The Department for Communities and Local Government is responsible for housing policy. Under the homelessness legislation (Part 6 of the Housing Act) any family with dependent children will be provided with accommodation. Homelessness teams will often be able to help families with debt advice or assist them to obtain that advice.

■ Secure Training Centres: Travellers

Rehman Chishti:

[\[49053\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress her Department has made on implementing the recommendation of the findings paper of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons, *People in prisons: Gypsies, Romany and Travellers*, published in February 2014, on recording the number of young people of Gypsy, Traveller and Roma background in secure training centres.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The Youth Justice Board currently records the ethnicity of young people in Secure Training Centres (STC) using the 2001 Census categories.

The Youth Justice Board commissions HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) to carry out an annual survey, 'Children in Custody', to monitor Gypsy, Romany and Traveller children in youth offenders' institutions (YOIs) and secure training centres (STCs).

The YJB keep their data collection systems, including on ethnicity, under regular review.

■ Social Networking

Anna Turley:

[\[48860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many meetings Ministers of her Department have had with social media companies to discuss harmful online content since May 2015.

Sir Oliver Heald:

Details of ministerial meetings with external companies are published on gov.uk.

■ Social Security Benefits: Appeals

Christina Rees:

[\[48930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the reasons are for the proposal to reduce the number of benefit appeal cases in which (a) an appellant can appear in person and (b) the panel includes a member with direct experience of the relevant benefit; and what cost savings are expected to arise from that change.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The Government is investing close to £1 billion to reform and digitise our courts and tribunals to deliver swifter and more certain justice.

Technology will be at the forefront of our reforms but specific support will be provided to ensure tribunals remain accessible to all and physical hearings will continue to be used to resolve many cases.

The impact assessment published alongside the Transforming our Justice System consultation paper sets out our estimate of potential savings from tribunal panel composition reform based on possible future scenarios.

The panel composition reforms will ensure that the most appropriate panel is always selected to hear a case. As now, relevant expertise will always be available where

needed, regardless of how a case is resolved. The Senior President of Tribunals will continue to determine when panel members are used.

■ Youth Custody: Travellers

Rehman Chishti: [\[49052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Gypsy, Traveller and Roma young people were held in (a) secure training centres, (b) secure children's homes and (c) young offenders' institutions in the most recent year for which figures are available.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) and HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) publish an annual report on 'Children in Custody' that monitors the number of gypsy, traveller and Romany (GRT) children in youth offenders' institutions (YOIs) and secure training centres (STCs). The reports are available on the HMIP website.

The survey does not cover young people in Secure Children's Homes (SCH). This is because Ofsted are responsible for inspecting SCHs, not HMIP.

Kate Green: [\[49243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps her Department takes to monitor the number of gypsy, traveller and romany children in (a) secure training centres, (b) secure children's homes and (c) young offenders' institutions using the 2011 census ethnic group classification.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) and HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) publish an annual report on 'Children in Custody' that monitors the number of gypsy, traveller and Romany (GRT) children in youth offenders' institutions (YOIs) and secure training centres (STCs). The reports are available on the HMIP website.

The survey does not cover young people in Secure Children's Homes (SCH). This is because Ofsted are responsible for inspecting SCHs, not HMIP.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Borders: Northern Ireland

Mary Creagh: [\[906771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what progress is being made on maintaining an open border between the UK and the Republic of Ireland after the UK leaves the EU.

James Brokenshire:

Leaders in both Ireland and the UK have been unequivocal – both want to maintain the current arrangement and avoid the introduction of physical border controls within the Common Travel Area.

I attend regular meetings with representatives of the Irish Government and we are working together to achieve this outcome.

■ Stormont House Agreement

Steve Baker: [\[906768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent progress has been made on the implementation of the Stormont House and Fresh Start Agreements.

James Brokenshire:

Significant progress has been made, including on welfare reform, and towards the establishment of the Independent Reporting Commission on paramilitary activity. We are working closely with the Executive and Irish Government on outstanding commitments. The devolution of corporation tax powers and building consensus for the legacy bodies are top priorities.

TRANSPORT

■ Belfast International Airport: USA

Jim Shannon: [\[49116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the Northern Ireland Executive on steps to ensure that maintenance of flight connections between Belfast Aldergrove Airport and New York.

Mr John Hayes:

The Department for Transport was briefed on several occasions by the Northern Ireland Office on the Northern Ireland Executive's considerations on steps to ensure the maintenance of flight connections between Belfast Aldergrove Airport and New York. The Department was not actively involved in this matter.

■ Bus Services

Daniel Zeichner: [\[49208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's bus statistics table BUS0208, what the supported bus service mileage has been by local authority in each year since 2010.

Andrew Jones:

The data in table BUS0208 on vehicle miles on local bus services by local authority and service type, including local authority supported mileage, is available for the years 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.

Table BUS0208 for 2013/14 is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/379004/annual-bus-statistics-year-to-march-2014.zip

Table BUS0208 for 2014/15 is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485295/annual-bus-statistics-year-ending-march-2015.zip

Table BUS0208 for 2015/16 is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/560582/bus0208.ods

■ Bus Services: Expenditure

Mr Khalid Mahmood: [\[49233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much has been spent from the public purse on bus services per capita in (a) Birmingham, (b) the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority, formerly Centro and (c) each region of England from 2009-10 to the most recent financial year for which information is available.

Andrew Jones:

The attached table shows the estimated revenue spend on bus services and estimated revenue spend per capita on bus services for the English regions, West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority and Birmingham for 2009/10 to 2014/15, the years for which data are available.

The table also shows figures used to derive the total revenue spend from:

- Bus Service Operator Grant paid by Department for Transport (DfT) directly to bus operators
- Local authority expenditure on concessionary fares (from Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) estimates)
- Local authority expenditure on support to bus operators (from DCLG estimates)

The estimates do not include spend from DCLG estimates on 'public and other transport planning, policy and strategy' and 'public transport management' that could relate to bus services. It is not possible to determine the extent of spend on bus services in these categories from the DCLG figures. Also, any local authority or DfT capital spend on bus infrastructure has been excluded.

Local authority revenue spend is not available for Birmingham. They receive a proportion of the funding from West Midlands ITA to run bus services in their area that is not disaggregated in the DCLG local authority spend estimates.

Attachments:

1. Table [PQ477792 (002) SPREADSHEET final.xlsx]

■ Cycling and Walking

Daniel Zeichner: [\[49195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 13 September 2016 to Question 44873, how many civil servants are currently analysing the responses to the draft cycling and walking strategy.

Andrew Jones:

This Government wants to create an environment which encourages walking and cycling, where cycling and walking is the norm for short journeys or as part of a longer journey. Our goal is of streets and public places which support walking and cycling and a road network where infrastructure for cycling and walking is always improved when local and national routes are maintained, upgraded or built.

Moving forwards the Department is working on a revision of the draft Strategy based on the feedback received during the consultation period. A number of officials are involved with the Strategy, with one specifically concerned with the consultation analysis.

Daniel Zeichner:[\[49196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 13 September 2016 to Question 44873, in what month he expects the cycling and walking investment strategy to be published.

Andrew Jones:

We have previously said we would publish the Strategy in the summer of 2016. Due to the very large number of consultation responses covering a wide range of issues, there has been a need to assess these and make any necessary revisions to the Strategy. We hope to publish the Strategy shortly but we are not able to specify a precise month.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line**Grant Shapps:**[\[49687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent estimate he has made of the date that the first phase of High Speed 2 will be completed and open to the public.

Andrew Jones:

The hybrid Bill for HS2 Phase One is proceeding through Parliament and we are aiming to achieve Royal Assent by the end of 2016, with construction starting in 2017 and the first trains running by the end of 2026.

■ High Speed Two**Mrs Cheryl Gillan:**[\[49780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the project management section of the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013 Expenditure Report, 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016, what incentive payments were made to HS2 Ltd's development partners and professional services contractors; to whom such payments were made; and what exceptional performance was relevant in each such case.

Andrew Jones:

Incentive payments were based on accrued estimates of the contractually obliged sums payable to the company's Development Partner CH2M Hill and its Professional Service Contractors. These contractors have provided critical support to HS2 Ltd in its undertaking of both its preparatory works and its ongoing hybrid Bill management. Assessment is undertaken by a multi-disciplinary panel from across HS2 Ltd to consider

the case made by each contractor as to the additional value provided over and above the original contracted scope.

The accrued estimates accounted for in support of HS2 Ltd's preparatory works are £1.4m, split over the following suppliers: CH2M Hill, Arup, Atkins, Capita Symons / Ineco, ERM / Temple / Mott McDonald, Mott.

Mrs Cheryl Gillan: [\[49800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to paragraph 3.12 of the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013 Expenditure Report, 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016, published by his Department in October 2016, if he will provide reasons for the difference between the actual and budgeted cost per person in the project management team.

Andrew Jones:

The difference between the actual and budgeted cost per person was due to the mix of permanent and non-permanent workforce being different from that assumed during the budgeting process. This was reflective of the greater reliance required on non-permanent specialist support to quickly mobilise teams to undertake preparation for Early Works Contracts leading into Main Works.

Mrs Cheryl Gillan: [\[49801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to paragraph 2.2 of the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013 Expenditure Report, 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016, published by his Department in October 2016, if he will detail the reasons, other than the delay in completing the acquisition of large-scale commercial properties, for the £192.7 million underspend referred to in that report.

Andrew Jones:

The £192.7m of the Land & Property (L&P) underspend shown in the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013 Expenditure Report for 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016 was formed from two elements – strategic property acquisitions and compensation schemes, including providing discretionary assistance to home owners and small businesses.

The majority of the total L&P underspend was caused by delays in completing non-compensation scheme acquisitions. These are generally acquisitions of commercial properties and it is hard to accurately estimate completion dates due to complexity of the deals.

The other part of the L&P underspend was related to acquisitions resulting from the compensation schemes. The suite of schemes are demand led which means HS2 Ltd has very limited control over the timing of property purchases. Successful applicants to the schemes are allowed between one and three years after acceptance to decide on when they want their homes purchased.

■ High Speed Two: Apprentices

Mrs Cheryl Gillan: [\[49798\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many apprenticeships have been provided to date by HS2 Ltd.

Andrew Jones:

HS2, through both HS2 Ltd and its supply chain, has a target of creating 2,000 apprenticeship opportunities over the lifetime of the project, from a forecast average annual workforce of 11,000 (with a peak of 25,000).

HS2 Ltd itself has to date provided five apprenticeships, though this is in the context that HS2 does not yet have Royal Assent and construction hasn't yet started. Looking forward, it is anticipated that HS2 Ltd will bring in 36 apprentices a year based on an average workforce of 1,500.

For the companies that will design and construct HS2 there will be requirements to deliver Skills, Employment and Education outcomes, including apprenticeships. In each of the major HS2 Ltd contracts, all bidders are assessed on their ability to deliver on these outcomes through the procurement process. Therefore, as HS2 enters its construction stage in 2017, apprenticeships are expected to increase rapidly.

■ High Speed Two: Public Appointments**Mrs Cheryl Gillan:**[\[49519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects a permanent High Speed 2 Construction Commissioner to be appointed.

Andrew Jones:

A permanent Construction Commissioner will be appointed following Royal Assent of the High Speed Rail (London to West Midlands) Bill.

■ Parking: Pedestrian Areas**Royston Smith:**[\[49804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 26 May 2016 to Question 37550, what further progress has been made on reviewing the legal and financial implications of an alternative pavement parking regime; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Jones:

The process for putting in place traffic regulation orders (TROs) was identified as a major factor affecting the enforcement of pavement parking. The Department for Transport is therefore now considering how best to address the general improvement of the TRO-making process and will provide further information once this is available.

■ Railways: Freight**Mrs Anne Main:**[\[49714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many rail freight interchanges there are in the UK; and what the utilisation rate is on the freight network.

Paul Maynard:

The UK has 16 intermodal rail freight interchanges. These are:

- o Birmingham International Railfreight Terminal
- o Daventry International Railfreight Terminal
- o Hams Hall
- o Widnes
- o Wentloog
- o Selby
- o Doncaster Railport
- o Grangemouth
- o Trafford Park Euroterminal
- o Trafford Park
- o Lawley Street
- o Leeds – Freightliner
- o Mossend Euroterminal
- o Wakefield Euroterminal
- o Willesden Euroterminal

- Barking

In addition to these interchanges, there are a large number of port-located rail terminals and small independent facilities nationwide.

The usage and available capacity of these terminals varies by facility and time of year. However, overall changes in the rail freight market means there has been an increase, in recent years, in imports and exports of containerised goods through the major ports (intermodal freight), increasing utilisation at these sites.

Mrs Anne Main:

[\[49719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many strategic rail freight interchanges have been granted planning permission since 2000; and of those granted permission how many have been built.

Paul Maynard:

Since 2000, development consent has been given for ten Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges across Great Britain. The Department for Transport does not monitor progress in constructing these sites. However we understand that not all of these interchanges have yet been constructed.

WORK AND PENSIONS■ **Children: Maintenance****Karin Smyth:**[\[49590\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 14 October 2016 to Questions 47096, 47097 and 47098, what data gathering methods are undertaken by the Child Maintenance Service to track (a) deduction from earnings or benefits orders, (b) deduction from bank account orders and (c) liability orders which the Child Maintenance Service has served on absent parents to recover payments due to parents with custody.

Caroline Nokes:

When a paying parent defaults on a payment without reasonable justification, the Child Maintenance Service will take appropriate action to recover the missed payment and re-establish compliance. This action could include deduction from earnings, benefits or directly from bank accounts, or enforcement via the courts such as a liability order.

The system generates compliance data that tracks the payment for internal management information purposes. The Child Maintenance Service can see how many cases are set to pay by each method, and whether or not they are compliant. If a payment under one of these methods fails, a case worker will be prompted to take further action.

■ **Department for Work and Pensions: Families****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[49367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what funding his Department has allocated to the Troubled Families Programme for (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18 and (c) 2018-19.

Damian Hinds:

The Department for Work and Pensions has not allocated direct funding to the Troubled Families Programme in those financial years. The Department has allocated funding for around 300 Troubled Families Employment Advisors to drive improved employment outcomes.

■ **Department for Work and Pensions: Staff****Jim Fitzpatrick:**[\[49571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans he has for the number of full-time equivalent staff to be in the benefit cap processing team when the lower benefit cap is implemented; and what estimate he has made of the cost of those staff to the public purse.

Caroline Nokes:

The implementation funding for additional benefit cap processing is circa £1.4m to provide an additional 44 FTE staff in steady state for Universal Credit and current benefit claimants.

■ Employment and Support Allowance

Diana Johnson: [49345]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his Written Ministerial Statement of 10 October 2016, HCWS174, what proportion of existing (a) support and (b) work related-activity group claimants of employment and support allowance will (i) continue and (ii) cease to be subject to re-assessment.

Diana Johnson: [49346]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to his Written Ministerial Statement of 10 October 2016, HCWS174, what steps his Department plans to take to ensure that relevant employment and support allowance claimants are not reassessed unnecessarily.

Penny Mordaunt:

We will be working over the coming months with medical professionals and other stakeholders to develop a process and functional criteria that will help us identify those with the most severe health conditions or disabilities, for whom repeat work capability assessments can be stopped. This change will only apply to those placed in the Support Group and Universal Credit equivalent.

No proportion of Support Group claimants can be estimated until the criteria has been agreed. This change will come into effect by the end of 2017.

Neil Gray: [49653]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many representations he has received (a) in favour and (b) against reductions in the employment support allowance for people in the work-related activity group.

Penny Mordaunt:

A number of representations were received regarding removal of the work-related activity component for new employment and support allowance claimants only. We do not hold a central record of this information.

Neil Gray: [49654]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many employment support allowance claimants in the work-related activity group have (a) come off that allowance and (b) had periods of reclaiming that allowance and what proportion of those claimants had fluctuating illnesses in the latest period for which figures are available.

Penny Mordaunt:

Statistics on Employment and Support Allowance off-flows, by phase of claim, are published and available at:

http://tabulation-tool.dwp.gov.uk/flows/flows_off/tabtool.html

Guidance on how to extract the information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-tabulation-tool-guidance>

The information requested on Employment and Support Allowance claimants reclaiming ESA and the proportion of claimants who had fluctuating illnesses is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Neil Gray:

[49760]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what he expects the savings to his Department to be of the proposed changes to the employment and support allowance work-related activity group; and how much funding has been allocated to the proposed work and health programme.

Penny Mordaunt:

The forecasted savings from the proposed changes to the Employment and Support Allowance work-related activity group from April 2017, can be found in Table 2.2 of the Budget 2016, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-2016-documents/budget-2016>

The 2015 Spending Review announced funding rising to at least £130 million a year by 2019/20 for the new Work and Health programme. The programme is one part of a wider offer of support for disabled people and our Work and Health Green Paper will be looking at how we can go even further.

■ Employment and Support Allowance: Appeals

Deidre Brock:

[49707]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what provision is in place to support employment and support allowance (ESA) claimants after a successful ESA appeal during the interim period before the reinstatement of that benefit and payment of arrears.

Penny Mordaunt:

If an employment and support allowance claimant appeals following mandatory reconsideration, benefit can be paid at the assessment phase rate pending the appeal hearing. Following a successful appeal the payment will be backdated to cover the period of mandatory reconsideration, provided medical evidence is supplied.

■ Employment: Disability

Maria Caulfield:

[49059]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of whether it is necessary to improve support services for people with disabilities entering the labour market; and what steps his Department is taking to make recruitment processes accessible for all.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Government is committed to enabling all disabled people to fulfil their potential and achieve their aspirations. Work is an important part of this, and the Government wants all disabled people and people with a long term health condition to go as far as their talents will take them. Every individual should have the opportunity to work and share in the economic and health benefits that work brings.

A new Disability Confident employer scheme went live on 14 July 2016. When employers sign up as Disability Confident they are asked to make specific meaningful offers of opportunities for disabled people such as jobs, apprenticeships, internships, and work experience opportunities.

We will soon publish a Green Paper that will explore a range of options for long-term reform across different sectors, targeting the factors which contribute to the disability employment gap.

Andrew Bridgen: [\[49350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that providers of his Department's services (a) better understand the demands of the local labour market and (b) reach out to employers to encourage them to consider disabled applicants.

Damian Hinds:

The Department has teams of performance managers who work with providers to ensure they keep to their contracted obligations, which include an understanding of the demands of their local labour market and consideration of disabled applicants.

There are specific programmes which support disabled people with entering or retaining work, and through which providers can work with local employers. These include Work Programme, Work Choice, and Specialist Employability Support.

Additionally, Disability Confident was launched in July 2013. Disability Confident supports this Government's commitment to halve the employment gap between disabled and non-disabled people by focusing on the role of employers, who have a crucial role to play in ensuring disabled people are recruited, retained and developed in their careers. When employers sign up as Disability Confident, they are asked to make specific meaningful offers of opportunities for disabled people such as jobs, apprenticeships, internships, and work experience opportunities. So far, over 1900 businesses have signed up to the new Disability Confident scheme, with this number growing daily.

■ Housing Benefit: Supported Housing

Tulip Siddiq: [\[49803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 14 October 2016 to Question 47528 and the Answer of 17 October 2016 to HL 2020, if he will provide further detail on the consideration of responses to questions seven and 11 and summary paragraphs 45 and 67 of the consultation on housing benefit reform, Cm 8152, where there are references to meeting appointed housing needs through locally administered funding; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Nokes:

We received a number of responses to questions 7 and 11 on the consultation CM8152, along with the other questions in the consultation, which the Government considered at the time. There was a range of views, comments and suggestions, from a range of

stakeholders, relating to the proposition that local authorities should administer funding for supported housing and that supported housing should be removed from Housing Benefit altogether.

■ Jobseeker's Allowance: Scotland

Dr Eilidh Whiteford:

[49435]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants in each constituency in Scotland have been in receipt of jobseeker's allowance for (a) one year, (b) two years and (c) five years.

Damian Hinds:

The information available for the number of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants by Parliamentary Constituency and duration is published and can be found at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/default.asp>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/home/newuser.asp>

■ Personal Independence Payment: Chronic Illnesses

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[49342]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will take steps to end reassessments for personal independence payments claimants with lifelong or degenerative conditions in line with his Department's policy on employment and support allowance.

Penny Mordaunt:

The length of a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) award is based on an individual's circumstances and can vary from 9 months to an on-going award with a light touch review at the ten year point. PIP already recognises that for the most severely disabled claimants, the award review process could seem unnecessarily intrusive. Existing PIP claimants with the most severe, lifetime disabilities, whose functional ability has remained the same, are more likely to have their evidence reviewed by a DWP Decision Maker and will not need to have another face-to-face assessment with a healthcare professional.

■ Social Security Benefits: Greater London

Jim Fitzpatrick:

[49609]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 6 September 2016 to Question 45327, what proportion of claimants affected by the lower benefit cap in (a) Tower Hamlets and (b) London are in receipt of (i) jobseeker's allowance, (ii) employment support allowance and (iii) income support.

Due to the complexity of the accompanying table, the link below is to the web version of the answer:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-10-20/49609>

■ **Social Security Benefits: Immigrants**

David T. C. Davies: [49143]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to ensure that people who have been subject to a deportation order are not eligible to claim benefits.

Damian Hinds:

We receive regular returns from data-matching. These identify cases where benefit is in payment in respect of an individual that Home Office data suggests no longer has legal basis to remain in the UK.

When we receive this information we review the case to establish the up-to-date position. Where the claimant appears to have no legitimate call on public funds we suspend benefit and write to the claimant telling them we will close their case unless they provide further information that establishes entitlement. If no such information is provided, we end their benefit claim.

■ **State Retirement Pensions: British Nationals Abroad**

Paul Blomfield: [49117]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he plans to maintain the system whereby UK citizens who live and work in EU countries are able to build up their entitlement to a state pension in the UK, and EU citizens who live and work in the UK are able to build up their entitlement to a state pension in their native country, after the UK leaves the EU.

Damian Hinds:

The EU social security regulations allow citizens to build entitlement to a state pension from the EEA country where they have worked and contributed toward their pension, rather than building up entitlement in their native country through work in another country.

The Prime Minister has been clear that she wants to protect the rights of British citizens currently living in European member states, in the same way that we want to protect the status of EU nationals already living here. The reciprocal rights and entitlements that will apply following the UK's exit are subject to the wider negotiation on our future relationship with the EU. Those negotiations have not yet begun and so it is not possible to set out any positions in advance. However at every step of the negotiations we will seek to ensure the best possible outcome for the British people, at home and abroad.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

HOME OFFICE

■ Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (1 June 2016 to 31 August 2016)

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd): [\[HCWS220\]](#)

Section 19(1) of the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011 (the Act) requires the Secretary of State to report to Parliament as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of every relevant three-month period on the exercise of her TPIM powers under the Act during that period.

The level of information provided will always be subject to slight variations based on operational advice.

TPIM NOTICES IN FORCE (AS OF 31 AUGUST 2016)	6
TPIM notices in respect of British citizens (as of 31 August 2016)	5
TPIM notices extended (during the reporting period)	0
TPIM notices revoked (during the reporting period)	0
TPIM notices revived (during the reporting period)	0
Variations made to measures specified in TPIM notices (during the reporting period)	3
Applications to vary measures specified in TPIM notices refused (during the reporting period)	3
The number of current subjects relocated under TPIM legislation (as of 31 August 2016)	6

The TPIM Review Group (TRG) keeps every TPIM notice under regular and formal review. The TRG met on 7 June 2016. The next TRG meetings will take place on 20, 27 and 28 September 2016.

During the reporting period one individual was charged in relation to offences under section 23 of the Act (contravening a measure specified in a TPIM notice without reasonable excuse). This individual is not currently subject to a TPIM notice, the notice having been revoked in the last reporting period.

The case of *Secretary of State for the Home Department v EB* [2016] EWHC 1970 (Admin) was heard at the High Court between 11 and 15 July 2016. In a judgment handed down on 29 July 2016 Mr Justice Mitting upheld the decision of the Secretary of State to impose a TPIM notice against EB. This judgment can be found at:

<http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2016/1970.html>

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

■ Technical review of the current English Votes for English Laws Standing Orders

Leader of the House of Commons (Mr David Lidington): [\[HCWS219\]](#)

Today I am launching a scheduled technical review of the current English Votes for English Laws Standing Orders.

The previous Leader of the House of Commons committed to a review of the Standing Orders 12 months after their introduction and I am now honouring that pledge.

In October 2015, English Votes for English Laws was introduced to address the West Lothian question. It provides for the consent of English (or English and Welsh) MPs to legislation that solely applies to England (or England and Wales), while maintaining the important principle that MPs from all parts of the UK should continue to be able to deliberate and vote on all legislation before the House.

There will be a consultation period to inform the review which will come to a close on 2nd December 2016, with publication of the outcomes of the review due later this session. The review will be available online only. Details of the review can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-votes-for-english-laws-review>.

The terms of reference for the review are outlined below:

- The impact of the Standing Orders on the legislative process
- The operation of the certification test
- Any suggestions for how the process could be further improved, or how understanding of the process could be further supported.