



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 13 September 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:28 P.M., 13 September 2016). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.45003

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Barristers

Karl Turner: [\[45661\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, if he will take steps to encourage barristers who are employed through the Service Prosecuting Authority to enter the selection competition to become Queen's Counsel.

Robert Buckland:

I would strongly encourage anyone with the appropriate skills and experience to apply to become Queen's Counsel, including those at the employed bar and within the Service Prosecuting Authority.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Biofuels: Subsidies

Ian Blackford: [\[906294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy that the proposed changes to the subsidy regime for CHP biomass plants allow schemes pre-accredited under the Renewable Heat Incentive to continue to benefit from that scheme.

Mr Nick Hurd:

This change has been made to provide value for money for the taxpayer. It will apply to new participants on the basis of when they fully qualify for the scheme. Those who fully qualified on or after 1st August will be subject to the change.

■ Cabinet Office EU Unit

Chi Onwurah: [\[42453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many full-time equivalent staff of his Department (a) have moved and (b) are planned to move into the EU Unit.

Joseph Johnson:

The new Department for Exiting the European Union will be made up of staff from various departments across Government. The overall size and scope of the new department, including staffing and budget, are under consideration.

■ CERN

Diana Johnson: [\[43674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his policy is on future British involvement in the European Organization for Nuclear Research and the CERN research facility.

Diana Johnson: [\[43708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his policy is on future British involvement with the European Space Agency once Britain exits the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

The European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) and the European Space Agency (ESA) are separate organisations from the European Union and thus the UK's memberships of CERN or ESA are not dependent on its EU membership. The UK will continue to play a leading role in major non-EU research collaborations, including CERN and ESA. In July we confirmed the UK's application to become a full member of a major new particle accelerator, the European Spallation Source in Sweden.

■ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Research

Alex Chalk: [\[43719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he has taken to encourage research into myalgic encephalomyelitis.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government supports research into Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME) through the Medical Research Council (MRC), which receives funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy; and through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), which is funded by the Department of Health.

Together the MRC and the NIHR welcome high quality applications for research into all aspects of CFS/ME which would include studies to investigate the biological causes of the condition, improve our understanding of it and to evaluate treatments.

CFS/ME research is a current MRC priority area and has funded such research to the tune of £2.1 million. Research proposals are particularly encouraged that address the mechanisms underlying chronic changes related to CFS/ME and which aim to increase research capacity by bringing new researchers into the field, building partnerships and supporting multidisciplinary teams to tackle research challenges.

■ Corruption

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which Minister in his Department has responsibility for tackling corruption.

Margot James:

I am the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility and I lead on competition law. I have a particular focus on ensuring that companies including directors, shareholders and employees achieve high standards of corporate behaviour to ensure that the public has trust in business and recognises their value to society.

I have specific responsibility for the UK's register of People with Significant Control. I lead on the Department's interests in transposing the Fourth Anti Money Laundering Directive. I am also the lead Minister for the Department on taking forward the UK's commitments agreed at the May anticorruption summit in London.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Living Wage**Frank Field:**[\[43499\]](#)

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

Joseph Johnson:

As at 1 August 2016 (following the implementation of the 2016 pay award) there are no direct employees in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills or former Department for Energy and Climate Change) paid less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

As at this date there are no agency staff in former DECC paid less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

There are 5 agency staff in former BIS paid less than the Living Wage Foundation's definition. However, all 5 are paid more than the Government's Living Wage rate of £7.20 per hour.

We do not centrally hold details of the pay levels of staff working for outsourced companies contracted by former BIS. Arm Length Bodies linked to former DECC have confirmed that they pay all their employees above the level set by the Living Wage Foundation.

There are no employees on zero hours contracts.

I have asked Chief Executives of the executive agencies of former BIS to respond directly to the Hon. Member.

Attachments:

1. ex-BIS agencies response [agencies response PQ 43499.pdf]

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Location**

Paul Blomfield:

[\[43630\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will reverse the former Department of Business, Innovation and Skills plans to centralise that Department's policy functions in London.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 5 September 2016]: Given the machinery of Government change we will be considering in the coming months how the reform plans of BEIS' two predecessor departments should best be aligned.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: UK Withdrawal from EU**

Karl McCartney:

[\[44240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department has taken to prepare for the UK to leave the EU since 23 June 2016; and what further such steps his Department plans to take in the remainder of 2016.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Department is working closely with all interested stakeholders to ensure their views are properly captured. I am working with colleagues across government to make sure we understand all of the potential risks and opportunities across the economy.

■ **Department For Business, Innovation and Skills: Reorganisation**

Paul Blomfield:

[\[43629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to review the BIS 2020 programme in the light of the restructuring of government departments.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 5 September 2016]: A number of former BIS policy areas are shifting to the Department for Education. Around 450-500 people and posts, working in these areas will be shifting to the Department for Education. Approximately 90 of these are in the regions.

Given the machinery of government change we will be considering in the coming months how the reform plans of BEIS' two predecessor departments should best be aligned.

■ **Hinkley Point C Power Station**

Judith Cummins:

[\[906293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made an assessment of alternative plans for the development of Hinkley Point in the event that China withdraw its planned investment in that project.

Jesse Norman:

The financing of HPC is a matter for EDF.

■ **Iron and Steel: Manufacturing Industries**

Tom Pursglove:

[\[906297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to improve the confidence of suppliers and customers in the future of the UK steel industry.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Government has been working closely with industry to provide all the support we can during these difficult times.

We have made significant progress in addressing the challenges faced by the industry and we have convened a Steel Council to ensure our continued support is targeted in the right areas.

■ **Manufacturing Industries**

Tom Blenkinsop:

[\[43875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to re-examine the potential merits of establishing a materials catapult for manufacturing.

Joseph Johnson:

[Holding answer 5 September 2016]: The Government recognises the importance of manufacturing to the UK economy and we have continued to invest significant funding through the High Value Manufacturing Catapult. This has led to the launch of two new programmes designed to offer additional cutting edge equipment and expertise and extend the Catapult's services to more manufacturing sectors; and to enable UK SMEs to become more productive and to win more business. We have also provided funding for the Catapult to establish two new centres in the North East - the National Biologics Manufacturing Centre at Darlington and the National Formulation Centre at NETPark in Sedgefield.

Innovate UK manages development of the Catapult network on behalf of Government.

It has rigorously considered the potential merits of establishing a Materials Catapult for Manufacturing and has concluded that there is no robust case to establish a Materials Catapult at this time. This decision has been confirmed within the last month and my Department does not intend to re-examine this assessment.

Justin Tomlinson:

[\[44914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the contribution of the manufacturing industry to the UK economy in each of the last six years.

Mr Nick Hurd:

Despite difficult global economic conditions, manufacturing output has increased by 2.4 per cent in real terms and 14.9 per cent in current prices since 2010. Manufacturing productivity has also increased more than three times faster than the UK economy as a whole over the past 10 years. The sector spans over 130,000 businesses and directly employs 2.7 million of people, with an estimated 5.1m employed across the total manufacturing value chain. It accounts for half of all British exports, and around 70 per cent of all UK R&D spending. Manufacturing activity creates demand and value in other sectors, with official statistics suggesting that each £1 increase in demand for manufacturing industry products results in an over £1.70 in output across the economy as a whole.

■ Maternity Leave**Mr Steve Reed:**[\[45213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the period of maternity leave for mothers of premature babies.

Margot James:

[Holding answer 12 September 2016]: The UK's generous entitlement of 52 weeks' maternity leave provides mothers with sufficient leave to take account of a range of circumstances. Parents who have been employees with the same employer for over a year also have a separate entitlement to parental leave of 18 weeks per parent per child, up to the child's 18 th birthday, of which typically up to 4 weeks can be taken in one year.

■ Migrant Workers: Qualifications**Deidre Brock:**[\[44030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many professionals from other EU member states in each regulated profession or holding qualifications from other EU member states related to each regulated profession were registered to work in the UK in the latest year for which figures are available.

Jesse Norman:

In 2014, a total of 12,178 professionals holding qualifications from EU or European Free Trade Association member states had their qualifications recognised for the purpose of permanent establishment in the UK, and 680 professionals had their qualifications recognised for provision of services on a temporary and occasional basis in the UK. Additional detail and statistics for other years are available on the European Commission's regulated professions database: <http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regprof/>.

■ Motor Vehicles: Fraud

Richard Burden: [\[45092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many (a) investigations and (b) prosecutions overseen by Trading Standards have related to (i) the mis-selling of vehicles and (ii) the tampering of mileage on vehicles in each of the last five years.

Joseph Johnson:

The Department does not hold the information requested. National Trading Standards issues annual reports setting out annual data but it is not broken down into the categories requested.

■ Renewable Energy

Pauline Latham: [\[906289\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to promote the British renewable energy industry.

Mr Nick Hurd:

We are proud of our track record on investment. Nearly £52 billion has been invested since 2010.

In the Budget we announced £730m of annual support, for 15 year contracts, for less established renewable electricity projects, including offshore wind; and an increase in the renewable heat incentive to £1.15bn.

■ Research: EU Action

Diana Johnson: [\[43572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the European Commission on the status of British academics wishing to be included in cross-European research project applications funded by the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

I have been in close contact with Commissioner Moedas on the topic of cross Europe research funding. The Commission have been very supportive of the UK perspective that while the UK remains a member of the EU, current EU funding and collaboration arrangements continue unchanged. And as we announced on the 13th August, the Treasury will underwrite funding for approved Horizon 2020 projects applied for before the UK leaves the European Union.

■ Science: Industry

Andrew Gwynne: [\[43556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support and develop the UK life sciences industry; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government remains committed to ensuring that the UK has one of the most competitive and productive life sciences sectors in the world, which is at the forefront of 21st century healthcare and technology. That is crucial to ensuring both improved health outcomes for patients and wider prosperity and economic growth.

The Government has created a supportive life sciences environment, including through significant support for research and development, both through the Research Councils and the National Institute for Health Research; support for innovation via Innovate UK; and support for exporters from the Department for International Trade. In 2014 UK Government spend on health research and development stood at just over £2.2bn ^[1].

The Government's investment in life sciences benefits many areas of the UK. For example, Government has invested £20m in a joint fund between Greater Manchester and Cheshire & Warrington Local Economic Partnerships, through Growth Deals.

[1] ONS UK Government Expenditure on Science, Engineering and Technology, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/governmentpublicsectorandtaxes/researchanddevelopmentexpenditure/datasets/scienceengineeringandtechnologystatisticsreferencetables>

CABINET OFFICE**■ Ballot Papers****Chris Elmore:**[\[45747\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 July 2016 to Question 42682, whether he is taking steps to reduce the number of spoilt ballots in elections.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government has made improvements to ballot papers, forms and instructions used by voters at elections and referendums in order to make voting as accessible as possible. This involved public user-testing of the revised voting forms. The Government will consider reports from the Electoral Commission and other organisations on the polls held during 2016 and decide whether any further action is required.

■ Brain: Tumours**Wes Streeting:**[\[45612\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many cases of Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma have been diagnosed in each of the last ten 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 - Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine [PQ 45612 final.pdf]

■ Cabinet Office: Ministerial Policy Advisers

Tom Watson: [\[45702\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 22 July 2016 to Question 43066, on Cabinet Office: Ministerial policy advisers, whether his Department has now calculated the information requested in that Question on severance pay.

Ben Gummer:

This information will be published in due course, as part of the full and detailed list of special advisers, salary bands and total pay bill costs.

Tom Watson: [\[45720\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the pay grade is of each special adviser in his Department.

Tom Watson: [\[45746\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many special advisers work for the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Ben Gummer:

A list of special advisers and pay bands will be published in due course.

■ Cabinet Office: UK Withdrawal from EU

Karl McCartney: [\[44242\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps his Department has taken to prepare for the UK to leave the EU since 23 June 2016; and what further such steps his Department plans to take in the remainder of 2016.

Chris Skidmore:

The Department for Exiting the European Union has responsibility for overseeing preparations for the withdrawal of the UK from the EU and conducting these withdrawal negotiations in support of the Prime Minister. In doing this it is working very closely with other government departments, including a wide range of other interested parties.

I also refer my Hon. Friend to my answers of 7 September 2016, Official Report, Cols. 317-318, on cross-government departmental resourcing.

■ Digital Technology: Rural Areas

Sue Hayman: [\[45597\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what discussions he has had with his Cabinet colleagues on the rollout of digital infrastructure in rural areas as part of the move to deliver public services through digital technology.

Ben Gummer:

I meet Cabinet colleagues regularly to discuss a range of issues. My officials in the Government Digital Service work with the Department of Culture, Media & Sport on

digital inclusion and engagement. Government is working in partnership with the private and voluntary sectors to ensure that everyone in the UK has the basic digital skills needed to benefit in the digital age. To date, more than 90 organisations, including EE, Vodafone, Age UK, the LGA, Tinder Foundation, Microsoft, Shelter and Google have signed up to the Government's Digital Inclusion Charter to develop initiatives that reach as many people as possible. We are committed to ensuring every UK citizen who can be online will be by 2020.

■ Electoral Register

Mr Nicholas Brown:

[45474]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people have registered to vote in the UK since 23 June 2016.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government holds figures for the number of applications to register, but not for the number of additions or deletions from each local register resulting from such applications. This data is only held by Electoral Registration Officers.

Since 23 June 2016, 783,834 applications to register have been made. Of these, 642,701 applications were made online, through the Government's Register to Vote (RTV) website. The remainder - 127,232 applications - were submitted on paper.

A breakdown of these applications by type (e.g. home movers, name changes, corrections or first-time applications) is not possible. It can be assumed that the vast majority of these applications relate to general churn in the system, with the annual canvass now well underway."

These figures will include re-registrations from people moving house, as part of the normal churn of electoral registration over time.

■ Electoral Register: Females

Thangam Debbonaire:

[45606]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will ensure that residents of women's refuges are automatically entitled to anonymity on the electoral register.

Chris Skidmore:

As I stated on 7 September 2016, Official Report, Column 318, the Government is determined that those whose personal safety would be at risk if their details appeared on the register should be able to register anonymously. The Government is aware of concerns that it is difficult for victims of domestic violence to apply for anonymous registration and has announced plans to look closely at the regulations on this important policy.

■ Ministers: Pensions

Deidre Brock: [45684]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what annual pension entitlements are due, and to whom, for service as (a) Prime Minister, (b) Chancellor of the Exchequer, (c) Foreign Secretary and (d) Home Secretary.

Deidre Brock: [45685]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what cash value of pensions was paid for service as (a) Prime Minister, (b) Chancellor of the Exchequer, (c) Foreign Secretary and (d) Home Secretary.

Deidre Brock: [45686]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will list the (a) current recipients of annuities from ministerial pensions and (b) value in each case of the annuity.

Deidre Brock: [45687]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much has been paid in ministerial pensions in each of the last 10 years.

Ben Gummer:

The annual pension entitlements for the current Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Foreign Secretary and Home Secretary are set out in a House of Commons Library briefing note available at

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN04586/SN04586.pdf>

In 2014/15 the Parliamentary Contributory Pension Fund (PCPF) paid out nearly £22m in pension benefits to former MPs and Ministers and their survivors. Further detail can be found in the PCPF Annual Review 2015, available on the PCPF website at

<https://www.mypcpfpension.co.uk/>.

The pensions paid to former Prime Ministers and Speakers come from the Consolidated Fund. In 2015/16 a total of £257,000 was paid to former political office holders or surviving dependents from the Consolidated Fund. Details of these pension payments are in the Consolidated Fund accounts, available at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535314/consolidated_funds_web.pdf

Prior to the Public Service Pension Act 2013 holders of the Great Offices of State (Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Speaker) participated in separate pension arrangements. Future holders (including the current Prime Minister and Lord Chancellor) of these offices will participate in the Ministerial pension scheme.

Recent Prime Ministers and Lord Chancellors have chosen to waive some of their pension entitlement and only draw an amount equal to what they would have received if they had been a member of the Ministerial pension scheme.

Historic information covering payments from these funds can be found online in PCPF Annual Reviews and Consolidated Fund accounts.

TREASURY■ **Audit****George Kerevan:**[\[45767\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he plans to publish the next national audit register.

Mr David Gauke:

We assume that the Hon Member is referring to the National Asset Register. HM Treasury have no plans to publish a National Asset Register. The decision to stop publication of a National Asset Register was made before the first publication of the Whole of Government Accounts for 2009-10. The latest version of the Whole of Government Accounts for 2014-15 was published on 26 May 2016.

■ **Housing and Planning Act 2016****Robert Neill:**[\[45165\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the statutory instruments relating to clause 196 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 will be laid before the House.

Mr David Gauke:

Government is committed to making the process of compulsory purchase orders clearer, fairer and faster. The Housing and Planning Act and the Neighbourhood Planning Bill will enable us to lay the legislation to insist that public bodies pay interest on payments of compensation that are paid late. The Regulations to set this level of interest will be laid at least 21 days before the substantive commencement of sections 192 to 198 of the Housing and Planning Act. This is likely to be in spring 2017.

■ **Members: Correspondence****Mr David Winnick:**[\[45596\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when his Department plans to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Walsall North of 17 August 2016 to the Director General, Benefits and Credits, on tax credits and Concentrix related to a constituency case.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs replied to the hon. Member's letter on 12th September 2016.

■ **Small Businesses: Tax Collection****Martyn Day:**[\[45742\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the implications for small businesses of his Department's plans to introduce quarterly digital tax returns by 2020.

Jane Ellison:

The Government launched the Making Tax Digital consultations on 15 August. The consultations included an initial impact assessment alongside an overview of the

potential costs and savings. This initial assessment shows a reduction in businesses' on-going administrative costs in the medium term; these proposals do not mean four tax returns a year.

The Government will publish an updated assessment in the Tax Information and Impact Note to be published alongside draft legislation

These reforms will bring the tax system into the 21st Century, contributing to HM Revenue and Customs' overall target to reduce administrative burdens for business by £400m.

■ **Treasury: South Wales**

Chris Elmore: [\[45655\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many times he has visited South Wales in an official capacity since his appointment; and what future plans he has to visit South Wales.

Simon Kirby:

The Chancellor will visit constituencies all across the UK in due course. All his visits are recorded in the transparency data published on gov.uk.

■ **Valuation Office Agency: Preston**

Mr Mark Hendrick: [\[45282\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to retain the Valuation Office Agency office at Preston.

Jane Ellison:

The Valuation Office Agency is undertaking a complex transformation programme, which will deliver more digital services and require a smaller estate.

Preston is not one of the locations the Valuation Office Agency will be operating from in the future and the office will close by March 2021. Staff in the Preston office were made aware of these plans in October 2014. However, a date has not yet been set for closure of the office.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ **Homelessness: Birmingham**

Richard Burden: [\[44006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what proportion of the population in (a) Birmingham, Northfield constituency and (b) Birmingham city was homeless in each year since 2010.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Total numbers of households, numbers of households accepted as homeless and in priority need, and numbers of homeless households in temporary accommodation, have

been published for each local authority in England, for the years 2004/05 to 2015/16, in live table 784:

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

Constituency level information on homelessness is not collected.

■ Housing: Construction

John Healey: [44064]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 26 July 2016 to Question 43423, on housing: construction, if he will publish statistics for net new dwellings in England for the years 1997-98 to 2005-06 comparable to those published for subsequent years.

Gavin Barwell:

The number of net additional dwellings in England, since 2000-01 are published in Table 1 of the Net Supply of Housing 2014-15 statistical release, available at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/net-supply-of-housing-in-england-2014-to-2015> An estimate of the number of net additional dwellings in England, from 1997-98 to 1999-2000 can be derived by calculating the annual change in the total dwelling stock, using published figures in Dwelling Stock live table 104, available at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

■ Local Government: Population

Mr Christopher Chope: [45754]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what advice his Department has issued on whether there are maximum or minimum permitted size of the population to be served by (a) district councils, (b) unitary councils and (c) combined authorities in England.

Mr Christopher Chope: [45756]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether statutory safeguards are in place to ensure that new unitary authorities created as a result of councils seeking to abolish themselves in favour of new unitary structures must set the same band D council tax for all households from their inception; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Christopher Chope: [45771]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the oral Answer of 18 July 2016, Official Report, column 542, what evidence district councils who wish to retain their independence and status in a two-tier system need to produce in order to protect that status.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Where an area has plans for its governance arrangements to be changed and proposes this to the Secretary of State, it must provide evidence as to how its proposals are likely

to result in the provision of better local public services, significant cost savings, greater value for money, stronger and more accountable local leadership, and sustainability in the medium to long term. It is of course open to any body or person to make representations to the Secretary of State either in support of or in opposition to such proposals.

As we have made clear during discussions with areas, whilst size is an important consideration for areas considering governance changes, there are no maximum or minimum permitted sizes.

The level of council tax of any new authority is a matter for the local councils concerned. The government will however maintain council tax referendum thresholds at a modest level in order to help keep bills down for hardworking people. This is always the case including in cases of governance change.

■ Neighbourhood Development Plans

Greg Mulholland:

[44881]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to enable communities with neighbourhood plans that are (a) complete and (b) being developed to appeal against planning decisions that conflict with that plan.

Gavin Barwell:

The Neighbourhood Planning Bill will strengthen neighbourhood planning, by requiring local planning authorities and others who decide planning applications to have regard to neighbourhood plans that have been independently examined, once the decision has been taken to put the plan to a referendum. The Bill would also ensure plans have full legal weight at an earlier stage of the process, as soon as the outcome of the referendum is announced, and make it easier to ensure plans can be kept up to date.

These measures are in addition to existing safeguards that ensure neighbourhood plans are given proper consideration, including existing powers for communities to request that the Secretary of State 'calls-in' planning applications for his own determination, and new requirements introduced in the Housing and Planning Act, that will require any conflict with a made neighbourhood plan to be set out in the committee report that will inform a planning committee decision.

Furthermore, national planning policy is clear that where a planning application conflicts with a neighbourhood plan that has been brought into force, planning permission should not normally be granted, and that decision-makers may give weight to policies in emerging neighbourhood plans according to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections, and the degree of consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework.

In the light of these safeguards, the government does not support a right of appeal for those opposed to a decision to grant planning permission, which would delay the building of the new homes we need.

■ Non-domestic Rates

Mr Christopher Chope: [45757]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 8 September 2016 to Question 45035, what guidance he has issued on how specific local authorities should estimate their potential annual proportion increase in yields from business rates in (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21 and (c) 2021-22 to facilitate long-term budgeting.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The department does not issue guidance on forecasting business rates.

■ Right to Buy Scheme

Justin Madders: [45027]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many social houses were (a) built and (b) sold under the Right to Buy scheme in (i) Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency, (ii) Cheshire West and Chester and (iii) England in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Gavin Barwell:

The 2012 reinvigorated Right to Buy scheme increased maximum discounts and, for the first time ever, introduced a requirement to replace every additional sale (i.e. one that has come about as a result of the increased discounts) nationally with another property through acquisition or new supply. There is a rolling 3 years deadline for local authorities to use the receipts from additional Right to Buy sales for new affordable housing – and councils are delivering, replacing more than one for one within the deadline. Right to Buy sales by local authority (Table 691) and local authority starts and acquisitions (Table 693) can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housingsales> Figures are not available at a constituency level.

■ Social Services: Expenditure

Mr Christopher Chope: [45755]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what information his Department holds on much (a) Dorset County Council, (b) Bournemouth Borough Council and (c) Poole Council spent on (i) adult and (ii) community care in (A) 2014-15 and (B) 2015-16; and what the average of such amount was in England in those periods.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Information on adult social care and children's social care by all local authorities in England are published on the Department's website.

2014-15: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing-england-2014-to-2015-individual-local-authority-data-outturn>

2015-16: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing-england-2015-to-2016-provisional-outturn>

Calculation of an

overall average spend figure for local authorities in England would not be valid due to the differing types, responsibilities and situations of each local authority.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Broadband: Fees and Charges

Drew Hendry: [\[45192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department plans to bring forward legislative proposals to prohibit the imposition of broadband service cessation fees by providers who are unable to provide customers with adequate service.

Matt Hancock:

Most major broadband providers have signed up to Ofcom's Residential Broadband Speeds Code of Practice. This requires providers to give new customers, or customers who have changed their service, information on their guaranteed minimum speed. If a customer cannot get this guaranteed access line speed and providers are unable to resolve the problem, the Code states that providers must allow customers to leave their contract without penalty.

■ Broadband: Rural Areas

Drew Hendry: [\[45196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what support her Department provides to rural communities to install their own fibre networks when commercial and other Government programmes have been unable to reach their premises.

Matt Hancock:

Through the Government's investment of over £780 million, superfast broadband is now available to over 90% of homes and businesses in the UK, compared to 45% in 2010. By the end of 2017 it will be available to 95% of homes and businesses. The Government welcomes initiatives taken by local communities and others to support community fibre broadband projects.

■ Broadcasting Programmes: Irish Language

Ian Austin: [\[45668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make it her policy to include in the BBC Charter a commitment to broadcast a minimum of 10 hours of in-house Gaelic language programming on BBC ALBA each week.

Ian Austin: [\[45669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what her policy is on the future funding of BBC Gaelic language broadcasting.

Ian Austin:

[45671]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the role of Gaelic language broadcasting in delivering the BBC's commitment to public service broadcasting.

Matt Hancock:

During the BBC Charter Review public consultation we have listened to views across a range of issues in relation to the BBC, including Gaelic language broadcasting.

There is a successful partnership between the BBC and MG Alba for the delivery of Gaelic language broadcasting. The White Paper, published in May 2016, sets out the Government's intention to require maintain a commitment to minority language broadcasting through the new Charter.

The level of funding dedicated to BBC ALBA and the number of hours of in-house Gaelic language programming broadcast are matters for the BBC Board to consider when fulfilling this requirement under the new Charter.

■ Broadcasting: Celtic Languages

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

[44918]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had on the BBC's investment in Gaelic broadcasting as part of the BBC Charter Review; and if she will make a statement.

Matt Hancock:

During our public consultation we have listened to views across a range of issues in relation to the BBC, including Gaelic language broadcasting.

■ Data Protection

Louise Haigh:

[45524]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, who is responsible for taking action against data users who misuse personal data; and what sanctions are available to that body.

Matt Hancock:

The Information Commissioner is the UK's independent authority responsible for administering and enforcing information rights, and provides guidance and advice to individuals and organisations on, among other things, the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Information Commissioner has a number of tools at its disposal to take action against those that breach the legislation. These powers include the ability to conduct audits, serve enforcement notices and impose civil monetary penalties of up to £500,000.

Further information about the Information Commissioner can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office's website at: www.ico.org.uk

■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Sanitation

Mr Mark Hendrick: [\[45460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what toilet facilities her Department provides for transgender people.

Matt Hancock:

DCMS provides toilet facilities for all staff and visitors.

Transgender staff or visitors are free to use whichever facilities they choose based on the gender they most identify with.

■ Gambling: Advertising

Mrs Helen Grant: [\[45623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department plans to initiate a further review of gambling advertising to follow up the review by the Industry Group for Responsible Gambling of 2014.

Tracey Crouch:

The Government is committed to ensuring that people, particularly the young and vulnerable, are protected from the risk of gambling-related harm. We are keeping the issue of advertising under review to ensure that sufficient protections are in place, and will not hesitate to take further action if necessary.

■ Lake District National Park

Sue Hayman: [\[45619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to support the Lake District National Park Partnership in its bid for status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Tracey Crouch:

Government continues to support the excellent work of the Lake District National Park Partnership and other stakeholders, which has led to the Lake District becoming the UK's nomination for World Heritage Status in 2017.

Officials will be present to support the partnership during the World Heritage Committee mission to the Lake District, due to take place in October 2016.

■ Scots Gaelic Language

Ian Austin: [\[45670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the contribution of Scottish Gaelic language to British culture and the creative industries.

Matt Hancock:

We recognise the important contribution Gaelic language makes to British culture and the creative industries. The Heritage Lottery Fund recently provided £4 million funding to reopen Lews Castle where over 20 community heritage societies have come together to

shape the way the story of the Outer Hebrides is celebrated and shared. Interpretation is in Gaelic first with English subtitles throughout the museum.

UK Government and its agencies are committed to working with the Scottish Government to help the creative industries continue to grow in Scotland, through the provision of broadband and mobile infrastructure, fiscal incentives, export promotion, advocacy and facilitation and the provision of official statistics.

■ World Expo: Greater Manchester

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[45559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will meet representatives of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish to discuss Manchester's bid to host the 2025 World Expo.

Tracey Crouch:

The Government recognises the power of international events to shine a spotlight on the success of cities and towns across the UK. The UK business events industry is thriving, and Government is committed to supporting its continued growth.

Nick de Bois, Chair of the UK Events Industry Board and myself will meet with the hon Member for Denton and Reddish, and representatives of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, to discuss the ways in which the Government can support Manchester's business events industry.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces: Children

Mrs Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

[\[45675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many serving members of the armed forces have dependent children.

Mark Lancaster:

As at 1 July 2016, there were 185,310 serving members of the Armed Forces with 57,590 dependent children.

Individual Service personnel self-declare the number of children they have on the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) database. For the purposes of this question, a dependent child is defined as any child under the age of 18, as recorded on JPA. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 10. Numbers ending in 5 are rounded to the nearest 20 to avoid systematic bias.

■ Armed Forces: Private Education

Mrs Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

[\[45700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many serving armed forces personnel are in receipt of Continuity of Education Allowance; and in respect of how many children such allowances are allocated.

Mark Lancaster:

There are 3,008 serving Armed Forces personnel in receipt of Continuity of Education Allowance for 4,454 children.

■ **Armed Forces: Recruitment**

Grant Shapps: [\[45549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many people applied for the 200 support role vacancies advertised by his Department in May 2016 when it waived the five year British citizenship rule for Commonwealth recruits.

Grant Shapps: [\[45778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's policy is on the waiver of the five-year British citizenship requirement for Commonwealth recruits to military support roles.

Mike Penning:

On 12 May 2016, the then Minister for the Armed Forces (Penny Mordaunt) made a written ministerial statement (HCWS 726) which announced that the five year UK residency requirement was being waived to allow for 200 Commonwealth citizens per annum to be recruited to fill a limited number of roles in the Regular Armed Forces which require specialist skills. The limit and the list of roles that can be filled under these arrangements were agreed in consultation with the Home Office. Those Commonwealth citizens who do not have the required skills to fill one of the 200 specialist roles are still required to meet the five year UK residency requirement.

Since the written statement, some 9,500 applications for specialist roles have been received from Commonwealth citizens. Many applicants will be rejected for not meeting the relevant eligibility criteria, or will fail the various stages of the selection process. The numbers who are enlisted and then successfully complete the training to fill one of these roles will therefore not exceed the 200 per annum limit.

Attachments:

1. 20160512 WMS - Commonwealth Recruitment
[20160512_WMS_Commonwealth_Recruitment.docx]

■ **Armed Forces: West Sussex**

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[45177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) reservists, (b) Cadet Forces adult volunteers and (c) cadets of the three services there are in West Sussex.

Mark Lancaster:

As at 1 July 2016 there were an estimated 100 personnel in the Future Reserves 2020 stationed in West Sussex.

The MOD publishes annual information on Cadets and Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFVA) through the MOD Sponsored Cadets Statistics. The latest publication was as at 1 April 2016 and can be accessed at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/526131/MOD_sponsored_cadet_forces_statistics_2016.pdf

This data is not broken down by region so information on the number of Cadets and CFAV in West Sussex is not held in the format requested.

■ **Defence: Procurement**

Andrew Rosindell: [\[45161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to increase the level of defence spending that goes to small firms.

Harriett Baldwin:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer my predecessor (Philip Dunne) gave on 27 June 2016 to Question 905485 to the hon. Member for Daventry (Chris Heaton-Harris).

Attachments:

1. Defence Spending Small Firms [Hansard Extract 27 June 2016 HOC 509474.docx]

■ **Forces Help to Buy Scheme**

Grant Shapps: [\[45550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his Department's announcement of 4 October 2015, on the Forces Help to Buy Scheme, whether his Department is on target to achieve an uptake of 10,000 of that scheme by October 2016.

Mark Lancaster:

The Forces Help to Buy Scheme continues to prove popular amongst members of the Armed Forces.

The latest monthly figures for the Forces Help to Buy Scheme are published at the following address:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/546417/20160818-FHTB_Official_Stats_July.pdf

■ **Gulf War Syndrome**

Margaret Ferrier: [\[45527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health on Gulf War Syndrome.

Margaret Ferrier: [\[45528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to fund further research into Gulf War Syndrome.

Mark Lancaster:

No recent discussions have taken place with the Secretary of State for Health regarding gulf war syndrome.

The Ministry of Defence continues to keep a watching brief on gulf veterans illness but in line with the Medical Research Council review of 2003 has no plans to institute further research either on causation or clinical management.

■ Infantry Battle School

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[45101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make an assessment of the adequacy of physical training provided at the Infantry Battle School in Brecon; and if he will make a statement.

Mike Penning:

In line with the requirements set out in Ministry of Defence policy, the adequacy of the physical training provided at the Infantry Battle School is wholly satisfactory. It complies with current Defence and Army physical training policy, and is conducted within an extensive framework of existing supervisory care policy and associated duty of care legislation. All physical training and fitness training must also be conducted within a safe system of training and only by appropriately qualified and competent personnel, to ensure all potential risks have been identified beforehand and steps taken to reduce these to 'As Low As Reasonably Practicable'.

■ Middle East: Armed Forces

Stephen Doughty: [\[45743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many UK armed forces personnel are stationed in (a) Saudi Arabia, (b) Yemen, (c) Oman, (d) Qatar and (e) UAE.

Mike Penning:

There are around 100 military personnel based in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including at the Defence section within the British Embassy in Riyadh. These personnel provide mentoring and advice to the Saudi Arabian National Guard as part of the British Military Mission to the Saudi Arabian National Guard. Personnel also work on the Saudi Arabia National Guard Communications Project to acquire and support, modern communications capabilities for the Saudi Arabian National Guard and work on the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Saudi Armed Forces Projects, supporting the United Kingdom's commitment to the defence of Saudi Arabia through the supply of modern military aircraft, naval vessels, weapons and associated support services to the Saudi Armed Forces. We have a small number of liaison personnel who work at the Saudi MOD and Operational Centres. We do not discuss specific numbers for reasons of safeguarding operational security.

There are no UK Armed Forces personnel based in Yemen.

There are around 195 military personnel based in Oman, including at the Defence section within the British Embassy in Muscat; personnel on Loan Service to the Omani Armed Forces and others on temporary assignments in the region. These numbers change on a daily basis according to the tasks assigned.

There are seven military personnel permanently assigned to Qatar (three within the Defence Section in the Embassy and four Loan Service officers working in training establishments). There are also a number of temporary personnel who work at Al Udeid airbase but we do not discuss specific numbers for reasons of safeguarding operational security.

There are six military personnel permanently assigned to the UAE (three within the Defence Section in the Embassy at Abu Dhabi; one within the Defence Section in the Dubai Consulate; and two Loan Service officers working with the UAE Electronic Warfare and Signals departments). There are also a number of temporary personnel at Al Minhad airbase but we do not discuss specific numbers for reasons of safeguarding operational security .

■ Middle East: Military Intervention

Natalie McGarry:

[\[45023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many British airstrikes have been conducted in (a) Iraq from September 2014 to September 2016 and (b) Syria from December 2015 to September 2016.

Mike Penning:

Between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2016 there were 941 UK airstrikes in Iraq. Between 1 December 2015 and 31 August 2016 there were 63 UK airstrikes in Syria.

These strike numbers are constantly reviewed and updated by the Coalition to ensure records are as complete and accurate as possible. As such, past and future statements regarding statistics may differ to those given here.

■ Military Attaches

Tom Brake:

[\[45190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much has been spent under each cost heading by UK defence attachés in each year since 2005.

Mike Penning:

The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Financial data older than six years is not retained by the Department.

Tom Brake:

[\[45291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 5 September 2016 to Question 43906, what forecast he has made of the amount that will be spent on UK defence attachés in each country in each year to 2020.

Mike Penning:

We are unable to be specific regarding the requirements in each country, as detailed figures have yet to be set for future years. Table 1 below provides a forecast of in-year expenditure for each Defence Section for financial year (FY) 2016-17, including the

British Defence Staff in Washington. Table 2 shows an estimate of expenditure for Defence Sections from 2017-18 to 2019-20.

Table 1

LOCATION	FORECAST OF OUTTURN 2016-17
ALGIERS	£257,000
BAGHDAD	£1,373,000
NEW YORK	£666,000
SARAJEVO	£324,000
KHARTOUM	£715,000
TRIPOLI*	£258,000
MOGADISHU	£935,000
RIGA	£130,000
HANOI	£475,000
OTTAWA	£523,000
WELLINGTON	£357,000
SINGAPORE	£394,000
BEIRUT	£502,000
BUCHAREST	£272,000
KATHMANDU	£187,000
MEXICO CITY	£453,000
RABAT	£363,000
BRASILIA	£441,000
SANTIAGO	£371,000
SEOUL	£715,000
JUBA	£252,000
VIENNA	£375,000
ACCRA	£357,000
BOGOTA	£536,000

LOCATION	FORECAST OF OUTTURN 2016-17
MUSCAT	£608,000
KIEV	£492,000
PRETORIA	£506,000
AMMAN	£690,000
KUWAIT CITY	£345,000
RIYADH	£863,000
MADRID	£299,000
MOSCOW	£949,000
OSLO	£303,000
NEW DELHI	£577,000
NAIROBI	£822,000
KUALA LUMPUR	£385,000
ABUJA	£294,000
ISLAMABAD	£711,000
ABU DHABI	£623,000
DUBLIN	£237,000
HARARE	£302,000
PARIS	£1,453,000
FRANCE**	£1,294,000
RANGOON	£341,000
STOCKHOLM	£386,000
DOHA	£319,000
CANBERRA	£668,000
NICOSIA	£229,000
ZAGREB	£223,000
BANGKOK	£368,000

LOCATION	FORECAST OF OUTTURN 2016-17
BELGRADE	£467,000
BERLIN	£900,000
BUENOS AIRES	£499,000
COPENHAGEN	£273,000
THE HAGUE	£303,000
ROME	£563,000
ANKARA	£658,000
ATHENS	£566,000
JAKARTA	£414,000
BEIJING	£1,380,000
PRAGUE	£355,000
TEL AVIV	£766,000
TOKYO	£547,000
WARSAW	£398,000
KINGSTON	£566,000
CAIRO	£523,000
KAMPALA	£275,000
DHAKA	£346,000
YEMEN	£249,000
BAHRAIN	£336,000
BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN	£375,000
TBILISI	£361,000
SKOPJE	£473,000
FREETOWN	£266,000
VILNIUS	£33,000
ASTANA	£247,000

LOCATION	FORECAST OF OUTTURN 2016-17
TASHKENT	£248,000
KABUL	£406,000
ADDIS ABABA	£519,000
TALLINN	£291,000
WASHINGTON	£3,749,000
DEFENCE SECTIONS CENTRAL FUNDING	£9,882,000 ***
TOTAL	£52,752,000

* Currently operating from Tunis

** UK Exchange Officers in France paid for through the Defence Engagement budget.

*** Central funding covers expenditure on the Defence Attaché network not attributable to a specific Defence Section.

Table 2

	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20
Estimated Attaché Costs	£39,372,162	£39,899,766	£40,433,147
Estimated FCO Platform Charges	£15,470,882	£15,689,819	£15,970,923
Estimated Total	£54,843,044	£55,589,585	£56,404,070

■ RAF Fairford

Fabian Hamilton:

[\[45434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to activate RAF Fairford for use by US visiting forces; and whether he (a) has had or (b) intends to have discussions with the US authorities about the future of RAF Fairford.

Mark Lancaster:

The UK and US have routine discussions on all aspects of US Visiting Forces in the UK. RAF Fairford is a US Visiting Forces base which is held in readiness to receive US and NATO forces as required, and proposed deployments to the base are subject to a process of notification and consultation with the Ministry of Defence. In 2015, as part of the US European Basing Review, the US reiterated that RAF Fairford has a viable long-term future supporting US and NATO requirements.

■ Syria: Guided Weapons

Brendan O'Hara: [\[45266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Brimstone missiles have been used in Syria in each month since December 2015.

Mike Penning:

The following number of Brimstone missiles have been released by UK aircraft engaged on Operation SHADER in Syria.

YEAR	MONTH	
2015	December	0
	January	17
	February	2
	March	0
	April	0
	May	0
	June	1
	July	0
45003	August	6

■ Type 26 Frigates

Richard Graham: [\[45442\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when his Department plans to make a decision on the (a) theme and (b) names of the Type 26 Global Combat Ships.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ships' Names and Badges Committee (SNBC) is responsible for considering and assessing the possible names for a new ship or class of ship. The committee considers all names which have been proposed, formally and informally, and presents its recommendations to a Panel of Senior Naval Officers from the Navy Board. The name(s) chosen at that stage are forwarded to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence before being submitted to Her Majesty the Queen for final approval.

A decision with regards to this process is not expected until the Type 26 Global Combat Ship programme has completed its assessment phase and Main Gate.

■ Veterans: Census

Grant Shapps:

[\[45552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what information his Department holds on progress made by the Office for National Statistics in reviewing its decision not to record veteran service personnel in the 2021 census since his letter of 12 July 2016.

Mark Lancaster:

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Ministry of Defence have established a working group to review the decision not to record veteran Service personnel in the 2021 census. To date it has met five times. The working group is developing a number of themes which has allowed us to develop a good understanding of each other's needs.

The ONS will be inviting key stakeholders from across Government, Local Authorities and the charitable sector to a meeting this autumn to further seek their input. In addition both organisations met with the Royal British Legion in July this year to explain the work that both departments are taking forward

■ War Widows

Greg Mulholland:

[\[45624\]](#)

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:

The Government remains sympathetic to the circumstances of those affected. We are reviewing the position, but need to take account of the wider consequences for other public sector schemes of making retrospective changes.

■ Warships: Repairs and Maintenance

Mrs Flick Drummond:

[\[45203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans his Department has to renew the capabilities provided by the former RFA Diligence for repair and maintenance of Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Forward Repair Ship, RFA DILIGENCE, is one part of a system providing support facilities to deployed ships and submarines. This support is regularly supplemented by commercial arrangements and international agreements and, when bespoke afloat capabilities are required, these are contracted on the open commercial market.

We continue to consider all our capability requirements depending on the operational task.

■ Yemen: Cluster Munitions

Stephen Doughty: [\[45745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what reports he has received on whether a UK-made cluster munition was (a) found and (b) used in Yemen in the last two years.

Mike Penning:

Amnesty International wrote to the Prime Minister on 23 May 2016, and to the Ministry of Defence on 3 June 2016, on the alleged use of UK-produced BL-755 cluster munitions by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen.

EDUCATION

■ Apprentices

Gordon Marsden: [\[45108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the proportionate level of effect of her Department's proposals for changes in apprenticeship funding, published on 12 August 2016, on (a) small employers, (b) young people in deprived areas and (c) apprenticeships offered in the service and tourism sectors.

Robert Halfon:

[Holding answer 12 September 2016]: Apprenticeships are a great way to progress in work and life and a great way for employers to improve the skills base of their businesses. They work for people of all ages and backgrounds and can transform lives.

We have engaged thousands of employers and training providers throughout the development of the apprenticeship funding reforms and continue to do so. This engagement helped to shape the funding policy proposals for England from May 2017, published on 12 August.

A survey seeking detailed views from employers and providers closed on 5 September, and the feedback will inform the final policy which we aim to publish in October, and our understanding of the potential impact.

Our proposed funding policy is designed to put employers of all sizes in more control, and supports individuals from all backgrounds and regions – it is not aimed at specific sectors or apprentices in deprived areas as our policies are aimed at everyone, including those groups.

Our proposals for how apprenticeships will be paid for in England in the future will simplify the current complex funding system by introducing a single funding band for individual apprenticeship framework pathways, putting them in line with apprenticeship standards, regardless of the age of the learner or geographic location.

■ Apprentices and Further Education

David Simpson:

[[44997](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government plans to take to increase the number of (a) young people and (b) young men from deprived areas entering further education and taking up apprenticeships.

Robert Halfon:

Apprenticeships are a great way for people of all ages and backgrounds to progress in work and life.

We are encouraging a wider range of young people into apprenticeships including a commitment to increasing the proportion of BAME apprenticeship starts by 20% by 2020.

Traineeships are available to help 16-23 year olds become 'work ready'. They include work preparation training, English, Maths and work experience, which all help the trainee to enter the world of work, including apprenticeships. They are flexible so providers can adapt them to the needs of the trainee by including additional support such as mentoring.

In addition to apprenticeships and traineeships, the Adult Education Budget supports those aged 19 and over who are unemployed, low-skilled, or socially disadvantaged, to enable them to develop the skills they require to progress towards wider learning and employment.

The local commissioning of adult skills by the Combined Authorities will make it easier to create new, more effective packages of support tailored to the needs of individuals, including adults in deprived areas.

■ English Language: Education

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[[44717](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what funding will be made available for English for Speakers of Other Languages in each of the next five years.

Robert Halfon:

Funding for English for Speakers of Other Languages is not ring-fenced but forms part of the Adult Education Budget (AEB). Providers will use their AEB allocation to put on appropriate provision based on their judgement of the economic and social needs of their local area. We expect that this will include ESOL where there is significant demand.

In addition, the Government has pledged up to £10 million over five years for a jointly funded DfE and Home Office programme to enable Syrian refugees across the UK to access language tuition and integrate into British society.

■ Free School Meals: Hounslow

Ruth Cadbury: [43861]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what effect the change in eligibility criteria for free school meals has had on schools funding in Hounslow in 2016-17.

Edward Timpson:

There has not been a change in the eligibility criteria for free school meals (FSM) since 2013 when Universal Credit was added to the list of qualifying benefits. Nationally, the proportion of pupils eligible for FSM has continued to fall across all age groups due to improvements in the economy over recent years.

FSM rates are used to determine pupil premium funding, and are targeted to each pupil who has been registered for FSM at any point in the last six years. FSM rates can also be used to determine a school's core budget. Local authorities devise their own formulae through which they distribute the Dedicated Schools Grant to schools in their locality. They must include a deprivation factor, and can allocate this funding on the basis of FSM status, an area level measure of deprivation, or both. The core schools budget has been protected in real terms for the duration of this Parliament.

■ Further Education

Mr Roger Godsiff: [45024]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what evidence the Government holds to demonstrate that merging further education colleges will create savings; and what assessment she has carried out on whether the policy of merging further education institutions in Scotland has been successful.

Robert Halfon:

Where an area review recommends further education colleges to merge, there will have been a financial assessment of the efficiencies that could be secured through the merger. These are likely to include reductions in administrative and management costs, as duplication of functions is reduced. This will make resources available for re-investment in delivering high quality teaching. This was one of the lessons that was learned from the pilot review carried out in North East Norfolk and North Suffolk and reflects the assessment undertaken by an independent further education adviser in 2015 of mergers in the further education sector to date.

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/current-models-of-collaboration-post-14-further-education>)

As education is a devolved matter, any assessment of the mergers of further education institutions in Scotland would be a matter for the Scottish Government.

Mr Roger Godsiff: [45053]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for what reason her Department's review of further education institutions does not include sixth forms or universities.

Robert Halfon:

Area reviews of post-16 education and training institutions are predominantly focused on general further education and sixth form colleges in order to ensure that there are high quality, financially resilient colleges that are able to meet the needs of young people and adults across the country. Schools with sixth forms and Higher Education Institutions can opt in to a review if they wish to do so and if they have the agreement of the review's local steering group.

Each review conducts a detailed analysis of the current post-16 provision in the area which includes the offer made by schools with sixth forms and Higher Education Institutions. Regional Schools Commissioners and local authorities sit on local area review steering groups and will take account of the analysis from area reviews in any decisions they make about future schools provision.

Schools: Teaching Methods**John Glen:**[\[44947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department holds data on the (a) use and (b) prevalence of setting and streaming in schools in England.

Nick Gibb:

In-school organisation, such as streaming or setting, is a matter for individual schools, and data is not collected or held by the Department on this matter.

Sign Language: Adult Education**Tom Blenkinsop:**[\[44477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will consider changing adult learning funding to fund British Sign Language courses for families of children who are born deaf.

Robert Halfon:

This Department funds British Sign Language (BSL) qualifications in England through the Adult Education Budget (AEB). In the current economic climate, our funding must be focussed where it can have the most impact, so we support young adults aged 19 and over to gain the skills and qualifications they need to get work or to progress in their chosen career.

Learners who need lip reading skills to access work or stay in work are eligible to receive public funding through the Skills Funding Agency, and we are introducing changes that will make BSL qualifications acceptable, for the purposes of apprenticeship completion requirements, as an alternative to Functional Skills English for apprentices whose first language is BSL.

Colleges and training providers are independent and autonomous bodies and are responsible for their course provision. They are required to respond to the needs of learners, employers and communities to ensure that provision meets the need of local people, and we would expect every college or training organisation that receives public investment to consider offering lip-reading and sign language provision if there is a demand for it locally. Our more flexible adult education budget funding rules for

2016/17 enable broader types of learning activities that re-engage people in learning, build confidence, and enhance well-being.

■ Social Workers

Justin Tomlinson: [\[44912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to encourage the recruitment of graduates into the social work sector.

Justin Tomlinson: [\[44913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to increase public awareness of the role of social workers.

Justin Tomlinson: [\[44916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent estimate her Department has made of the average number of cases being handled by individual social workers on a weekly basis.

Edward Timpson:

Social workers perform some of the hardest roles in society and that is why it is already a graduate profession. Government is continuing to invest in social work education and training, including through the highly successful Step Up to Social Work and Frontline programmes, both of which aim to bring high calibre graduates into child and family social work, and Think Ahead, which offers a new route for graduates and career-changers into adult mental health social work.

Improving the quality and status of child and family social work is a high priority. Higher standards, including through the introduction of a national system of assessment and accreditation will help provide greater assurance that social workers have the necessary knowledge and skills for the demanding work they do. The Government does not, however, have any specific plans to increase public awareness of the role of social workers.

Government does not collect data on the number of cases held by social workers on a weekly basis. The department expects to publish caseload information, for the first time, relating to the year ending 30 September 2016, in February 2017.

■ Special Educational Needs: Classroom Assistants

David Simpson: [\[44992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many one-on-one classroom assistant tuition hours were provided on average each week for children with special educational needs in state schools in each of the last five years.

Edward Timpson:

The Department does not collect data on the number of hours tuition provided to children with special educational needs by teaching assistants.

Schools, as the employers, decide how to deploy teaching assistants within their school structure in a way that reflects local priorities and circumstances.

■ Teachers: Employment

David Simpson:

[44998]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of graduate teachers secured a permanent teaching post within a year of graduation in each of the last five years.

Nick Gibb:

The table below shows final year postgraduate trainee award status and employment outcomes for the last five years. The statistics on employment outcomes are collected within six months of trainees being awarded qualified teacher status (QTS).

TRAINEE COHORT	TOTAL TRAINEES AWARDED QTS ¹	TOTAL IN A TEACHING POST, WITHIN 6 MONTHS OF GAINING QTS ²	PERCENTAGE IN A TEACHING POST, WITHIN 6 MONTHS OF GAINING QTS ²
2014/15	22,738	21,579	95%
2013/14	23,730	22,380	94%
2012/13	23,145	21,488	93%
2011/12	23,845	21,895	92%
2010/11	25,163	21,971	87%

1) Excludes those with unknown employment outcome 2) This refers to posts in England and includes maintained, non-maintained schools and sector not known.

This table is derived from Table 6a of the main tables in the 'Initial teacher training performance profiles: 2014 to 2015' statistical release which was published on 28 July 2016 and is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-training-performance-profiles-2014-to-2015>

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Bees: Neonicotinoids

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[45289]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent representations she has received from scientists and other experts on the use of neonicotinoids and their effect on the bee population.

George Eustice:

Defra has not received recent expert representations on this issue. However we do consider new studies on neonicotinoids carefully, taking advice from the independent UK Expert Committee on Pesticides, Defra's Chief Scientific Adviser and experts in the Chemicals Regulation Division within the Health and Safety Executive.

■ Dangerous Dogs**Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[44639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the findings of the RSPCA report entitled, Breed Specific Legislation - A Dog's Dinner, published in August 2016, if she will make an assessment of the effectiveness of breed specific legislation.

George Eustice:

The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 was reviewed as recently as 2014. At that time it was decided to make some changes, including extending the criminal offence of allowing a dog to be dangerously out of control to all places and increasing the maximum penalties substantially from 2 years' imprisonment to (i) 14 years' imprisonment in cases of death of the victim; (ii) 5 years' imprisonment in cases of injury; and (iii) 3 years' imprisonment in cases where a dog attacks an assistance dog.

The Government does not consider that dogs bred for fighting, or those that share the characteristics of these animals, make ideal pets. However, the law allows individual dogs to be exempt from the general prohibition if a court is satisfied that they do not pose a threat to public safety and if the owner is considered a fit and proper person.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Consultants**Margaret Hodge:**[\[44349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many times her Department has used the services of (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what (i) work was undertaken and (ii) the cost to the public purse was on each such occasion.

George Eustice:

The attached information shows contracts for consultancy, by company, in the years 2013 – 2016, lists the description of work carried out for Defra and the contractually committed spend by contract.

Attachments:

1. PQ44349 - use of consultancy [PQ 44349 - use of consultancy .pdf]

■ Dog Fighting**Maria Caulfield:**[\[44317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to reduce the incidence of illegal dog fighting.

George Eustice:

Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 animal fights, including dog fights, are prohibited. Offences include publicising a fight, providing information about an animal fight and betting on an animal fight. The maximum penalty for such offences is six months' imprisonment, an unlimited fine or both. In addition, under section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 four types of dog have been prohibited that have been identified either as being bred for fighting or that share the characteristics of dogs bred for fighting. The maximum penalty for possession of an illegal type dog is six months' imprisonment, an unlimited fine or both. Separately the independent Sentencing Council have recently consulted on changes to their guidelines to magistrates' courts for a range of offences including animal cruelty offences. The Sentencing Council stated in June that in relation to animal cruelty, the Council wants to ensure that the most serious cases lead to prison sentences, and that these sentences are of an appropriate length.

The Government has also worked with the Pet Advertising Advisory Group (PAAG), a grouping of welfare charities and pet industry interests, who have been lobbying operators of internet sites to adopt minimum standards for the advertising of pet animals.

■ Flood Control**Caroline Lucas:**[\[45440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the potential of rewilding to reduce the risk of flooding in the UK.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Rewilding techniques, such as woodland creation, leaky debris dams and peatbog restoration can have an impact in slowing the flow of flood water downstream. The Government's natural flood management demonstration projects, including those at Pickering in Yorkshire and Holnicote in Somerset, have demonstrated that these types of measures can be effective in helping to manage flood risk at a catchment scale, slowing the flow of water and reducing local impacts when carefully incorporated into a wider suite of catchment measures

The Government's long term plan for the environment will look at how to deliver benefits across wider landscapes and whole water catchment areas through more integrated catchment management. Incorporating natural flood management measures is at the heart of this.

■ Flood Control: Finance**Tom Tugendhat:**[\[45646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the announcement on page 4 of her Department's publication entitled Central Government Funding for Flooding and Coastal Erosion, published in September 2016, that decisions on where to allocate the remaining funding set aside for flood defences have yet to be made,

(a) which Department or agency will make those decisions and (b) when she expects those decisions to be made.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Decisions on allocating the remaining headroom from the £700 million uplift to flood defence and resilience measures announced at Budget 2016 will be made on the basis of a rigorous assessment of local needs and value for money. HM Treasury, in consultation with other government departments including Defra and the Environment Agency, will make allocation decisions in due course.

■ Horse Racing: Animal Welfare

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[45068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many racehorses (a) died and (b) were destroyed on British racecourses or shortly afterwards due to injury sustained in (i) flat, (ii) all weather and (iii) national hunt racing in (A) 2013, (B) 2014 and (C) 2015.

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[45070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many racehorses (a) died and (b) were destroyed at each of Britain's 59 racecourses in (i) 2013, (ii) 2014 and (iii) 2015.

George Eustice:

The Government does not hold information on racehorse fatalities. However, the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) publishes annual statistics on their website on the number of racehorse fatalities. The statistics do not record whether the horse died of its injuries or was destroyed at the racecourse and do not differentiate between the different sorts of horseracing, but according to the BHA the numbers of racehorses that died at racetracks for each of the last three years are provided in the table below:

YEAR	NUMBER OF RACEHORSE FATALITIES AT BRITISH RACETRACKS
2013	196
2014	189
2015	156

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[45069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many racehorses (a) died and (b) were destroyed as a result of training injuries in Britain in (i) 2013, (ii) 2014 and (iii) 2015.

George Eustice:

Neither the Government nor the British Horseracing Authority holds information on racehorse fatalities as a result of training injuries.

■ Hunting Act 2004

Dawn Butler:

[\[44483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she plans to bring forward legislative proposals to amend or repeal the Hunting Act 2004 during this Parliament.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government stands by its manifesto commitment to give Parliament the opportunity to repeal the Hunting Act on a free vote, with a Government Bill in Government time.

■ Ports: Plymouth

Oliver Colvile:

[\[45554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the reasons are for the time taken by the Marine Management Organisation to process the licence application for the boardwalk development at Sutton Harbour in Plymouth.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The application for the proposed boardwalk development is currently on hold until further information is provided by the applicant, which is necessary to continue assessing the application to make a determination. The Marine Management Organisation continues to work with the applicant to ensure issues can be resolved in a timely manner, in addition to having sufficient information to allow a full assessment of any impact on the environment prior to determining the licence.

Oliver Colvile:

[\[45555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the archaeological survey for Sutton Harbour in Plymouth will be allowed to commence.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The marine licence application has yet to be determined, but archaeological interests, including the need for any survey, will be considered as part of the Marine Management Organisation's decision making.

■ Royal Society for the Protection of Birds: Finance

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[45082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what grants her Department has paid to the RSPB in each of the last five years; and for what purpose each such grant was paid.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Grant payments made by core Defra to the RSPB during financial years 2011-12 to 2015-16 are shown the table attached.

Attachments:

1. PQ45082 - Grant payments to RSPB [PQ 45082 - Grant payments to RSPB.pdf]

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION**■ Free Movement of People: Voluntary Work**

Richard Arkless: [\[45620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what steps his Department is taking to secure the free movement of volunteer workers from the EU.

Richard Arkless: [\[45621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether his Department plans to protect the free movement rights of volunteers coming to the UK from the EU after the UK leaves the EU.

Richard Arkless: [\[45622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether his Department has estimated the number of EU citizens who come to the UK each year to take up voluntary work.

Mr David Jones:

The Prime Minister has been clear that free movement cannot continue as it has in the past and one of the opportunities of Brexit is that we will be able to control the number of people coming to Britain from the EU. The precise way in which the Government will control the movement of EU nationals, including volunteers, is yet to be determined. We will be considering all options available to us based on the best available evidence.

■ Poultry: Animal Welfare

Diana Johnson: [\[45267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, if he will make it his policy to ensure the UK maintains the requirements of Council Directive 1999/74/EC on battery hens.

Mr David Jones:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given to her by my Hon. Friend the Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (written question 43718).

The EU-wide ban on keeping hens in 'battery' (conventional) cages in 2012 represented a significant welfare advance across the EU, was supported by the UK and has been implemented in full. The Government has a manifesto commitment to protect farm animal welfare and to push for high animal welfare standards to be incorporated into farming policy.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ Iran: Capital Punishment**

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[45748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of people executed in Iran in the last 12 months.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

As stated in our annual 2015 Human Rights report, the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights estimated that between 966 and 1,025 people were executed in Iran in 2015. It is estimated that there have been 309 executions to date in 2016. The British Government continues to oppose the death penalty in all circumstances.

Mr Nigel Evans:[\[45749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps in addition to his discussions with his Iranian counterpart his Department is taking to encourage the cessation of capital punishment in Iran.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The British Government opposes the use of the death penalty in all circumstances. We raise this issue with Iran at all levels. In addition, we successfully lobbied to renew the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran, and actively support the launch of an EU/Iran Human Rights dialogue.

■ Rebecca Coriam**Christian Matheson:**[\[44883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 19 July 2016 to Question 42328, for what reasons his Department did not provide the schedule of documents requested in that Question relating to the disappearance of Rebecca Coriam.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Further to your meeting with consular officials in August, a schedule of documents has been provided to you.

■ Sudan: South Sudan**Jim Shannon:**[\[45206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the government of Sudan on bringing peace to South Sudan.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Whilst I have not yet personally discussed South Sudan directly with representatives of the Government of Sudan, the UK regularly engages with the Sudanese over this pressing issue. We do this both bilaterally and in the margins of international meetings on South Sudan's peace process, such as July's Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission Partners Group meeting, which Sudan hosted and co-chaired with China.

■ Yemen: Military Intervention**Steve McCabe:**[\[45588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 25 July 2015 to Question 42913, on Yemen: Armed Conflict, what representations he has received from Saudi officials on the timescale for that investigation.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK welcomes the release by Joint Investigation Assessment Team of the outcome of eight investigations into incidents of alleged breaches of international humanitarian law in Yemen.

The UK regularly encourages the Saudi-Arabian led Coalition to conduct thorough and conclusive investigations into reports of alleged violations of international humanitarian law.

HEALTH■ **Babies**

Mr Steve Reed: [\[45215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many premature babies were born in (a) England and (b) each local authority in 2015.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Information is not available in the format requested. The gestation length is not recorded on an individual birth record, but on the mother's delivery episode. Therefore we cannot provide the number of births, as a single delivery may involve multiple births.

■ **Blood: Contamination**

Diana Johnson: [\[45751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to paragraph 3.26 of his Department's paper, *Infected blood: Government Response to Consultation on Reform of Financial and Other Support*, published in July 2016, when bereaved families will be able to apply for support; what factors will be taken into account in deciding whether infection with HIV and hepatitis C contributed to the death of their partner or spouse; and whether widows and widowers who subsequently remarried will be able to claim discretionary and lump sum support.

Nicola Blackwood:

We expect to provide, before March 2017, a £10,000 lump sum payment to bereaved partners/spouses of a primary beneficiary when they died and where the infection with HIV and/or hepatitis C contributed to the death. The Department is developing guidance on what factors will be taken into account in deciding whether infection with HIV and/or hepatitis C contributed to the death of a primary beneficiary of the current infected blood payment support schemes; and whether widows and widowers who subsequently remarried will be able to claim the lump sum.

From April 2017, a new, single discretionary scheme will replace the current three infected blood discretionary support schemes and guidance is also being developed about eligibility for access to the new discretionary support arrangements.

Diana Johnson:

[\[45753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to his Department's paper, *Infected Blood: Government Response to Consultation on Reform of Financial and Other Support*, published in July 2016, whether it is planned that the new single trust set to be established in 2017-18 will receive all funds held in reserves by the Caxton Foundation, the Eileen Trust and Macfarlane Trust; and how much is held in reserves by each of those charities.

Nicola Blackwood:

There will be a new scheme administrator combining the functions of the existing schemes into a single scheme going forward. The new scheme administrator will become operational in the financial year 2017/18 and the current bodies will operate until then. We are working on transition plans and would hope that the charities would use any reserves to support beneficiaries. Details of reserves are published in the Annual Accounts.

Diana Johnson:

[\[45758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to his Department's paper, *Infected Blood: Government Response to Consultation on Reform of Financial and Other Support*, published in July 2016, whether he plans for people receiving discretionary support from the reformed scheme to continue to receive (a) prescription prepayment certificates, (b) advice on support with benefit applications and appeals, (c) one-off £1,200 lump sum payments for dependants and (d) means-tested top-ups to their income to lift them above the poverty line; and whether he plans for the partners of bereaved people to continue to receive annual payments topping their income up to £19,000 per year.

Nicola Blackwood:

In 2017/18, a new, single, discretionary scheme will replace the current three discretionary support schemes (The Caxton Foundation, The Eileen Trust and The McFarlane Trust), and it is intended to be equitable, transparent, flexible and responsive to individual needs, that may change over time.

Details on the components that will make up a new discretionary scheme are still being worked through and will be publicised in due course. In the meantime, the current discretionary arrangements remain throughout the current financial year.

Diana Johnson:

[\[45772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of how much the administration of (a) the discretionary support scheme and (b) the stage 1 hepatitis C special appeals mechanism will cost for people infected with contaminated blood in each year from 2015 to 2020 Spending Review period; and how many full-time equivalent staff will be employed for the administration of that scheme.

Nicola Blackwood:

No such estimates have been made.

Diana Johnson:

[\[45773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will set a date for the introduction of (a) the 2016-17 and (b) 2017-18 additional support packages for people who were infected with contaminated blood.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department continues to work closely with the current scheme administrators to fulfil this Government's commitment to make all such payments before the end of March 2017. We have committed to payment, back dated to April 2016 of:

- a) the new annual payments of £3,500 for those infected with hepatitis C stage 1 (rising to £4,500 in 2018/19); and
- b) the continuation of annual payments for those infected with severe hepatitis C (stage 2) or HIV of £15,500 from this year (an increase from the current £14,749), and rising to £18,500 in 2018/19.

In addition, payment of a one-off lump sum payment of £10,000 to all those who were the partner or spouse of a primary beneficiary when they died and where infection with HIV and/or hepatitis C contributed to the death of their partner/spouse will apply to those already bereaved (and newly bereaved from April 2016 and beyond).

As well as these payments, the schemes continue to provide their existing support payments to registrants of the schemes, and will do so until the new, single scheme administrator is operational during 2017/18.

Taken together, the Government's action in this area is the most comprehensive ever to those infected with contaminated blood.

■ Brain: Tumours

Wes Streeting:

[\[45609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many clinical trials relating to Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma have taken place in each year since 2010.

Nicola Blackwood:

There has been one United Kingdom trial relating to Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma approved since 2010.

Wes Streeting:

[\[45610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much Government funding has been made available for research into paediatric brain tumours in each year since 2005.

Wes Streeting:

[\[45611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much Government funding has been made available for research into brain tumours in each year since 2005.

Nicola Blackwood:

Spend on research funded directly by the Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is categorised by Health Research Classification System (HRCS) health

categories including 'cancer'. There are no HRCS health sub-categories such as for brain tumours and information on total annual NIHR spend on brain tumour research (or on paediatric brain tumour research) is not held.

The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including brain tumours. These applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality. In all disease areas, the amount of NIHR funding depends on the volume and quality of scientific activity.

The Government agrees that an increase in the level of research into brain tumours is crucial in order to achieve better outcomes for patients and their families who are affected by these devastating diseases. A new Department of Health Task and Finish Working Group on Brain Tumour Research will be bringing together clinicians, charities and officials to discuss how, working together with research funding partners, we can address the need to increase the level and impact of research into brain tumours. The Working Group will be chaired by Professor Chris Whitty, the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser. It will first meet on 18 October and the Government anticipates that it will complete its tasks by September 2017.

The Medical Research Council (MRC) is one of the main agencies through which the Government supports medical and clinical research. It is an independent research funding body which receives its grant in aid from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

The MRC's portfolio of brain tumour research includes brain and pituitary tumours. A breakdown is provided below.

YEAR	BRAIN AND PITUITARY TUMOUR RESEARCH (£ MILLION)	OF WHICH BRAIN TUMOURS (£ MILLION)	OF WHICH PITUITARY TUMOURS (£ MILLION)
2005/06	£1.08	£0.29	£0.79
2006/07	£1.22	£0.57	£0.64
2007/08	£1.18	£0.54	£0.64
2008/09	£1.37	£0.70	£0.67
2009/10	£1.66	£0.87	£0.79
2010/11	£1.75	£0.86	£0.90
2011/12	£1.61	£1.60	£0

YEAR	BRAIN AND PITUITARY TUMOUR RESEARCH (£ MILLION)	OF WHICH BRAIN TUMOURS (£ MILLION)	OF WHICH PITUITARY TUMOURS (£ MILLION)
2012/13	£2.16	£2.16	£0
2013/14	£2.56	£2.56	£0
2014/15	£2.82	£2.64	£0.18

To provide context, in 2014 the MRC's overall expenditure on cancer research was £76.2 million (calendar year figure, source: National Cancer Research Institute). This figure includes a broad portfolio of site-specific and general underpinning cancer research, some of which will be relevant to research on brain and pituitary cancers as it is often the case that research relevant to one site may also have implications for other forms of cancer.

The MRC does not normally analyse the brain and pituitary research portfolio to identify research into paediatric cancers, but when this was done last (in 2012) the MRC's analysis showed that paediatric cancer made up between 6 and 16% of the in-year research spend. Research in the broader brain and pituitary research portfolio may also help to improve our understanding of paediatric brain and pituitary cancers and inform future research and potential treatments.

Wes Streeting:

[\[45613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much Government funding has been allocated to finding treatment for Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma in (a) each of the past three years and (b) 2016-17.

David Mowat:

Spend on research funded directly by the Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is categorised by Health Research Classification System (HRCS) health categories including 'cancer'. There are no HRCS health sub-categories such as for brain tumours and information on total annual NIHR spend on brain tumour research is not held.

The usual practice of the Department's NIHR is not to ring-fence funds for expenditure on particular topics such as diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma: research proposals in all areas compete for the funding available.

The Government agrees that an increase in the level of research into brain tumours is crucial in order to achieve better outcomes for patients and their families who are affected by these devastating diseases. A new Department of Health Task and Finish Working Group on Brain Tumour Research will be bringing together clinicians, charities and officials to discuss how, working together with research funding partners, we can

address the need to increase the level and impact of research into brain tumours. The Working Group will be chaired by Professor Chris Whitty, the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser. It will first meet on 18 October and the Government anticipates that it will complete its tasks by September 2017.

■ **Cancer: Young People**

Mr George Howarth:

[\[45000\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the CLIC Sargent report of 1 September 2016, entitled Cancer costs: financial impact of childhood cancer revealed, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of cancer on young people and their families.

Mr George Howarth:

[\[45001\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the findings of the CLIC Sargent report, entitled Cancer costs: financial impact of childhood cancer revealed, published on 1 September 2016, if he will carry out an immediate review of travel assistance available to young cancer patients and their parents.

David Mowat:

We know that cancer can affect all areas of a person's life, including finances – 83% of people say they are financially impacted by cancer. People require holistic support from diagnosis onwards, encompassing their physical, financial, psychosocial, and information and support needs, throughout their entire cancer journey.

Children and teenagers with serious or critical illnesses such as cancer are also entitled to apply for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) (or a Personal Independence Payment if over 16). This is a tax free allowance, which contributes to the extra costs incurred by families in caring for children with additional needs and includes a mobility component. Children in receipt of DLA can receive up to £139.75 a week, and people who are terminally ill can have their claim fast tracked to access benefits sooner. Families and carers can also qualify for Carer's Allowance and receive £62.10 a week if they meet the eligibility criteria, and some councils run Council Tax Reductions schemes for people on low incomes or who claim benefits.

We do not have any plans to review the hospital travel costs scheme – which provides financial assistance to those patients who do not have a medical need for ambulance transport, but who require assistance with their travel costs. This is part of the well-established NHS Low Income Scheme, in which patients on low incomes or receiving specific qualifying benefits or allowances can be reimbursed in part or in full for costs incurred in travelling to receive treatment at hospitals and this would include cancer treatment. It also can be claimed where the appointment has been made for a child or other dependent.

■ Department of Health: Breastfeeding

Mr Mark Hendrick: [45286]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what activities have been undertaken by (a) Ministers and (b) officials of his Department at (i) Richmond House, London and (ii) Quarry House, Leeds to promote breastfeeding during World Breastfeeding Week 2016.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Government is committed to supporting breastfeeding through the Healthy Child Programme.

No specific activities were undertaken in either Richmond House or Quarry House by Ministers or officials in relation to World Breastfeeding Week.

■ Department of Health: Sanitation

Mr Mark Hendrick: [45459]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what toilet facilities there are for transgender people at his Department at (a) Richmond House, London and (b) Quarry House, Leeds.

David Mowat:

There are no specific toilets facilities for transgender people at either Richmond House or Quarry House.

■ General Practitioners

Steve McCabe: [45660]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress has been made on the implementation of the General Practice Forward View, published in April 2016.

David Mowat:

The General Practice Forward View was published by NHS England on 21 April 2016 and is a package of measures to stabilise and support general practice. It sets out that an extra £2.4 billion a year will be invested in general practice services by 2020/21.

At its Board meeting on 28 July 2016, NHS England set out progress to date on implementation, including on delivery of a new practice resilience programme to help struggling practices, and a new Indemnity Support Scheme to alleviate the immediate pressure of rising costs for general practitioners (GPs) from indemnity. Further details are available on NHS England's website:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/item5-28-07-16.pdf>

NHS England has established an external Oversight Group to oversee implementation of the General Practice Forward View. Its membership includes the British Medical Association (BMA), Royal College of General Practitioners and NHS Clinical Commissioners. The BMA has also established a reference group of local medical committees from across England to gain further input from GPs and make sure the changes set out in the General Practice Forward View are realised.

■ Health Services

David Simpson: [\[44991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans to introduce new care models across the UK similar to those introduced in England to date.

David Mowat:

New care models have been proposed by NHS England as an approach to address the three major challenges facing the health and care system highlighted in the Five Year Forward View: the health and wellbeing gap, the care and quality gap, and the funding and efficiency gap.

NHS England has no jurisdiction over any of the other health services within the United Kingdom and therefore not within our remit to impose plans upon them.

Decision making is devolved and therefore it is for each of the separate health services to determine individually.

Colleen Fletcher: [\[45614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations he has received from patient organisations on the results of the NHS England clinical policy prioritisation process for specialised services.

Colleen Fletcher: [\[45616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he had made of levels of patient engagement in the recent NHS England clinical policy prioritisation process for specialised services.

David Mowat:

Although NHS England's prioritisation process is not yet complete, it has received 400 formal responses through the two public consultations. These responses come from a range of organisations and individuals and relate to the development of a process for prioritising investment in specialised services.

In spring 2015, NHS England undertook the "Investing in Specialised Services" consultation which proposed a number of principles to guide prioritisation, and described a proposed process for decision making. This was a 90 day consultation during which five face to face events were held (250 attendees) and targeted focus groups were also undertaken. Responses to the consultation questions were captured via an online survey. There were 278 responses to the consultation. All responses were externally analysed and a report produced which was published alongside NHS England's response to the consultation.

In April 2016, building on that earlier consultation, NHS England launched a further 30 day consultation "Developing a Method to Assist Investment Decisions in Specialised Commissioning". This consultation set out a proposed method that would be used when making recommendations on investment decisions for 2016/17.

The consultation attracted 122 responses which were considered by external analysts who produced a content analysis which was published alongside NHS England's

response to the consultation. Consultation activity included a consultation guide and online survey, direct meetings with key stakeholder groups, two publicly open webinars (virtual meetings) on which around 150 people participated and one face to face event attended by over 80 people.

Colleen Fletcher: [\[45615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with NHS England on the results of the provisional investment decisions for specialised services.

David Mowat:

NHS England is an independent body which bases its annual provisional investment decisions on rigorous examination of existing evidence and cost benefit analyses. As such, ministers do not typically meet with NHS England to discuss specialised investment decisions.

However my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Lord Prior met with NHS England to discuss the overall strategy for specialised commissioning on 12 September 2016.

Officials continue to have ongoing discussions with NHS England regarding both provisional investment decisions and specialised services commissioning overall.

■ Health Visitors

Luciana Berger: [\[45665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department plans to conduct a review to assess the public health effect of the reduction in the number of health visitor posts in England.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Public Health England monitors a range of outcomes for child health. This includes information provided by local authorities for health visiting services high impact actions. The Early Years High Impact Areas were developed to support the transition of commissioning to local authorities and to help inform decisions around the commissioning of the health visiting service and integrated children's early years services. The High Impact Areas focus on key areas where health visitors have a significant impact on health and wellbeing and improving outcomes for children, families and communities.

The six High Impact Areas are:

1. Transition to parenthood and the early weeks
2. Maternal mental health
3. Breast feeding
4. Healthy weight including physical activity
5. Managing minor illness and reducing accidents
6. Health and wellbeing at two years

The majority of the related indicators are stable or improving.

The indicators collected by local authorities to make up the Early Years Profile are based on the High Impact Areas. The latest indicator data for England is available to view here:

<http://atlas.chimat.org.uk/IAS/dataviews/report/fullpage?viewId=433&reportId=482&geod=17&geoReportId=4494&select=EN>

■ Health Visitors: Training

Luciana Berger: [\[45666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many health visitor student training places were commissioned in each year since 2010.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The following table shows the number of health visitor student training places made available in each financial year since 2009/10.

2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
517	642	1,443	2,526	2,787	1,041	1,193	817

Source: 2009/10 – 2012/13 – Strategic Health Authority Workforce Planning returns
2013/14 – 2016/17 – Health Education England Workforce Plans

■ Heart Diseases

David Simpson: [\[45003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the Government plans to take to (a) reduce the number of patients receiving an incorrect initial heart diagnosis and (b) provide the correct diagnosis and treatment for those patients.

David Mowat:

Swift diagnosis and treatment of heart attack are key to ensuring the best outcomes for patients. Action being taken by NHS England includes:

—increasing awareness of the signs and symptoms of heart attack amongst the public and healthcare professionals as this will help speed up diagnosis;

—prioritisation of rapid treatment for heart attack by the urgent and emergency care networks, which are responsible for providing urgent care and emergency care across England;

— and improving tests for more accurately diagnosing heart attack so that correct treatment can be given as quickly as possible.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has also published guidance on diagnosing heart attacks.

■ HIV Infection: Drugs

William Wragg: [\[45608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what his Department's legal costs have been in connection with the judicial review on HIV PrEP to date.

Nicola Blackwood:

This information is not available as the Judicial Review is still ongoing. Once proceedings have concluded, all the parties' costs, including the Department's, will be in the public domain.

■ Hospitals

Justin Madders: [\[45026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many hospitals are forecast to (a) open and (b) close in each of the next five years for which figures are available.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The reconfiguration of services, including the opening and closing of hospitals, is clinically led and a matter for the local National Health Service.

■ Hospitals: Parking

Mr George Howarth: [\[45002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the findings of the report of CLIC Sargent, Cancer costs: financial impact of childhood cancer revealed, published on 1 September 2016, how he plans to ensure that his Department's guidance on hospital car parking is applied consistently across England.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The National Health Service patient, visitor and staff car parking principles (first published in August 2014 and then updated in October 2015), set out a nationally consistent approach to determining car parking policies, making clear the rules which NHS trusts should follow when making decisions about car parking.

■ Mental Illness: Suicide

Luciana Berger: [\[45664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many adults have taken their own life while in inpatient mental health care in each year since 2010.

Nicola Blackwood:

The National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide by People with Mental Illness, commissioned by NHS England through the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership, publishes statistics on suicide by people in contact with mental health services. The latest report provides data between 2003 and 2013 and is available at the following link:

<http://research.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/cmhs/research/centreforsuicideprevention/nci/reports/NCISHReport2015bookmarked2.pdf>

■ **NHS England: Finance**

Justin Madders: [45059]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the annual budget is of the NHS England EU Transition Team; and what the remit of that team is.

David Mowat:

The annual budget for the NHS England European Union Transition Team has not yet been determined. The purpose of the team will be to understand possible implications for the National Health Service from the negotiations with Europe. The details of how this team will work with the Department will be set out in due course.

■ **NHS England: Staff**

Justin Madders: [45058]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the (a) job description and (b) salary is of the Head of the NHS England EU Transition Team.

David Mowat:

The post of Head of Europe Transition Team for NHS England has been advertised on NHS Jobs and is currently being recruited to. The related job description and person specification is attached. The post was advertised at an Agenda for Change Band 9 which offers a salary of between £78,629 and £99,437.

Attachments:

1. Job description [pq45058 Job description.pdf]

■ **NHS: Staff**

Philip Davies: [44948]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the ratio of medical staff to administrators is in the NHS.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The ratio of medical staff to administrators in the National Health Service is 1:1.05. The number of medical staff includes only doctors and does not include roles such as nurses, midwives and other non-medical clinicians.

■ **NHS: Sustainable Development**

Mr Roger Godsiff: [45067]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether Sustainability and Transformation plans will be (a) made public and (b) fully consulted on before being implemented.

David Mowat:

As set out in the NHS Shared Planning Guidance, published in December 2015, the success of Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) will depend on having an open,

engaging, and iterative process that harnesses the energies of clinicians, patients, carers, citizens, and local community partners including the independent and voluntary sectors and local government. The national bodies responsible for the development of the programme have continued to ask for robust local plans for genuine engagement as part of the STP process.

STP proposals are currently at a draft stage, but it is expected that all local leaders will be talking to the public and stakeholders regularly as it is vital that people are able to shape the future of their local services. All local STP areas should therefore now be having conversations with local people and stakeholders – understanding what matters to them, and explaining how services might be improved. No changes to the services people currently receive will be made without local engagement, and if plans propose service changes that are agreed, then formal consultation will be followed in due course in line with good practice and legislative requirements. All footprints will submit an updated plan in October, with further formal public engagement and consultation taking place from this point, as appropriate. Many footprints are already publishing patient-facing summaries as part of their engagement programme.

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[45701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that (a) hon. Members, (b) members of the local authority and (c) the public are consulted about the sustainability and transformation plans for West Sussex and its surrounding area.

David Mowat:

The NHS Shared Planning Guidance, published in December 2015, asked every health and care system in England to come together to create its own local plan for implementing the Five Year Forward View (5YFV). Following this, neighbouring National Health Service providers, commissioners, local authorities, and other health and care services have formed 44 ‘footprints’: geographic areas in which people and organisations are collaborating to develop plans to improve the way that health and care is planned and delivered in a more person-centred and coordinated way for local people, and to narrow the three gaps (health and wellbeing, care and quality and financial sustainability) outlined in the 5YFV.

As set out in the NHS Shared Planning Guidance, the success of Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) will depend on having an open, engaging, and iterative process that harnesses the energies of clinicians, patients, carers, citizens, hon. Members and local community partners including the independent and voluntary sectors and local government through, for example, health and wellbeing boards. The national bodies responsible for the development of the programme have continued to ask for robust local plans for genuine engagement as part of the STP process.

STP proposals are currently at a draft stage, but it is expected that all local leaders will be talking to the public and stakeholders regularly as it is vital that people are able to shape the future of their local services. All local STP areas should therefore now be having conversations with local people and stakeholders – understanding what matters to them, and explaining how services might be improved. No changes to the services

people currently receive will be made without local engagement, and if plans propose service changes that are agreed, then formal consultation will be followed in due course in line with good practice and legislative requirements. All footprints will submit an updated plan in October, with further formal public engagement and consultation taking place from this point, as appropriate. Many footprints are already publishing patient-facing summaries as part of their engagement programme.

■ Nurses

David Simpson:

[\[44995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he plans to take to increase the number of nurses (a) qualifying and (b) subsequently working in the UK.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Since May 2010, there have been record number of nurses working in the National Health Service in England.

In the Health Education England (HEE) Workforce Plan for England published in May 2016, HEE set out planned increases in the number of nurse training places in 2016-17. This is an increase of 14.8% in the total number of planned nurse training places since 2013-14.

The changes to healthcare education funding from August 2017 means that we can move away from centrally imposed number controls and financial limitations, enabling universities to increase nurse training places by the end of the Parliament.

Training and recruitment across the devolved administrations is a matter for that Government.

■ Obesity: Children

Norman Lamb:

[\[45676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether restrictions on advertising and promotional deals on unhealthy foods were included in drafts of the Government's childhood obesity plan prior to the publication of the final version of that plan.

Nicola Blackwood:

In developing the plan we have been very open about the fact we considered a number of different policies and have focused on the ones that are likely to have the biggest impact on childhood obesity.

The policies in the plan are informed by the latest research and evidence, including from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition report *Carbohydrates and Health*, Public Health England's evidence package *Sugar reduction: the evidence for action*, other government departments, debates in this House and various reports from key stakeholders including the Health Select Committee.

Current restrictions on the advertising of less healthy food and drink in the United Kingdom are amongst the toughest in the world. Alongside this, we welcome the action

taken by forward thinking retailers on promotions, these voluntary actions mean that business can move more quickly and go beyond what regulation would permit.

Copies of *Carbohydrates and Health* and *Sugar reduction: the evidence for action* are attached and are available at:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445503/SACN_Carbohydrates_and_Health.pdf

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470179/Sugar_reduction_The_evidence_for_action.pdf

Attachments:

1. PHE Sugar reduction The evidence for action [pq45676 PHE Sugar reduction The evidence for action.pdf]
2. SACN Carbohydrates and Health [pq45676 SACN Carbohydrates and Health.pdf]

■ **Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust: Cerner**

Mr Richard Bacon: [\[45043\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust has paid Cerner in the last 10 years.

Mr Richard Bacon: [\[45044\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust has paid Cerner in the last 10 years.

Mr Richard Bacon: [\[45045\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust has paid Cerner in the last 10 years.

Mr Richard Bacon: [\[45046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has paid Cerner in the last 10 years.

Mr Richard Bacon: [\[45047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust has paid Cerner in the last 10 years.

Mr Richard Bacon: [\[45048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust has paid Cerner in the last 10 years.

Mr Richard Bacon: [\[45049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much to date the NHS has paid Cerner in the last 10 years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department has not, over the last 10 years, made payments to Cerner for National Health Service systems. The Department does not hold information centrally about contracts that are held by NHS Trusts locally.

■ **Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust**

Barbara Keeley:

[\[45603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 7 September 2016 to Question 44738 and with reference to the Report by Mazars, entitled Independent review of deaths of people with a learning disability or mental health problem in contact with Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust April 2011 to March 2015, published in December 2015, what steps he has taken in response to the finding of that report that the systems Southern Health Trust had in place provide no evidence that the Trust has fully reported or investigated unexpected deaths or taken remedial action where appropriate; in what circumstances it is his policy to investigate senior staffing decisions at NHS trusts; and if he will make it his policy to investigate senior staffing decisions in NHS trusts which are taken in response to critical findings of independent reviews.

Mr Jeremy Hunt:

I have no role in decisions about individual chief executives or other staff in National Health Service trusts and foundation trusts (FTs). Oversight of trusts is primarily the responsibility of NHS Improvement, which provides updates to Ministers and the department as appropriate. Since the Mazars report and the report issued by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in April 2016, NHS Improvement has been liaising closely with Southern Health, supporting the trust to address the issues set out in both reports.

In response to the Mazars report into Southern Health, I have asked NHS England, NHS Improvement and the CQC to take a number of steps to address the issues raised. As a result, the CQC and NHS Improvement are working to support NHS trusts and FTs to better understand their avoidable mortality and to then take effective action to improve safety; the Department has published independently assured, Ofsted-style ratings of the quality of care offered to people with learning disabilities for all 209 clinical commissioning group areas; and, NHS England commissioned the first Learning Disability Mortality Review Programme to support local areas to review deaths of people with learning disabilities and act on the information to improve care.

Luciana Berger:

[\[45663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will investigate the circumstances surrounding the appointment of the former Chief Executive of Southern Health NHS Trust to a new £240,000 per year role; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Jeremy Hunt:

The Secretary of State has no role in decisions about individual chief executives or other staff in National Health Service trusts and foundation trusts. Oversight of NHS trusts is primarily the responsibility of NHS Improvement. Since the Mazars report and the report issued by the Care Quality Commission in April 2016, NHS Improvement has been

liaising closely with Southern Health and supporting the Trust to address the issues set out in both reports.

■ **Streptococcus**

David Simpson: [\[44993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much funding has been provided to prevent and tackle Group B Strep infection among pregnant women in the last five years.

David Simpson: [\[44994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the Government is taking to prevent and tackle Group B Strep infection among pregnant women and unborn children.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Information on how much funding has been provided to prevent and tackle Group B Strep infection among pregnant women over the last five years is not collected centrally.

The Government has made clear that maternity care is a priority and on 13 November 2015 announced an ambition to reduce by 50% stillbirths, neonatal deaths, maternal deaths and neonatal brain injuries by 2030. This includes harm and death caused by Group B Streptococcus (GBS).

A range of work addressing GBS is being taken forward by the Department of Health and Public Health England with a range of partner organisations. This includes:

—Monitoring developments on GBS vaccines and undertaking a grant-funded study to assess the potential impact of a maternal immunisation programme.

—An audit in partnership with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and supported by the Royal College of Midwives, recently carried out by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG). This examined current practice in preventing early onset neonatal GBS disease by investigating the implementation of the RCOG Green-top guideline on preventing the disease. The last of two reports was published on 29 January 2016 and has made recommendations for improvements in care in the prevention of early-onset GBS disease.

—The National Institute of Health Research has approved funding for a study on accuracy of a rapid intrapartum test for maternal group B streptococcal colonisation and its potential to reduce antibiotic usage in mothers with risk factors (GBS2). The study commenced in May 2016.

The Department is also convening two half day workshops with leading experts from a wide range of organisations, including the RCPG and Gynaecologists, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health and the charity Group B Strep Support to discuss research evidence gaps in relation to GBS.

HOME OFFICE■ **Asylum**

Oliver Colvile: [\[44842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to create more cohesive societies in areas with dispersal centres for asylum seekers.

Oliver Colvile: [\[44843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support her Department is giving to dispersal centres for asylum seekers to help foster community cohesion.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office funds strategic migration partnerships which are local authority-led partnerships designed to provide structures and support services for those organisations working with migrants and refugees in local communities.

The Home Office also provides a dedicated integration loan directly to recognised refugees. The loan is designed to help refugees integrate into UK society by offering financial support towards housing costs, employment and training.

■ **Asylum: Appeals**

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[44205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people refused asylum under the non-suspensive appeal policy were removed from the UK in the first six months of 2016; and how many such people (a) lodged an appeal and (b) successfully appealed against the refusal of their asylum application.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 7 September 2016]: Between 1st January and 30th June 2016, 110 removals of people who have previously been refused asylum and had their claims certified, took place. Of those claimants removed in that period four lodged appeals; there were no successful appeals by the end of the same period.

■ **Asylum: Children**

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[45175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to speed up the process of family reunification for unaccompanied refugee children in Europe.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Government began work to implement the 'Dubs amendment' immediately after the Immigration Bill gained Royal Assent. Over 30 children who meet the criteria in the Immigration Act have been accepted for transfer since it received Royal Assent in May, the majority of these have already arrived in the UK.

We continue to work with the French, Greek and Italian authorities and others to speed up existing family reunification processes or implement new processes where necessary

for unaccompanied children. We have seconded a UK official to Greece; we have a long-standing secondee working in Italy and will shortly be seconding another official to the French Interior Ministry to support these efforts.

We have established a dedicated team in the Home Office Dublin Unit to lead on family reunion cases for unaccompanied children. Transfer requests under the Dublin Regulation are now generally processed within 10 days and children transferred within weeks. Over 120 children have been accepted for transfer this year from Europe.

We also continue to consult local authorities about the transfer unaccompanied refugee children from Europe to the UK, where it is in their best interests

Dr Paul Monaghan:

[45379]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps she has taken to accelerate the family reunification process for unaccompanied children in Europe.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Government began work to implement the 'Dubs amendment' immediately after the Immigration Bill gained Royal Assent. Over 30 children who meet the criteria in the Immigration Act have been accepted for transfer since it received Royal Assent in May, the majority of these have already arrived in the UK.

We continue to work with the French, Greek and Italian authorities and others to speed up existing family reunification processes or implement new processes where necessary for unaccompanied children. We have seconded a UK official to Greece; we have a long-standing secondee working in Italy and will shortly be seconding another official to the French Interior Ministry to support these efforts.

We have established a dedicated team in the Home Office Dublin Unit to lead on family reunion cases for unaccompanied children. Transfer requests under the Dublin Regulation are now generally processed within 10 days and children transferred within weeks. Over 120 children have been accepted for transfer this year from Europe.

We also continue to consult local authorities about the transfer unaccompanied refugee children from Europe to the UK, where it is in their best interests

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[45436]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information her Department holds on the geographical distribution by parliamentary constituency of unaccompanied minors who have applied for asylum in the UK in each of the last 12 months; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office holds information as to the relevant local authority, responsible adult and social worker for each individual unaccompanied asylum seeking child and we remain in contact with these parties whilst considering the child's asylum claim. This information is not collated and does not form part of our published statistics.

Lady Hermon:

[\[45571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to introduce a timetable for the re-unification of refugee children in Europe with family members in the UK; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Government began work to implement the 'Dubs amendment' immediately after the Immigration Bill gained Royal Assent. Over 30 children who meet the criteria in the Immigration Act have been accepted for transfer since it received Royal Assent in May, the majority of these have already arrived in the UK.

We continue to work with and consult the French, Greek and Italian authorities and others to speed up existing family reunification processes or implement new processes where necessary for unaccompanied children. We have seconded a UK official to Greece; we have a long-standing secondee working in Italy and will shortly be seconding another official to the French Interior Ministry to support these efforts.

We also continue to consult local authorities about the transfer of unaccompanied refugee children from Europe to the UK, where it is in their best interests.

In addition, we have established a dedicated team in the Home Office Dublin Unit to lead on family reunion cases for unaccompanied children. Transfer requests under the Dublin Regulation are now generally processed within 10 days and children transferred within weeks. Over 120 children have been accepted for transfer this year from Europe.

■ British Nationality

Philip Davies:

[\[45360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many test centres there are in England for citizenship applicants to take the (a) life in the UK and (b) English language test.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

In England there are currently (a) 35 Life in the UK centres and (b) 17 English Language Test Centres.

■ British Nationality: EU Nationals

Drew Hendry:

[\[45198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to simplify the citizenship application process for EU nationals.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

All those applying for naturalisation as a British citizen must meet the statutory requirements that are set out in the British Nationality Act 1981. These include a period of lawful residence, settled status, good character, and knowledge of language and life in the United Kingdom. These apply equally to EEA and non-EEA nationals.

■ Deportation

Dawn Butler: [\[45629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what measures are in place to ensure that people deported under Operation Nexus have an opportunity for legal challenge.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

All deportation decisions, including those pursued under Operation Nexus, adhere to existing legislative requirements with regards to the service of those decisions. Those requirements are contained within the Home Office Enforcement Instructions and Guidance and include the provision of standard notice of removal at Chapter 60, available at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/534727/Chapter_60_v11_-_july_2016.pdf

■ Forensic Science

Philip Davies: [\[45487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the (a) target and (b) actual average timescale was for the return of forensically analysed evidence in cases involving (i) burglary, (ii) murder, (iii) violence against the person, excluding murder, (iv) drugs offences and (v) sexual offences in the last 12 months; and if she will make a statement.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office does not set the target timescales for the return of forensically analysed evidence. This would be an operational matter within policing for each Chief Constable.

■ Home Office: EU Nationals

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[45510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many citizens of other EU countries work in her Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office undertakes checks to confirm that potential candidates meet the eligibility requirements to work in the UK. However, the Home Office does not record the nationality of employees on our IT systems and is unable to provide this information.

■ Immigration Controls

Christian Matheson: [\[45595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department has spent on advertising and promoting the proposed points-based immigration system in the latest period for which figures are available.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We have spent no money promoting a proposed points-based immigration system for EU nationals. The precise way in which the Government will control the movement of EU nationals to Britain after Brexit is yet to be determined. However, as the PM has said many times in the past, a PBS will not work and is not an option.

■ **Immigration: EEA Nationals**

Stuart C. McDonald:

[45158]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications were made by (a) EEA nationals for registration certificates and (b) EEA family members and extended family members for residence cards in each month since January 2016.

Stuart C. McDonald:

[45159]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the feasibility of processing applications for registration certificates and residence cards through an online system; and if she will estimate the potential savings in administration costs to the public purse of such a system.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 12 September 2016]: Data on the total number of EEA related applications made by people in the UK is published on a quarterly basis as part of the Migration Transparency Data release. The latest published figures (Q2 2016) can be found in the table 'Temporary and permanent migration data'. See tab InC-01a. This data can be accessed via the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/temporary-and-permanent-migration-data-august-2016>

With regards to the online processing of EEA applications, UK Visas & Immigration is undertaking a programme of transformation of which digitisation is a core part. UKVI is working towards digitising all application routes from existing methods of applying by paper for applicants from within and outside of the UK. The intention is to enable customers to apply online across the services and immigration routes in a straight-forward and customer-focused way.

The online application service Access UK first launched for visit visa customers in China in June 2014, and has subsequently been rolled out to 180 countries globally for overseas visit routes in more than 15 languages. For those already in the UK, Access UK has launched for customers applying for tier 2 (work) and tier 4 (study) extensions and is preparing for further services to go online. UKVI is currently trialling the online service for some EEA applicants. As the programme matures we expect benefits to security, customer service and efficiencies to be identified and realised.

■ Overseas Students

Daniel Zeichner: [\[44875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to remove international students from the Government's migration targets following the decision to leave the EU.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

International students are included in net migration statistics that are produced by the independent Office for National Statistics (ONS). In line with the internationally agreed UN definition, these statistics define a migrant as someone changing their normal place of residence for more than a year. Students are therefore included in the same way as other migrants. Other countries, such as the United States, Canada, and Australia also include students in their net migration figures.

Like other migrants, students who stay for longer than 12 months have an impact on communities, infrastructure and services while they are here, so it is right that they are included in the net migration count.

We are committed to reducing non-EU migration across all visa routes in order to bring net migration down to sustainable levels as soon as possible.

■ Prime Ministers: Official Cars

Jack Dromey: [\[45258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the manufacturer and model is of the Prime Ministerial car.

Mr Ben Wallace:

[Holding answer 12 September 2016]: The car used by the Prime Minister is a Jaguar. Further specifications of the car, such as the car's model, are not released on security grounds.

■ Refugees

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[45183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been resettled through the Vulnerable Persons Relocation programme; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[45184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of people to be resettled through the Vulnerable Persons Relocation programme in each of the next 12 months; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We intend to resettle up to 20,000 Syrians in need of protection during this Parliament. We will continue to work closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to identify appropriate cases, prioritising the most vulnerable. The

numbers resettled in a particular period will depend on a range of factors including the flow of referrals from UNHCR in the field and the availability of suitable accommodation and care packages in the UK. We continue to work closely with local authorities to manage the arrival of the Syrian refugees in to the resettlement places they have pledged. We will manage the flows based on need and in support of the wellbeing of the people and communities involved, rather than rushing to meet arbitrary targets. However, we are clear that we want to help as many people as we can as quickly as possible.

The Home Office is committed to publishing data in an orderly way as part of the regular quarterly Immigration Statistics, in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Latest statistics published on 25 August confirmed that a total of a total of 2,898 Syrians have been resettled under the scheme since it began, 2,646 of these arriving since 1 October 2015.

Alison McGovern:

[\[45347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to support local authorities in integrating refugees into British society.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 12 September 2016]: The Home Office funds strategic migration partnerships which are local authority-led partnerships designed to provide structures and support services for those organisations working with migrants and refugees in local communities.

The Home Office also provides a dedicated integration loan directly to recognised refugees. The loan is designed to help refugees integrate into UK society by offering financial support towards housing costs, employment and training.

■ Refugees: Syria

Matthew Pennycook:

[\[45199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the effect of the cost of private-rented sector accommodation on the ability of London boroughs to resettle vulnerable Syrian refugees under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement programme.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Participation in the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme is voluntary and a number of Syrians have already been resettled under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme in London. Overall the programme is on track to meet the commitment to resettle 20,000 vulnerable Syrians by 2020. Local authorities, including London boroughs are expected to arrange affordable and sustainable accommodation for families before they arrive. They are provided funding by Government to meet the cost of resettlement. This funding is un-ring fenced so it will be for them to determine the best use of the funds to support the placements in their area.

■ Smuggling: Stun Guns

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[45677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 September 2016 to Question 44370, how many stun weapons have been seized at the UK border in each year since 2011-12.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 13 September 2016]: Table 1 - Number of stun weapons seized at the UK border each year since 2011-12

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUN WEAPONS SEIZED
2012/13	425
2013/14	633
2014/15	604
2015/16	729
2016/17 (Apr to end Jun)	3,725

This is provisional management information that is subject to change due to continued reporting. Therefore it is not possible to assure the data to the standard of Official Statistics.

The figures for the reporting of stun weapons prior to 2012 had not been disaggregated from those of other firearms.

The figure for 2016/17 includes a seizure of 3,600 stun guns in May 2016. Following further investigation, it was deemed that the importation of the illegal items was as a result of administrative error as opposed to a deliberate act.

The figures refer to stun weapon seizures over the financial year (1 April - 31 March).

■ UK Border Force: Port of Hull

Karl Turner:

[\[45626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Border Force officers or equivalent roles under the previous UK Border Agency have been employed at the Port of Hull site in each year since 2005.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The requested information has not been released as it is Border Force policy not to release port-specific staff numbers on grounds of national security. Furthermore staff are deployed flexibly according to demand and therefore move between locations.

■ Visas

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

[[44261](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with which countries the UK has a visa waiver agreement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

All non-EEA nationals coming to the UK for periods of longer than six months unless exempt from immigration control are expected to obtain a UK visa in advance of travel.

Appendix 2 of Appendix V of the Immigration Rules lists those countries whose nationals or citizens are subject to immigration control and who additionally require a visa obtained in advance of travel as a visitor or for any purpose for less than six months. Appendix 2 also provides details of specified travel documents whose holders do not need a visa before they travel to the UK as a visitor:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-v-visitor-rules>

Nationals of countries not included on the visa national list who are visiting the UK for less than six months may travel without a visa obtained in advance but will still need to seek permission to enter on arrival. An exception to this for nationals of Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait intending a stay of less than six months allows them to apply for an Electronic Visa Waiver (EVW) in advance of travel.

■ Visas: Higher Education

Daniel Zeichner:

[[45380](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will bring forward proposals to amend visa regulations to better support international university staff and student mobility in order to expand UK universities' science and research markets outside of the EU.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We will continue to reform the student visa system to tackle abuse, and deliver an effective immigration system that is fair to British citizens and those who play by the rules. At the same time, we continue to be committed to ensuring our top universities are a magnet for the best students from around the world.

Our immigration rules for non-EU workers already cater for highly skilled workers, including academics, scientists and researchers

■ Visas: Space Technology

Daniel Zeichner:

[[45520](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will bring forward proposals to amend visa regulations to better enable highly skilled people to come to the UK to work in the space and satellite sector.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Our immigration rules for non-EU workers already cater for the highly skilled, including academics, scientists and researchers. Within the immigration system, we have consistently protected and enhanced the treatment of such roles, even whilst restricting migration in other spheres.

In Tier 2, the skilled work route, PhD level roles are given higher priority when allocating places within the annual limit and are exempt from certain of the usual recruitment and settlement rules. The Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) route is also available for world leaders in science, engineering, humanities, the arts and digital technology, and several universities and research organisations are making use of this route. The Tier 5 (Temporary Work) route contains provisions to enable sponsored researchers to participate in international research collaborations, and for overseas medical and dental post-graduates to undertake training in the UK.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Department for International Development: Public Expenditure****Stephen Doughty:**[\[45600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent meetings she has had on her Department's budget with the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union.

Rory Stewart:

The Secretary of State holds regular meetings with ministerial colleagues including with the Department for Exiting the European Union.

■ Developing Countries: Breastfeeding**Mr Mark Hendrick:**[\[45285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what activities have been undertaken by Ministers of her Department to promote breastfeeding during World Breastfeeding Week 2016.

Rory Stewart:

DFID supports breastfeeding. Interventions to improve early infant feeding can save newborn lives in less developed settings, and early initiation of breastfeeding has been shown to have a major additional impact in reducing neonatal deaths.

DFID Ministers did not undertake activities to mark World Breastfeeding Day specifically. Our country offices regularly work with local partners to promote breastfeeding and other public health interventions.

■ Developing Countries: Crimes of Violence**Mr Mark Hendrick:**[\[45484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what projects to tackle domestic violence and violence against women and girls her Department has funded since 2010.

Rory Stewart:

The UK can be proud of its global leadership on tackling violence against women and girls. In the past five years we have nearly doubled our programming to address this human rights abuse, including over a six-fold increase in our programming to address violence against women and girls in humanitarian contexts. We now have 127 programmes tackling this abuse in its many forms. This includes prevention of, and response to, domestic violence, acid attacks, FGM and child, early and forced marriage.

For example, we are supporting the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, which specialises in providing grants for small women's and civil society organisations to tackle multiple forms of violence. In 2015 this programme reached over one million people to help end violence against women and girls. You can find further details on DFID's violence against women and girls programming in the recent Independent Commission for Aid Impact's review. This assessed DFID's efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls and gave DFID's performance a 'Green' rating, the highest achievable.

Ethiopia: Security**Steve McCabe:**[\[45678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether funding for her Department's executive masters programme in security sector management in Ethiopia is classified as Overseas Development Assistance under the International Development (Official Development Assistance Target) Act (2015).

James Wharton:

UK support for the Executive Masters Programme in Security Sector Management Ethiopia (MSc) included both Overseas Development Assistance and non-Overseas Development Assistance elements.

DFID suspended support to the programme in June 2014 and the programme was closed in June 2015.

Overseas Aid**Stephen Doughty:**[\[45599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent meetings she has had on the aid budget with the Secretary of State for International Trade.

Rory Stewart:

The Secretary of State for International Development and the Secretary of State for International Trade meet regularly to discuss trade and development issues. Both agree on the importance of ensuring that UK development and trade policy are fully integrated.

Martyn Day:[\[45607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the effect of the Government's commitment to allocating 50 per cent of her

Department's spending to fragile states and regions on the future allocation of development assistance to poor but peaceful countries.

Rory Stewart:

DFID uses a range of factors to determine allocations to countries, including the need of those countries for development assistance, how effective our assistance is likely to be in those countries, and the strategic fit with UK government priorities.

The 50% commitment is not only the right thing to do but also the smart thing to do for Britain's national interest. The commitment ensures that we improve the lives of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world. Poverty is increasingly concentrated in fragile states and regions, and conflict is one of the major challenges to development. Over half of the world's poor live in fragile states.

Our work in fragile states and regions will help to build stability, prevent conflict and support economic growth in the world's poorest countries and regions. Without stability, our gains on poverty reduction risk being reversed.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Department for International Trade: Staff

Mr David Lammy: [\[44417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many full-time equivalent trade negotiators his Department has in post (a) in total, (b) with at least a year's experience, (c) with at least five years' experience and (d) with at least 10 years' experience.

Greg Hands:

The Department for International Trade has a strong and capable trade policy team with many years of negotiating expertise. We will continue to hire the brightest and best talent from within the UK civil service and from elsewhere in order to build the world class negotiating strengths needed to deliver the best outcomes for the UK.

Mr David Lammy: [\[44954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many staff in his Department are currently engaged in (a) London and (b) Geneva on World Trade Organisation policy.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 9 September 2016]: As the Department for International Trade (DIT) is still to obtain a transfer of functions order to establish the Secretary of State and Department as a separate legal entity, it is not yet recognised as an independent employer. Therefore no independent staff data is available. DIT does not have staff in Geneva but will continue to work closely with the UK Mission to the UN in order to deliver the best possible outcomes for the UK.

Peter Kyle: [\[45238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many staff at what civil service grades his Department employs.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 13 September 2016]: Following her appointment on 13 July 2016 the Prime Minister established the Department for International Trade (DIT). The DIT aggregates UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), UK Export and Finance (UKEF), Trade Policy Units from the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), as well as some new hires.

Until such time as a transfer of functions order establishes the Secretary of State as a corporation sole, DIT remains a unified Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) department for accounting purposes.

As DIT is currently being formed, the number staff the Department employs is being finalised while employee transfers and recruitment are taking place.

■ Department for International Trade: Trade Agreements**Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[45148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many meetings have been held between Ministers of his Department and their international counterparts on future trade deals since his Department was created; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Garnier:

[Holding answer 13 September 2016]: As the Prime Minister made clear earlier this week, as we leave the EU, Britain will seek to become the global leader in free trade. This is why my team of Ministers and officials at the Department for International Trade are actively engaging with our international partners. Through these discussions, we are working to best promote British trade, and to ensure we take advantage of the great opportunities available to us – including through our future trading relationships.

■ Trade Agreements**Steve Baker:**[\[45028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will make it his policy to (a) establish a prosperity zone among countries with similar approaches to the UK to have trade, completion and property rights and (b) negotiate and inherit bilateral trade deals with nations whose markets are more distorted.

Greg Hands:

In due course, Britain will be leaving the EU. This offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world. The Prime Minister has established the Department for International Trade to promote British trade across the world and ensure the UK takes advantage of the huge opportunities open to us. The Government is currently reviewing its trade policy. We will engage fully on this with a broad range of stakeholders over the coming weeks and months.

■ Trade Agreements: Devolution

David Simpson: [\[45065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what plans his Department has in place to include the devolved administrations in UK trade negotiations in the future.

Greg Hands:

In due course, Britain will be leaving the EU. This offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world: to negotiate, in time, our own trade agreements and to be a positive and powerful force for free trade. The Prime Minister has established the Department for International Trade to promote British trade across the world and ensure the UK takes advantage of the huge opportunities open to us. The Government is currently reviewing its trade policy. We will engage fully with the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland governments and with a broad range of stakeholders over the coming weeks and months as we prepare for negotiations with our international partners.

JUSTICE

■ Approved Premises

Charlotte Leslie: [\[44557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if her Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the number of offenders on probation housed in Approved Premises.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Approved Premises (formerly known as probation or bail hostels) are used to provide enhanced supervision for higher-risk offenders who have been released from prison after completing the custodial part of their sentence. They also house a small number of defendants on bail. My Department is analysing the capacity and distribution of the Approved Premises estate to establish whether more places are needed.

■ Medway Secure Training Centre

Rehman Chishti: [\[44635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps she plans to take to ensure adequate care and safeguarding of young people at Medway Secure Training Centre in response to findings of the Ofsted report of 8 August 2016 on that centre.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The allegations of abuse at Medway and the findings of the most recent Ofsted led inspection in June are shocking and decisive action has already been taken.

Since the period covered in the report, G4S have been removed from the running of Medway and the centre has been brought under the leadership of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS).

The new governor has a strong track record of working with children in secure care and has already put in place a robust action plan to improve safeguarding, reduce violence and create a positive environment where children have the opportunity to learn and develop.

The safety and rehabilitation of young offenders is extremely important. We will be responding to the Charlie Taylor review with our plans for reform of the youth justice system shortly.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Consultants**

Margaret Hodge:

[\[44355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many times her Department has used the services of (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Ernst and Young, (d) KPMG and (e) other consulting firms in the last three financial years; and what (i) work was undertaken and (ii) the cost to the public purse was on each such occasion.

Dr Phillip Lee:

It has not been possible to answer this question in the time allowed. I will write to the right honourable member in due course.

■ **Oakhill Secure Training Centre**

Jo Stevens:

[\[44427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress has been made on the sale of the contract for Oakhill secure training centre.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The Ministry continues to be in regular contact with G4S and other relevant bodies. This engagement includes monitoring the progress of the potential sale to ensure it does not jeopardise the delivery of services at the Secure Training Centres.

■ **Prisoners' Release: Housing**

Luciana Berger:

[\[45667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of prisoners left prisons with settled accommodation in each (a) financial year since 2010 and (b) month since April 2016.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Up until 2014/15 prisons were responsible for collecting information on accommodation outcomes for prisoners on release. The figures are based on prisoners self-reporting. Figures for the percentage of prisoners released into settled accommodation for the financial years 2010-11 to 2014-15 are published on gov.uk.

From 1 May 2015 Community Rehabilitation Companies became responsible for helping offenders obtain suitable accommodation as part of their Through the Gate resettlement services. Information on what proportion of prisoners left prisons with settled accommodation for the financial year 2015-2016 and monthly information since April 2016 is not available centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Sentencing: Mental Health

Tom Elliott: [\[45166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what requirements are in place to ensure that the mental health of a defendant is fully considered before sentencing.

Dr Phillip Lee:

Under the Criminal Justice Act 2003, before passing sentence, the Court must obtain a pre-sentence report unless it considers it unnecessary to do so in any individual case. The pre-sentence report covers all circumstances which are relevant to the offender and highlights any links to his offending behaviour, including mental health problems.

Under the same Act, the Court is required to obtain and consider a medical report on a defendant who is or appears to be mentally disordered, before passing a custodial sentence.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

■ Private Members' Bills

Mr Charles Walker: [\[45752\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, pursuant to the Answer of 5 September 2016 to Question 43403, what the evidential basis is for his assertion that no hon. Members have handed in the text of their Bill; what discussions he and his officials have had with House authorities on the status of each of the Private Members' Bills presented on 29 June 2016; and which Bills have been received by Parliamentary Counsel in draft as part of the process of discussion with Departments.

Mr David Lidington:

Bills formally submitted to the Public Bill Office are available to all Members and are published online. Government Departments are holding discussions with several Members about their Bills.

The Government will set out its position on each Bill at the relevant Second Reading.

TRANSPORT

■ Aviation

Jim Shannon: [\[45280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the importance of direct long-haul air links with a hub airport when opening trade discussions around the world.

Mr John Hayes:

Evidence on the links between long-haul air connections and international trade was presented by the Airports Commission in its Final Report and supporting documents. The Government is considering all of this evidence very carefully.

■ Cycling and Walking: Children

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[45087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to page 8 of the Government's report entitled, Childhood Obesity: a Plan for Action, published in August 2016, how much the Government has invested in (a) walking to school and (b) cycling to school in each year since 2010.

Andrew Jones:

The table attached shows investment in walking and cycling to school programmes in each year since 2010:

In 2010/11 Bikeability was one of a portfolio of programmes delivered by Cycling England, which received £63m government funding in 2010/11.

Between 2011/12 and 2015/16, the Local Sustainable Transport Fund was open to local authorities to bid for funding for projects to address local transport problems. For some areas, this included support for walking and cycling to school projects. The Department does not hold information on precise funding allocated to these projects.

Similarly, the Department has made £20.6m revenue funding available in 2016/17 through the Sustainable Transport Transition Year Fund, which is eligible for local authorities to bid for projects which support walking and cycling to school.

Attachments:

1. Table [045087 - Zeichner (table).pdf]

■ Cycling and Walking: Finance

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[44873\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to publish the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

Andrew Jones:

We hope to publish the final Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy once all considerations have been taken into account, following analysis of responses to the draft Strategy consultation.

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[45656\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects to respond to his Department's consultation on the draft cycling and walking investment strategy, published in March 2016.

Andrew Jones:

We hope to publish a Government Response to the consultation on the draft Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, alongside the final Strategy, once the Government completes its analysis of responses to the consultation and all considerations have been taken into account.

■ Department for Transport: Fees and Charges

Justin Madders: [\[45129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 29 June 2016 to Question 40558, from which sources other than vehicle excise renewals his Department receives credit card fees from people paying for services offered by his Department and its agencies; and what the total amount so received was in (a) 2013-14, (b) 2014-15 and (c) 2015-16.

Andrew Jones:

There are no services, aside from paying Vehicle Excise Duty, for which my Department or its agencies receives a credit card fee.

■ Heathrow Airport

Jim Shannon: [\[45281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect that a possible Heathrow Airport expansion will have on UK industry.

Mr John Hayes:

The Airports Commission shortlisted three airport expansion schemes, two at Heathrow and one at Gatwick. The Government accepted the Commission's shortlist in December 2015 and is considering all of the evidence very carefully before reaching a view on its preferred scheme. The Government is not providing a running commentary on this work before an announcement on its preference.

■ Midland Main Railway Line: Electrification

Lilian Greenwood: [\[45662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 16 October 2015 to Question 11754, whether Network Rail has estimated the cost to the public purse of the decision to unpause electrification of the Midland Mainline.

Lilian Greenwood: [\[45750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 7 July 2015 to Question 4429, on the Midland Main Line, for what works on which sites on the Midland Main Line for funding under the Passenger Journey Time Fund had been authorised; and what funding has been awarded to date to which of those works under the Passenger Journey Time Fund.

Paul Maynard:

Network Rail has estimated between £29.5-£39.5m costs of the pause/un-pause of electrification.

Funding has been provisionally allocated from the Passenger Journey Improvement Time Fund (PJIF) to various schemes, including the Midland Main Line Programme. Subject to affordability and value for money, the allocated funds will be confirmed once schemes have completed the detailed design stage.

As part of the Hendy Review £90million was provisionally allocated to the MML from the PJIF fund for Control Period 5 of which:

Derby to Sheffield PJIF- £49.2m

Market Harborough PJIF - £27m (This denotes the PJIF element of funding for Market Harborough not the total cost of the scheme)

Leicester South PJIF - £8m

(2012/13 prices)

■ Railways: Electrification

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[45604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of job losses in the rail supply chain in connection with his Department's decisions to pause and unpause the electrification of Midland Mainline and the North TransPennine Route; and what assessment he has made of the number of such job losses as a consequence of Hendy Review rescoping exercise of Control Period 5.

Paul Maynard:

As a result of the replan exercise by Sir Peter Hendy, resources were redeployed to other projects within Network Rail. The Government is investing £40bn in the railways between 2014-19, which will be a significant boost to the rail supply chain.

■ Railways: Franchises

Henry Smith:

[\[45089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of the size of (a) rail franchises and (b) the Govia Thameslink rail franchise on the efficient delivery of rail services.

Paul Maynard:

We take a very large number of factors into account when determining the most appropriate way forward when franchises are due for renewal. We undertook just such an assessment when considering options for the most appropriate approach to providing passenger rail services during the delivery of the Thameslink Programme infrastructure and the introduction of new rolling stock. This included balancing the size of the franchise against the need to ensure effective coordination of all the services on the lines affected by Thameslink during the construction period. We of course always take into account lessons learned from practice when looking at similar decisions in the future.

Regarding the size of the Govia Thameslink Railway franchise, as I made clear at the Transport Select Committee, it is unlikely the Department will wish to let such a franchise in the future. The size of the franchise is a factor in this assessment. However, I believe that with the measures recently announced this franchise should deliver a better passenger experience in the future.

■ Railways: Scotland

Drew Hendry: [\[45193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps the Government is taking to simplify rail fares for journeys between London and Scotland and reduce the fare anomalies that lead to split ticketing.

Paul Maynard:

Rail passengers should always be able to get the best deal and the industry must work harder to make this a reality. We are aware that there are a number of routes for which it can be cheaper to purchase two or more tickets for individual parts of the route than a through ticket for the entire journey. Anyone is entitled to purchase two or more separate tickets for their journey so long as the train they are travelling on stops at the stations indicated at the end of each ticket. Apparent anomalies in pricing that may be experienced on long-distance routes like London to Scotland, can sometimes be a result of competition on the railways encouraging one operator to reduce prices when competing with others on the route. Price competition on the railways can be positive for passengers. The Department would need to consider very carefully any action that removed this incentive for operators.

Train operators are obliged to sell the most appropriate through fare based on the information the passenger gives them. This will depend on what time the passenger wants to travel and how flexible they need to be. The National Rail Conditions of Carriage, which form the basis of the contract you enter into when you buy a rail ticket, allow passengers to use combinations of tickets. However, it is vital that industry improve information available to passengers and I will be raising this with the Rail Delivery Group as a priority.

■ Road Traffic Offences: Mobile Phones

Stephen Hammond: [\[44934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the penalties for mobile phone use while driving.

Andrew Jones:

Evidence shows that hand-held mobile phone use whilst driving decreased after the legislation was introduced in 2003, and after the first increase in the penalty in 2007. I know that dangerous mobile phone use remains a key concern amongst motorists. The previous Government increased the level of fine in 2013 and this Government has consulted on increasing penalties. The consultation closed on 15 March and we plan to issue our response soon.

■ Rolling Stock: East Midlands

Lilian Greenwood:

[45605]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to require the ordering of new Intercity bimodal rolling stock as a condition of the next East Midlands rail franchise.

Paul Maynard:

No decisions have been taken yet with regard to specifying new rolling stock. However, as part of the competition there will be a public consultation in advance of finalising the Invitation to Tender that will inform any such decision.

■ Taxis: Licensing

Sarah Champion:

[45598]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the letter of the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State to the right hon. Member for Rotherham on 8 July 2016, on clause 145 of the Policing and Crime Bill, when the Government expects to publish a timetable for its (a) consultation on tax and private hire vehicle licensing and (b) publication of guidance.

Andrew Jones:

The Government expects to publish the timetable for the full public consultation on the local authority Best Practice Guidance for Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles in advance of Royal Assent of the Policing and Crime Bill. The government aims to launch the full public consultation upon Royal Assent of the Bill.

The Guidance will be published following completion of the full public consultation and once any amendments have been made.

■ Thameslink Railway Line: Standards

Peter Kyle:

[45658]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will provide performance data for each month from January 2015 to August 2016 for the Thameslink (a) 0657 Brighton to Bedford, (b) 0722 Brighton to Bedford, (c) 0748 Brighton to Bedford, (d) 0800 Brighton to Bedford, (e) 1550 Bedford to Brighton, (f) 1608 Bedford to Brighton, (g) 1626 Bedford to Brighton and (h) 1708 Bedford to Brighton service.

Paul Maynard:

The Department does not hold train-level performance information. Both Network Rail and relevant train operators provide comprehensive data and reports to the Department, but punctuality of individual trains is an operational matter for the industry to manage.

The Rail Delivery Group has recently launched a new online tool which enables customers to track the punctuality and reliability record of any train on the national network over a period of up to a year, which can be found at:

<http://www.mytrainjourney.co.uk/>.

■ Walking: Children

Daniel Zeichner: [\[45088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to page 8 of the Government's report entitled, Childhood Obesity: a Plan for Action, published in August 2016, whether the clear target to increase the number of children walking to school in the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy will be quantifiable.

Andrew Jones:

The objective to increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school, as mentioned on page 6 of the draft Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, is evidently quantifiable in that we will know if the objective has been achieved if the percentage of those walking to school in the future is higher than the percentage at the current time.

We hope to publish the final Strategy once all considerations have been taken into account, following analysis of responses to the draft Strategy consultation.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Department for Work and Pensions: SCC**

Dr Eilidh Whiteford: [\[44509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will provide details of the contracts that his Department has with the technology company SCC.

Caroline Nokes:

The Department does not hold any direct contracts with the technology company SCC. It has however tendered services from SCC via the Crown Commercial Service.

■ Employment: Graduates

David Simpson: [\[44996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans the Government has to encourage and support graduates in finding a job.

Damian Hinds:

Jobcentre Plus is committed to providing a high quality service to all jobseekers and this includes graduates looking for employment in high level sectors.

Jobcentre Plus work coaches personalise the support they provide to claimants to help them find work, based on their individual need and circumstances. They have access to a menu of specialist support designed to assist graduates and professional executives.

From April 2017 we are introducing a new Youth Obligation to ensure that young people aged 18–21 are either earning or learning and are given the support, skills and experience they need to move into and get on in work.

■ Housing Benefit: Mental Illness

Mr Hugo Swire:

[[45617](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect of the housing benefit cap on the ability of people with severe mental illness to afford suitable housing.

Caroline Nokes:

The Secretary of State has confirmed that the Government expects to make an announcement on the way forward for supported housing in early autumn.

Full impact and equality impact assessments will be undertaken in due course.

■ Housing Benefit: Refuges

Thangam Debbonaire:

[[45659](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that the housing benefit cap does not have an adverse financial effect on refuges for domestic violence survivors; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Nokes:

All tenants in supported accommodation are exempted from the Local Housing Allowance cap until April 2017.

The Secretary of State has confirmed that the Government expects to make an announcement on the way forward for supported housing in early autumn.

■ Occupational Pensions

Steve McCabe:

[[45590](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make an assessment of the ability of companies to fund their long-term pension obligations after the reduction in the Bank of England base rate to 0.25 per cent.

Richard Harrington:

I refer the hon. Gentleman to my previous answer I gave on the 12th September 2016 to Question: UIN 44305

■ Social Security Benefits

Debbie Abrahams:

[[45252](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he plans to publish the reviews carried out by his Department on the deaths of social security claimants since 2014.

Damian Hinds:

[*Holding answer 12 September 2016*]: All our currently published reviews can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-foi-releases-for-may-2016>

Jim Fitzpatrick:

[45327]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 27 June 2016 to Question HL691, if the Government will publish the information it holds on the proportion of claimants affected by the lower benefit cap who are in receipt of (a) jobseeker's allowance, (b) employment and support allowance and (c) income support.

Caroline Nokes:

The information is provided in the table below.

Estimated number of households affected by the lower cap levels by benefit receipt, 2016/17, GB

BENEFIT TYPE	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS AFFECTED (000's)	PROPORTION OF AFFECTED HOUSEHOLDS
Employment and Support Allowance	19	21%
Income Support	43	49%
Jobseeker's Allowance	19	21%
Other	8	9%
Total	88	100%

Notes:

1. Figures may not sum due to rounding.
2. Estimates assume no behavioural responses - any behavioural responses to the lower cap, such as claimants moving into employment, would cause the number of households affected to reduce.
3. The methodology used to estimate the households affected by the cap is consistent with that described in the latest impact assessment published here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/welfare-reform-and-work-act-impact-assessment-for-the-benefit-cap>

The benefit cap will be lowered from 7th November from £26,000 to £20,000, except in London where it will be lowered to £23,000. To help ensure Local Authorities are able to protect the most vulnerable Housing Benefit claimants and to support households adjusting to our welfare reforms, the Government will provide £870m funding for Discretionary Housing Payments over the next 5 years. Information about this and other measures to ease the transition for families affected by this policy change is included in the latest impact assessment at the link above.

■ Social Security Benefits: Scotland

Natalie McGarry:

[[45084](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make an assessment of the effect of the Government's welfare reforms on deprivation in (a) Glasgow East constituency, (b) the city of Glasgow and (c) Scotland.

Damian Hinds:

The Government set out our assessment of the impact of the welfare policies in the Welfare Reform and Work Act on 20 July 2015, with similar assessments for previous changes.

■ Social Security Benefits: Telephone Services

Chris Stephens:

[[44894](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the average length of time a person making an initial inquiry claiming social security benefit spent on the telephone in the last 12 months.

Caroline Nokes:

[Holding answer 8 September 2016]: The DWP's benefit claim lines handle calls both enquiring about claiming benefit and making a claim to benefit. The average length of calls to these lines for the period 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016 was 00:12:56. For some benefits, systems require that the data collected includes time spent updating records after the conversation has ended.

Data sources: Operational Management Information System (OPMIS) and data supplied by outsource partners.

Please note this information is derived from the Department's management information designed solely for the purpose of helping the Department to manage its business. As such, it has not been subjected to the rigorous quality assurance checks applied to our published official statistics. As DWP holds the information internally, we have released it. However, it is possible information held by DWP may change due to operational reasons and we recommend that caution be applied when using it.

■ Universal Credit: Data Protection

Chi Onwurah:

[[45601](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in what circumstances compensation will be made available to universal credit claimants as a result of a breach of security that has been found to compromise their data.

Chi Onwurah:

[[45602](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the security of the data held in the universal credit system; and if he will make a statement.

Damian Hinds:

The security of claimant information is a crucial part of the way that data is managed in the department. The personal details of Universal Credit claimants are securely stored and access to this data is strictly controlled. A range of controls are present within the Universal Credit service to protect the confidentiality and integrity of claimant personal data and there are regular tests against these controls to ensure that they meet Government and international security standards.

The Department operates a discretionary special payment scheme. The policy and guiding principles of the scheme are described in Financial Redress for Maladministration which is available on Gov.UK.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422425/financial-redress-maladministration-apr-15.pdf

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

DEFENCE

■ Apache AH-64 Helicopter

Mark Menzies:

[\[43478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reasons his Department has not negotiated a workshare component in its contract to buy Apache helicopters off-the-shelf from Boeing in the US.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 7 September 2016. The correct answer should have been:

Harriett Baldwin:

We are buying our new Apache AH-64E helicopters through a Foreign Military Sale with the United States Government. This approach delivers the best possible value for money for the UK taxpayer, allowing us to take advantage of established production lines and the resulting economies of scale, while ensuring we deliver a world-leading capability to our Armed Forces.

A number of UK companies have secured work on the global Apache supply chain, delivering products that will be used in our new helicopters and those being delivered to the US Army as well as other international customers. There will also be significant opportunities for UK companies to assist in the provision of support and training services for our new Apache helicopter fleet.

Separately, as per the announcement at Farnborough Airshow on 11 July 2016, Boeing are investing significantly in the UK creating more than 100 new jobs.

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ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS■ **Marine Environment**

Kerry McCarthy:

[44856]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will ensure that the UK continues to comply with the (a) Bathing Waters Directive and (b) Marine Strategy Framework Directive when the UK leaves the EU.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 12 September 2016. The correct answer should have been:

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

~~We are committed to creating a cleaner, healthier natural environment for the next generation and our 25 year plan for the environment is designed to fulfil this commitment.~~

In the 2015 Manifesto, we set the goal of being the first generation to leave the natural environment in England in a better state than we found it. We remain committed to this ambition.

Defra will be working with the Department for Exiting the EU on the UK's withdrawal and future relationship, liaising closely with other key departments. The Government will work with industry, environmental groups and the public to develop these new arrangements. The Government is committed to improving our environment and achieving the UK vision for our seas and oceans.

Until we leave the EU, EU law continues to apply and we will continue to comply with the requirements of the EU Bathing Water Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

DEFENCE

■ Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate Constabulary into the Strategic Leadership of the Royal Navy Police

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Mark Lancaster):
[\[HCWS147\]](#)

I wish to inform the House that the first report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) Inspection of the Royal Navy Police (RNP) has been laid before the House today.

The Armed Forces Act 2011 places a duty on HMIC to inspect and report to the Ministry of Defence on the independence and effectiveness of investigations carried out by each Service police force, and this is HMIC's first statutory inspection report on the RNP.

I consider this report to be a positive endorsement of the RNP providing assurance from an independent civilian authority that the RNP is well led overall. Six recommendations have been made and one area for improvement has been identified. The Royal Navy accepts the report's findings and work is already under way to address the recommendations and the area for improvement.

Copies of the report will be available in the Journal Office and Printed Paper Office.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

■ Report on the 23 June 2016 referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union

Spokesperson, Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission (Mr Gary Streeter):
[\[HCWS146\]](#)

The Electoral Commission has today published its report on the referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union (EU referendum), held on 23 June 2016. The report looks at the key issues that arose on the way to polling day, including the conduct of campaigners and the Electoral Commission's regulation of them, and provides data on the views of voters and the experience they had throughout this period. The report also points to a number of recommendations that would improve the administration, regulation, and delivery of future referendums.

Recognising its direct involvement in the management of the poll, the Commission has also enabled an independent report conducted by two academics which has been published today. The Commission has also today published three related reports respectively evaluating its public awareness campaign, international observers' scheme, and an independent report on the experience of registered campaigners. The Commission will publish further reports relating to the referendum, including a report on the analysis of campaigners' spending and

donations at the referendum and a report detailing the costs of the administration of the referendum in full, in 2017.

The evidence gathered by the Electoral Commission to inform its report shows that the referendum was delivered without any major issues. Its public opinion research with voters finds that they had a positive view of the EU referendum process, with 77% being very or fairly confident that the referendum was well-run. People were also satisfied with the process of registering to vote (87% said they were generally satisfied). People remain highly satisfied with the procedures for voting in the referendum, whether in-person at a polling station (97%), or by post (99%).

The Electoral Commission's report acknowledges that this success was due to the over 100,000 members of staff who were working in around 41,000 polling stations across the UK and Gibraltar on polling day. It recognises the Counting Officers and their staff, as well as the 11 Regional Counting Officers and the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland whose professionalism and diligence were critical components of the organisation of the referendum. Electoral Registration Officers are singled out for praise in the report for processing 2.1 million additional applications to register to vote in the weeks before the referendum, as well as electoral services staff who coped with a record high electorate of 46,500,001 and 72.2% voter turnout.

The Electoral Commission had a leading role in the referendum. Under the framework of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) the Commission had a number of specific statutory responsibilities and functions in relation to the delivery and regulation of the referendum. It designated the two lead campaigners and produced guidance for all campaigners, of which there was a total of 123 registered campaigners - 63 indicating they supported 'Remain' and 60 supporting the 'Leave' side. The discharge of these duties was in addition to its responsibility to promote public awareness of the referendum, the question put to the electorate, and how to vote in it.

The work for the EU referendum undertaken by the electoral community, the Electoral Commission, and campaigners was done at a time when important elections were taking place, under high levels of public scrutiny, and with uncertainty about the date of the referendum until four months before the poll. The report notes that careful management of the potential risks associated with the timing and profile of the poll was needed to successfully deliver the poll. Nevertheless, the Electoral Commission once again reiterates its recommendation that referendum legislation should be clear at least six months before it is required to be implemented or complied with.

The report also calls for the important changes which have been applied to the legal framework for recent referendums to be incorporated into PERA, which sets out the standard framework for referendums. This would ensure that they would apply for all future referendums, and would remove the need to draft completely new legislation on these aspects for each future poll. In addition, the Commission recommends that a generic Order for the conduct of referendums, which it has called for since 2004, should be introduced by the Government now. This would remove ambiguity over the detailed rules for the conduct of referendums each time one of these polls is called. To build on the successful approach taken in both the EU referendum and the 2014 referendum in Scotland, this legislation

should also require the designation of lead campaigners shortly before the referendum period, rather than during the first six weeks of this period, as currently set out in the legislation.

The Electoral Commission also suggests that Section 125 of PPERA should be significantly redrafted to clarify the nature and scope of the restriction on activities by governments and other publicly funded bodies during the referendum period. It should be clear which activities are restricted, and whether there are any specific exemptions; it should be clear when the restrictions apply; and it should be clear who is responsible for enforcing the restrictions, and what the penalties would be for any breach of the restrictions. The Commission is therefore calling on the UK Government to consult on options for redrafting Section 125 of PPERA, with a view to introducing amending legislation as soon as practicable, sufficiently ahead of any specific legislation for a future referendum.

One thing the Commission has not recommended, however, is any role for itself in regulating the 'truth' or the content of what campaigners say. The report sets out why it does not believe this would be an appropriate role for the Commission given the breadth of its other functions. Instead, it is for campaigners and the media to scrutinise each other's contentions and right that information is widely available for voters to do the same, but it is not clear that an independent body could, or should, be required to regulate the 'truth', which is likely to be highly contested.

While the Commission has been pleased that the UK Government has incorporated many of its recommendations at each recent referendum, and that overall the legislation worked well for this poll, it is not practical to use different pieces of legislation from previous referendums and PPERA in order to draft legislation for each new referendum. It is therefore the Electoral Commission's view that Parliament must now establish a clear standard legal framework for the conduct and regulation of future referendums.

Copies of the Commission's report have been placed in the library and it is also available on the Commission's website: www.electoralcommission.org.uk

TRANSPORT

■ HS2-Phase 2a consultations (West Midlands to Crewe)

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Andrew Jones):
[[HCWS143](#)]

HS2 will be the new backbone of our national rail network and help us build an economy that works for all. Good rail links bring our country closer together, making it easier for people to get on and driving economic growth. That is why the government is heavily investing in transport infrastructure, such as HS2, across the country. HS2 presents huge opportunities for UK business, and has the potential to increase the amount of freight transported by rail meaning fewer lorries on the roads, cutting congestion and carbon. The sooner we build HS2, the sooner we will see these benefits.

The Government remains committed to completing the full Phase Two "Y" network from Birmingham to Manchester on the Western Leg, and to Leeds, via the East Midlands and

Sheffield on the Eastern Leg. The decision to accelerate construction of part of the Phase Two route between the West Midlands and Crewe – known as Phase 2a – was taken in November 2015. This will mean that this section of the route becomes operational in 2027, so that some of the benefits of HS2 will be delivered six years earlier than originally planned.

Therefore, as part of our plans to prepare the HS2 Phase 2a (West Midlands to Crewe) hybrid Bill for introduction to Parliament next year, we have today launched the following consultations:

- The Working Draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report;
- The Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Report; and
- A Design Refinement consultation.

Alongside the launch of these consultations, we are also publishing the revised EIA and EqIA “Scope and Methodology Reports” (SMR), which set out how the assessments will be undertaken, and the associated consultation response analysis documents.

The launch of these consultations is an important step towards delivering Phase Two, and reinforces our commitment to continually trying to improve and refine the scheme. Importantly, we want to give those affected the opportunity to make their views known and provide further evidence to inform the Secretary of State’s final route decision.

Working draft Environmental Impact Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment Reports

HS2 Ltd has developed working draft EIA and EqIA reports for the Phase 2a scheme, on which there will be an eight week consultation. This will enable interested parties to comment on the current proposed design of the scheme, current environmental baseline, likely impacts and effects (where identified) and proposed mitigation measures.

The responses to these consultations will be considered as the design and assessment are developed and will help in the development of the formal EIA and EQIA Reports. The formal EIA Report will set out the likely significant environment effects of the Phase 2a scheme, and will be deposited alongside the Phase 2a hybrid Bill so it can be taken into account by Parliament before it decides whether or not to grant the powers to build the railway. The formal EqIA Report will help us fulfil our Public Sector Equality Duty and is expected to be published when the hybrid Bill is deposited. Further information on these consultations can be found at www.gov.uk/hs2

Design Refinement Consultation

We are also consulting separately on a number of refinements to the route developed since November 2015. This consultation will last eight weeks, and enable the Secretary of State to take into account the views of those potentially affected before taking a decision on the refinements. Further information on this consultation can be found at

www.gov.uk/hs2

Work on the design is continuing alongside these consultations which may lead to further changes being identified and decision taken. The full route will then be published when we deposit the hybrid Bill in 2017, at which point those affected will have an opportunity to

comment on the formal EIA Report. People specially and directly affected by the scheme will also have the opportunity to petition Parliament as part of the hybrid Bill process.

HS2 Ltd has today written to people living near the proposed route changes to inform them of the consultation and invite them to attend consultation information events in their local areas.

HS2 is a once in a generation opportunity to transform Britain's railways, and I look forward to our continuing engagement in order to make it a reality and ensure that we maximise every opportunity it has to offer.

■ Rail Freight

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Paul Maynard):
[\[HCWS144\]](#)

I am today publishing the Government's new Rail Freight Strategy, which has been developed in collaboration with Network Rail, the rail freight industry and its customers.

Rail freight makes an important contribution to our economic and environmental well-being, with benefits estimated at around £1.6 billion to the national economy every year. It generates around £1 billion from improved productivity, while around £0.6 billion is the value of the reductions in road congestion, carbon emissions and air pollutants.

Rail freight currently carries one in four of the containers coming into our ports, and has the potential to carry an even higher proportion. Each freight train removes the equivalent of up to 76 lorry journeys from our roads. Transporting freight by rail reduces carbon emissions by around three quarters compared to road, and also provides significant benefits through reduced local air pollution, road damage, traffic noise and road traffic accidents.

Since rail privatisation in the 1990s, the rail freight industry's market share of freight transport has risen from around 5% to around 12%. The industry has invested significantly on its own account, in rolling stock and terminals, in order to win new customers.

Government is also investing on a large scale in the rail network, including important enhancements worth nearly £240 million specifically identified by the rail freight industry as their priority.

This Rail Freight Strategy sets out our vision for how rail freight can continue to grow, and how the broader logistics sector and rail industry can collaborate and innovate to help relieve pressure on the road network. It looks at challenges facing the rail freight industry – the way in which network capacity is used, the potential for innovation, the skills challenge and public perceptions of rail freight – and identifies ways in which the Government and the industry can work together to address them.

A copy of the strategy has been placed in the library of both Houses and is also available on GOV.UK, together with two supporting technical reports.

Attachments:

1. Rail Freight Strategy [160913 - Rail freight strategy.pdf]

WALES**■ Wales Bill: Memorandum of Analysis of English Votes for English Laws in relation to Government amendments at Commons Report**

Secretary of State for Wales (Alun Cairns): [\[HCWS145\]](#)

I am pleased to announce the publication of analysis of English Votes for English Laws in relation to Government amendments to the Wales Bill at Commons Report.

The English Votes for English Laws process applies to public bills in the House of Commons. To support the process, the Government has agreed that it will provide information to assist the Speaker in considering whether to certify that Bill or any of its provisions for the purposes of English Votes for English Laws.

The memorandum provides an assessment of tabled Government amendments to the Wales Bill at Commons Report, for the purposes of English Votes for English Laws. The Department's assessment is the amendments do not change the territorial application of the Bill.

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

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Cold Weather Payments Scheme 2016/17**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Welfare Delivery (Caroline Nokes): [\[HCWS142\]](#)

I am pleased to announce that today I intend to lay regulations to amend the cold weather payment scheme. The changes detailed in these regulations will come into force on 1 November this year, in time for the beginning of the winter period.

The scheme makes cold weather payments to help vulnerable groups during cold periods. Each year the Department reviews the scheme with expert advice from the Met Office and, where necessary, makes changes to regulations to ensure that postcodes are linked to the most appropriate weather station for the purposes of the cold weather payment.

For the 2016/17 season the Met Office has recommended the replacement of one primary weather station and the introduction of an additional new station.

The current station at Skye, Lusa will be closed and have equipment removed by spring 2017. The Met Office has therefore recommended changing to an alternative site at Achnagart to protect the 2016/17 service from any potential risk of earlier disruption to the station at Skye, Lusa.

South Devon, particularly the EX and TQ postcodes, would be better represented by the newly installed station at Exeter Airport. The Met Office has recommended including this station as an additional site in the network taking some of the postcodes currently served by

Dunkeswell and North Wyke. The Exeter Airport site better represents the postcodes along and near the east facing coastline around east Devon, Exeter and parts of Torbay. The more inland and higher altitude sites at Dunkeswell and North Wyke will continue to serve the more inland communities.

The regulations also make other minor changes to the alternative weather stations. This will ensure that the weather station to postcode links are as representative as possible.

The changes to the postcode to weather station links resulted from the Department's annual review of the cold weather payments scheme. The review drew on expert advice from the Met Office and took account of representations from benefit claimants and Members of Parliament.

I will be writing to each Member who made representations about the administration of the scheme last winter to make them aware of the advice from the Met Office.

Cold weather payments are separate from, and in addition to, winter fuel payments.

For winter 2016/17 the cold weather payment rate will continue to be £25 for each seven day period of very cold weather.

The regulations are being amended so that, in future, revisions can be made without the need for new legislation each time weather station to postcode links change. This will not materially impact on how the scheme operates in practice.

The regulations are also being amended to ensure that where a primary station is unable to provide temperature information or the Met Office is unable to produce a forecast at a primary station, there are adequate procedures for the necessary temperature information or forecast to be obtained from another weather station.