



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 14 July 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:34 P.M., 14 July 2016). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

■ Adult Education

Jim McMahon: [\[42195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many adult learners paid for courses in each year since 2011.

Nick Boles:

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is only able to provide information on overall funding made available for adult learning provision. It does not hold information on learners who pay for provision.

■ Digital Technology: EU Internal Trade

Chi Onwurah: [\[42455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many full-time equivalent staff of his Department are working on the Digital Single Market.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

There are a number of departments across Whitehall who work on aspects of the Digital Single Market (DSM) including the Department for Culture Media and Sport, the Home Office and HM Treasury. And, within the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) there are a number of policy areas that are involved directly or indirectly in aspects of the Digital Single Market including the Intellectual Property Office, Competition and Consumer Policy and Advanced Manufacturing and Services.

BIS leads on behalf of Government and coordinates activity across those departments with an interest. There is a core team of five FTEs who act as the hub for all of this work.

■ Employment: Young People

Tom Brake: [\[41958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what assessment the Government has made of the potential effect of the outcome of the EU referendum on (a) education and training opportunities for and (b) future employment prospects of 16 to 20 year olds.

Nick Boles:

The result of the EU referendum has raised many questions, for all our stakeholders and citizens. However, nothing changes in the immediate term. We will continue taking forward the important legislation that we set before Parliament in the Queen's Speech, including the Higher Education and Research Bill. We will also continue with our further education reform programme.

On Friday 8 July we published the Post-16 Skills Plan. This is our long-term, ambitious framework to support young people and adults to secure a lifetime of sustained skilled employment and meet the needs of rapidly changing economy by putting employers in the lead. The reforms set out in the Skills Plan, which are based on the findings an independent expert panel chaired by Lord Sainsbury, are just as critical following the EU referendum result.

Our priority will be to work with both the further education and higher education sectors to fully understand the impact of the referendum and help shape our approach for higher and further education in the coming months. We will also continue to focus on high quality apprenticeships and remain committed to 3m starts by 2020.

The employment prospects for our young people are good - the labour market for young people is the strongest it has been for almost 10 years with the employment rate for the 4 million 16-24s not in full-time education being 74.3%.

■ Further Education: Greater Manchester

Jim McMahon:

[\[42192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what savings to the public purse he expects to be made as a result of the post-16 education and training area review in Greater Manchester.

Nick Boles:

Area reviews are about ensuring post 16 institutions are in the best state possible to meet the economic and educational needs of their areas and financially resilient for the long term. Colleges will be able to invest any savings created through implementation of area review recommendations in improved front line services, including better delivery of apprenticeships and higher level skills. This is expected to be the position in Greater Manchester, which is due to conclude shortly.

■ Minimum Wage: Prosecutions

James Heappey:

[\[41917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if his Department will undertake an assessment of the potential effect on business of introducing a minimum wage of £17.50 per hour.

Sajid Javid:

Increasing the National Living Wage (NLW) for workers aged 25 and over to £17.50 in 2020 would represent an increase of 143% on the current NLW (£7.20) and of 94% on the current forecasted NLW of £9.00 by 2020.

Based on an underlying assumption that the wage distribution from April 2015 grows in line with the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) average earnings forecast made in March 2016, we estimate that in 2020, a NLW of £17.50 would be equivalent to around 116% of the projected median wage. Around 15 million employees would be covered by such an NLW, and labour costs would be around £150 billion higher in 2020 compared to a counterfactual of forecast average earnings growth (in nominal terms)

due to the direct effects of the NLW. This is equivalent to an increase in total compensation of employees of almost 15%.

We also estimate that there would be somewhere close to 1.75 million job losses and somewhere between 65,000 and 119,000 business deaths. There would also most likely be a substantial reduction in hours worked, increased labour costs and increased prices, and obvious disincentives to starting new businesses.

This assessment is based on BIS analysis of provisional data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2015 and is subject to significant uncertainty given that a National Living Wage of £17.50 is considerably higher than any previous NMW increase or any minimum wage internationally. Our cost estimates do not include estimates of any ripple effects higher up the wage distribution if employers were to restore wage differentials above the NLW.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Office: Temporary Employment

Chi Onwurah:

[42457]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many contract staff are employed in his Department; and what the total wage bill (a) is in 2016-17 and (b) was in 2015-16 for such staff.

Matthew Hancock:

The number of Cabinet Office non payroll staff (excluding contractors) as of May 2016, is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/payroll-costs-and-non-consolidated-pay-data>

The overall total spend on agency and temporary staff in FY 2015/16 is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-annual-report-and-accounts-2015-to-2016>

■ Lung Diseases: Sheffield

Gill Furniss:

[42049]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people in (a) Sheffield and (b) Sheffield City Region have been diagnosed with (i) lung cancer, (ii) chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, (iii) mesothelioma and (iv) other lung conditions in each year since 2010.

Gill Furniss:

[42050]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people in (a) Sheffield and (b) Sheffield City Region have died from (i) lung cancer, (ii) chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, (iii) mesothelioma and (iv) other lung conditions in each year since 2010.

Mr Rob Wilson:

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

Attachments:

1. Excel Attachment for Member - Lung Cancer Deaths [PQ 42049_42050_Final .xlsx]
2. UKSA Letter to Member - Lung Cancer Deaths [UKSA response to PQ42049and42050 .pdf]

TREASURY**■ Income Tax**

Roger Mullin: [\[42310\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury of 27 June 2016, Official Report, column 72, how many (a) income tax post-transaction valuation checks and (b) PAYE health checks were made in 2015-16; and what proportion of each of those checks were made by SMEs.

Mr David Gauke:

For 2015-16 HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) dealt with a) 620 income tax post-transaction checks and b) 39 PAYE health checks.

HMRC does not retain directly accessible data that allows identification of what proportion of each of these checks were made by small and medium enterprises.

■ Mesothelioma: Research

Rachel Reeves: [\[42064\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 2.15 of the Budget 2016, on funding for mesothelioma research, who in his Department is responsible for the decision to award that funding to four institutions centred around Imperial College.

Rachel Reeves: [\[42065\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 2.15 of the Budget 2016, on funding for mesothelioma research, what criteria his Department used to make its decision on awarding that funding to four institutions centred around Imperial College.

Rachel Reeves: [\[42066\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 2.15 of the Budget 2016, on funding for mesothelioma research, what consultation his Department conducted with stakeholders before the decision was taken to award that funding to four institutions centred around Imperial College.

Rachel Reeves: [\[42067\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 2.15 of the Budget 2016, on funding for mesothelioma research, if he will publish all the documents his Department hold related to the decision to award that funding to four institutions centred around Imperial College.

Greg Hands:

The award of £5 million for Mesothelioma to establish a National Centre for Mesothelioma Research was in response to an application for charitable funds in order to urgently address the anticipated imminent high mortality rate amongst Royal Navy Veterans and dockyard workers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has made a series of Banking Fines announcements since October 2012. Throughout all of these his intention has always been that the fines would be allocated to good causes including Military and Emergency Services charities and related good causes that represent the 'best of values'. This award was committed by the Chancellor in accordance with his intent for the use of LIBOR fines articulated above.

The National Mesothelioma Centre, to which the funds have been committed, will be a collaboration between four leading institutions which have a major interest in the treatment of mesothelioma: the National Heart and Lung Institute (NHLI) at Imperial College, the Royal Brompton Hospital, the Institute of Cancer Research (ICR), and the Royal Marsden Hospital. Scientists at NHLI and ICR have considerable expertise in the discovery of the genetic mutations which cause cancer, including mesothelioma, and in particular in the identification of 'driver' mutations which can be potential targets for new treatments. ICR has considerable experience of pulling through novel therapies into clinical practice. Their NHS partner hospitals - Royal Brompton and Royal Marsden Hospitals as national specialist centres have mesothelioma patients referred to them from across the UK. This collaboration will form the hub of the Centre whose spokes will engage all other hospitals in the UK to which mesotheliomas are referred and treated. This will thus form the basis of a network to enable rapid evaluation of potential new treatments. The funds therefore have been committed to establish a National Centre for Mesothelioma research, rather than to just 4 specific hospitals/research centres.

Professor Sir Anthony Newman Taylor, the driving force behind the application, has, as per his original intention stated in his funding application, engaged across the Mesothelioma community, with a view to forming a steering group for the centre. Those he has contacted include: the British Lung Foundation, who have offered to fund raise with the centre for further resources for mesothelioma research; Ms Liz Darlison, of Mesothelioma UK; the June Hancock Mesothelioma Research Fund; and the Asbestos Victims Support Groups Forum; Dr Robert Rintoul from Cambridge University; Prof Anne Willis and Marion Macfarlane and Dr John Le Quesne from Leicester University; and Prof Luciano Mutti from Manchester University. They have all expressed their support for the intention that these funds be used as a platform to foster collaborative research into an effective treatment for mesothelioma across the UK.

The grant to the National Mesothelioma Centre is subject to standard grant terms and conditions including a reporting requirement to ensure that the funds are used as intended. It is not policy to publish all documentation relating to LIBOR awards, due to the large number of applications and associated correspondence.

■ Science: Finance

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[42201\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to replace any reductions in private investment and access to EU research grants occurring as a result of the vote to leave the EU by increasing the science budget.

Greg Hands:

Horizon 2020 is the main EU Research and Innovation programme. The European Commission made the following statement on 4 July 2016:

“The Statement of 29 June of the Heads of State or Government of 27 Member States, as well as the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission, confirms that until the UK leaves the EU, EU law continues to apply to and within the UK, both when it comes to rights and obligations. This includes the eligibility of UK legal entities to participate and receive funding in Horizon 2020 actions.”

■ Tax Collection: Debts Written Off

Stuart C. McDonald:

[\[42289\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department made of the value of debts written off during HM Revenue and Customs' switch from the Business Review of the Collection Service to the Real Time Information system.

Mr David Gauke:

The transition from the Business Review of the Collection Service, more commonly known as BROCS, to the Real Time Information System did not cause the write off of debt.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Council Housing: Sales

Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:

[\[42409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what exemptions there will be from the Government's proposed enforced sale of high-value council homes.

Brandon Lewis:

Through regulations, government has the power to exclude categories of housing when calculating local authority's payment in respect of their higher value vacant housing. During the passage of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, government committed to exclude housing that is in a National Park or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and confirmed that it would consider other suggestions that had been made during the passage of the legislation and by stakeholders for excluding other categories of housing.

Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:

[\[42448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what criteria his Department plans to use in determining which council houses will be deemed to be higher

value for the purposes of implementing the provisions of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 relating to the sale of such houses.

Brandon Lewis:

Under the Housing and Planning Act, local authorities have a duty to consider selling vacant higher value housing and must, if the Secretary of State has made a determination under the Act, make a payment to government in respect of their higher value vacant housing. The definition of 'higher value housing' will be set out in regulations made under section 69(8) to (10) of the Act, and will be subject to the affirmative resolution procedure.

■ **Housing: Construction**

Tim Farron:

[\[42445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that suitable brownfield sites are prioritised for development over greenbelt sites under the proposed Housing Delivery Test.

Brandon Lewis:

We are still considering responses to the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, including on the housing delivery test.

The Government has put in place the strongest protections for the Green Belt. The Framework is clear that inappropriate development will not be allowed unless there are very special circumstances, and that Green Belt boundaries should be adjusted only in exceptional circumstances, through the Local Plan process. The Framework also encourages development of brownfield land, and we have undertaken to ensure that 90 per cent of brownfield land suitable for housing will have planning permissions for new homes in place by the end of this Parliament.

■ **Housing: Whalley**

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[42426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if his Department will take steps to mitigate the environmental and congestion concerns of residents arising from the building of new houses in Whalley.

Brandon Lewis:

Local authorities and their communities are best placed to decide, through their Local and Neighbourhood Plans, which land is most suitable for development and what infrastructure is needed to support it. The National Planning Policy Framework, which must be taken into account in plan-making and is a material consideration in individual planning decisions, makes it clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It:

- states that Green Belt should be given the highest protection and its boundaries only adjusted in exceptional circumstances through the Local Plan process;

- requires local authorities to support a pattern of development that, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable
- enables local communities to identify for special protection green or open areas of particular importance to them as Local Green Space;
- is clear that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk.

Individual decisions are made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

■ London City Airport: Planning Permission

Jim Fitzpatrick:

[\[42444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, when he expects a decision to be taken on London City Airport's planning application.

Brandon Lewis:

The published target date for issuing the decision is on or before 28 September. My Department does of course attempt to reach planning decisions in advance of target dates when this is practical.

■ Members: Correspondence

Rob Marris:

[\[42281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, when he plans to respond to the letter to his Department from the hon. Member for Wolverhampton South West of 5 May 2016 on neighbourhood plans, reference ZA3476.

Brandon Lewis:

I replied to the hon. Member on 11 July 2016.

■ Right to Buy Scheme: Fraud

Sir Gerald Howarth:

[\[42350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether there has been any evidence of fraud relating to the Right to Buy scheme; and what steps the Government has taken to prevent such fraud.

Sir Gerald Howarth:

[\[42355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what resources the Government has allocated to anti-fraud measures relating to the Right to Buy scheme; and how that allocation compares to measures aimed at preventing or detecting benefit fraud.

Sir Gerald Howarth:

[\[42356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps (a) local authorities, (b) housing associations, (c) his Department and (d) the National Audit Office have taken to investigate the extent of fraud relating to the Right to Buy scheme.

Brandon Lewis:

This Government takes fraud extremely seriously. The Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 increased the deterrent to tenants considering cheating the system, ensuring those who do cheat are detected more easily and punished more severely, and encourages social landlords to take a more proactive approach to tackling tenancy fraud.

We also provided £19 million funding to help councils tackle tenancy fraud as part of over £35 million government funding to tackle fraud across local government.

We have recently set up a Right to Buy Working Group with representative of housing associations, local authorities and lenders to identify additional safeguards to curb fraud when the Voluntary Right to Buy scheme is rolled out to 1.3 million housing association tenants. Work is underway developing the detailed design of the scheme in collaboration with the housing association sector, specifically looking at how fraud and opportunistic practice prevention measures can, as far as possible, be designed into the sales process.

■ Right to Buy Scheme: Social Security Benefits

Sir Gerald Howarth: [\[42357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many tenants who receive social security benefits have been granted the Right to Buy.

Sir Gerald Howarth: [\[42358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many tenants who receive social security benefits have paid cash for properties sold under the Right to Buy scheme to date.

Brandon Lewis:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ Social Rented Housing: Rents

Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods: [\[42449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether his Department plans to apply the pay to stay provisions of the House and Planning Act 2016 in all areas regardless of the levels of market and social rents.

Brandon Lewis:

My officials are considering how the policy should apply to properties where market and social rents are close and the cost of operating the policy may be greater than the additional rent collected. We will be setting out the approach in detail in the pay to stay regulations and guidance will be provided to local authorities to support them through the implementation of the policy.

■ Tenancy Agreements

Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:

[\[42408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, which tenants will be exempt from the Government's proposed phasing out of lifetime tenancies.

Brandon Lewis:

The provisions restricting the use of lifetime tenancies are intended to ensure we get the best use out of our social housing stock - ensuring that social housing is focussed on those who need it the most for as long as they need it. This is essential with 1.24 million households on council waiting lists. The changes will apply to new tenants, but will not apply to existing lifetime tenants who remain in their own home.

If tenants are required to move home by their landlord, for example to allow demolition and regeneration work to take place, they will be granted a tenancy with no less security in their new home.

Where existing lifetime tenants seek to transfer, local authorities will retain a discretion – in limited circumstances – to offer the tenant a further lifetime tenancy in their new home. We will set out the circumstances in which local authorities may exercise this discretion in regulations. We expect these will include where tenants downsize into a smaller home, move for work or to escape violence.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Cabinet Office EU Unit

Chi Onwurah:

[\[42454\]](#)

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

Mr Edward Vaizey:

A new Europe unit is being set up in Whitehall, bringing together officials and policy expertise from across government. This unit will be led by and staffed by the best and brightest from across the civil service, including DCMS.

■ Mobile Phones: Liverpool City Region

Luciana Berger:

[\[42417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he has taken to improve mobile telephone coverage in the Liverpool City Region.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Improving mobile coverage remains a priority for the Government, and our landmark agreement in December 2014 with the four mobile network operators (MNOs) for each to provide voice and SMS text coverage to at least 90% of the UK landmass by 2017 will significantly improve coverage in the UK, including the Liverpool City Region. The additional licence obligation on Telefonica, which the other MNOs have publicly stated

they will match, will deliver significant improvements in 4G coverage - covering 98% of UK premises by the end of 2017.

In support of this work, the Government is also reforming mobile planning laws (in England only) and the Electronic Communications Code to make it cheaper and quicker for industry to invest and deliver coverage improvements.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces: Housing

Tim Farron: [\[42389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many service family accommodation homes have not met the Decent Homes standard in each of the last five years,

Mark Lancaster:

Data on Service Family Accommodation (SFA) houses that did not meet the decent homes standard in each of the last five years is not held as the Ministry of Defence (MOD) only started assessing houses against this standard in April 2016.

As of 12 July 91.6% of SFA houses met or exceeded the decent homes standard.

The information on the historical condition of SFA demonstrated a steady increase in condition against the 'Standard for Condition' metrics. Under this system 96% of SFA was at the top two standards for condition which broadly equated to the decent homes standard.

Any family currently living in a property that does not meet the decent homes standard has the option to move, but will not be forced to move. The MOD does not allocate properties below the decent homes standard to families.

■ HMS Queen Elizabeth

Philip Davies: [\[41981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) initial estimate and (b) actual cost was for the HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Mr Philip Dunne:

As reported in successive Major Projects Reports, the original approved cost of the Queen Elizabeth Class (QEC) Aircraft Carrier programme was £3.9 billion, including the capitalised costs of the Assessment and Demonstration Phases. The approvals and cost management have been based on the QEC Class for a two-ship programme, and it is therefore not practicable to apportion costs to the individual Aircraft Carriers.

The current approved cost of the QEC Aircraft Carrier programme is £6.2 billion, as announced by my right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State for Defence the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) on 6 November 2013 (Official Report, column 251-254). Whilst there are cost pressures, and final costs cannot be agreed until the programme finishes around 2019. The MOD continues to work closely with the

Aircraft Carrier Alliance to drive the programme to remain within the current approved cost.

Attachments:

1. Aircraft Carriers and UK Shipbuilding [Hansard Extract 6 November 2013.docx]

■ **Iraq: Military Aid**

Jim Shannon: [\[42120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what support his Department is giving to women soldiers in Iraq through (a) training and (b) provision of body armour.

Penny Mordaunt:

The UK has trained female soldiers from the Iraqi Security Forces in infantry skills, combat first aid and explosive hazard awareness as part of the wider Coalition programme to build security force capacity in Iraq. As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence announced to the House on 2 September 2014 (Column 16WS), the UK has also gifted non-lethal equipment to the Peshmerga including enhanced combat body armour suitable for both men and women.

Attachments:

1. Operations in Iraq (Update) [Hansard Extract 2 September 2014 , (Col 16WS).docx]

■ **Middle East: Military Intervention**

Tim Farron: [\[42392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Brimstone missiles have been fired by RAF warplanes in (a) Iraq and (b) Syria since the UK joined the coalition fighting against Daesh in those countries.

Penny Mordaunt:

The following number of Brimstone missiles have been released by RAF aircraft engaged on Operation SHADER up to and including 11 Jul 2016 since the start of operations:

MUNITION	IRAQ	SYRIA
Brimstone	175	19

■ **Ministry of Defence: Maps**

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[42313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the estimated value is of maps held by his Department.

Mark Lancaster:

The Department has not estimated the value of its maps. They are increasingly held in digital form, in many cases issued and used digitally, and only printed as required. The accounting value of our holdings is rated as 'zero' as they have no realisable financial

value due to copyright and licensing constraints. The value to Defence of the material held in the databases is impossible to quantify.

EDUCATION

■ Academies: Collective Worship

Stephen Timms: [\[42077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many academies applied for an exemption from providing a broadly Christian daily act of collective worship in each year since 2010; and how many of those schools were defined as non-faith.

Edward Timpson:

[Holding answer 11 July 2016]: 13 open academies have applied for an exemption from providing a broadly Christian act of collective worship since April 2012 when the Education Funding Agency was established. All of the applicants were non-faith schools as only non-faith schools can apply for an exemption.

FINANCIAL YEAR	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Open academies who have applied for an exemption from providing a broadly Christian act of collective worship	0	1	10	2

■ Collective Spirit Free School

Jim McMahon: [\[42159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what improvement plan is in place for the Collective Spirit Free School in Oldham.

Edward Timpson:

Underperformance at any school is unacceptable. The Regional Schools Commissioner, Vicky Beer, has requested an action plan from the trust and will be working with them to identify appropriate and sustained improvements.

If the trust's plans fail to convince the department that they are able to make the necessary improvements, we will not hesitate to consider more formal intervention.

Jim McMahon: [\[42166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what (a) funding, (b) land, (c) property and (d) other investment her Department has provided to the Collective Spirit Free School in Oldham.

Edward Timpson:

As with all free schools, Collective Spirit received a project development grant before the school was open and a post-opening grant after the school had opened. The details of

these grants are published on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revenue-expenditure-for-free-schools>

Since the school opened in 2013, the revenue funding of the school has been on a per-pupil basis equivalent to other schools in the local authority area.

We are currently in the process of confirming both the site acquisition and construction costs for this school. Costs will be published in due course on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-funding-for-open-free-schools>

■ Free Schools

Jess Phillips:

[42152]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many free schools offer nursery provision that delivers 15 hours free childcare.

Edward Timpson:

Local authorities receive funding for early years places through the Dedicated Schools Grant and are responsible for deciding how best to distribute this funding. They are required to fund all early years providers, including free schools with nursery provision, who meet the quality requirements set out in statutory guidance. The department does not keep a central list of the early years providers that are funded by local authorities.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

■ Electricity Generation: Scotland

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

[905868]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, when the application for state aid clearance for the remote Scottish islands will be submitted to the European Commission.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government will publish plans for the next Contract for Difference Allocation Round for less established technologies – planned for the end of 2016 – as soon as possible.

Following this we will work to deliver the round, including submission of any necessary notification to the European Commission.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture: Digital Technology

Rachel Reeves:

[42285]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress her Department has made on supporting access to mobile digital technology for farmers.

Rory Stewart:

Improving mobile connectivity across the country is a key priority for the Government. Defra works closely with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on this,

with a key focus on rural and hard to reach areas. Defra Ministers are directly involved through meetings with DCMS Ministers and the Digital Implementation Taskforce.

4G mobile rollout in the UK has been one of the fastest in Europe; 90% of premises now have 4G coverage from at least one operator. Two legally binding licence obligations will help deliver improved mobile coverage across the UK. Telefonica will provide indoor 4G coverage to 98% of UK premises by the end of 2017. This complements the obligation on each of the UK's four mobile network operators to provide voice and text coverage to at least 90% of UK landmass, also by the end of 2017.

To facilitate rollout, the Government is reforming the Electronic Communications Code to make it cheaper for the industry to provide coverage and is introducing reforms to the planning regime to allow, amongst other things, taller masts and to enable upgrades of communications infrastructure.

■ Agriculture: Migrant Workers

Rachael Maskell: [\[42286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the effect of the outcome of the EU referendum on future levels of migrant labour from other EU countries in the farming industry.

George Eustice:

Workers from other EU countries are an important and valued part of our workforce. Over the next two years whilst we negotiate a new relationship with the EU, nothing changes.

This will be one of the issues that will have to be resolved as part of our exit negotiation and future relationship with the EU.

■ Agriculture: South Wales

Chris Elmore: [\[42320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department has taken to support agriculture in South Wales since May 2015.

George Eustice:

Agricultural policy is devolved. Support for agriculture in South Wales is the responsibility of the Welsh Government.

■ Agriculture: Subsidies

David Simpson: [\[42132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with the Rural Payments Agency to resolve the backlog of 2015 Basic Payment Scheme payments.

George Eustice:

I have regular discussions with the Rural Payments Agency on the progress of Basic Payment Scheme payments.

As of 3 July 86,760 (99.6%) farmers have received a payment on their 2015 BPS claim. The Rural Payments Agency continues to focus on making top up payments to those farmers who have already received a bridging payment.

Tim Farron:[\[42391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her policy is on compensation for farmers of the loss of CAP payments after the UK has withdrawn from the EU.

George Eustice:

Decisions on the future of agricultural support will be taken once the new Government is in place. The Government will work with industry and the public to develop the new arrangements.

■ Air Pollution**Rachael Maskell:**[\[42282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she plans to bring forward legislative proposals to improve air quality.

Rory Stewart:

The national air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide, published in December last year, set out a range of measures that we are implementing to improve air quality. In the plan the Government announced that we will be mandating the introduction of Clean Air Zones in five key cities (Birmingham, Derby, Leeds, Nottingham and Southampton). We will be consulting later this year on a Clean Air Zone framework, to provide consistency and certainty, together with draft secondary legislation to mandate the implementation of Clean Air Zones.

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

■ Air Pollution: Greater London**Neil Coyle:**[\[42204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to work with the Mayor of London to improve air quality in London.

Rory Stewart:

The National Air Quality Plan for nitrogen dioxide, published in December last year, sets out a comprehensive approach for meeting the air quality challenges by implementing a new programme of Clean Air Zones, along with the Ultra-Low Emission Zone in London. The Plan combines targeted local and national measures, forming part of a wider

approach that exploits new and clean technologies, such as electric and ultra-low emission vehicles.

The Government has committed over £2 billion since 2011 to increase the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles, support green transport initiatives and support local authorities to take action.

The Mayor is responsible for air quality standards in London. The Mayor provides the framework and guidance which London boroughs use to review and improve air quality within their areas. The new Mayor recently set out his plans to improve air quality in London.

■ Ash Dieback Disease

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[42034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much her Department has spent on preventing the spread of ash dieback disease since that disease was first detected in the UK; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

We are monitoring and managing ash dieback and have invested over £4 million into surveillance and research.

Our surveillance programme involving Government, industry, conservation groups and the public, enables us to monitor the disease and to target resources effectively.

Investing in research on the development of tolerant trees is one of our key commitments in response to the disease. Ash trees have a very wide genetic diversity and have the potential for great levels of resistance compared to other tree species that have been affected by diseases.

The Government-funded research and screening trial of 155,000 ash saplings is unprecedented in its scope. It has now identified native ash trees that show tolerance to ash dieback, raising the possibility of using selective breeding to develop strains of trees that are tolerant to the disease.

■ Beach Huts: Christchurch

Mr Christopher Chope:

[\[42458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the application by Christchurch Borough Council to Natural England for SSSI consent for the development of beach huts at Highcliffe, Christchurch was withdrawn; and what costs have been incurred by Natural England in connection with that application.

Rory Stewart:

The application for SSSI consent was withdrawn on 6 July. At that point, the cost to Natural England was for staff costs only.

■ Birds of Prey: Conservation

Andy Slaughter:

[\[42443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department has taken to protect birds of prey.

Rory Stewart:

All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which provides a powerful framework for the conservation of wild birds, their eggs, nests and habitats. The Government is committed to ensuring the protection afforded to wild birds of prey is effectively enforced. There are strong penalties for offenders, including imprisonment.

Raptor persecution is one of six national wildlife crime priorities and is subject to a prevention, intelligence and enforcement plan.

The National Wildlife Crime Unit, which is part funded by Defra, monitors and gathers intelligence on illegal activities affecting birds of prey and provides assistance to police forces when required.

■ Dairy Farming: Northern Ireland

Jim Shannon:

[\[42197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions she has had with her Northern Ireland counterparts on assistance for dairy farmers in Northern Ireland; and what assistance her Department is giving such farmers.

George Eustice:

The Secretary of State is writing to the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland to outline the steps we are taking to help our hard-pressed dairy farmers. These include: securing a £26.2 million aid package from the European Commission, introducing a new system of extended tax averaging, and working with the Treasury to assess whether improved access to risk management tools can contribute to the resilience of the dairy industry.

I regularly meet representatives of the dairy industry from across the UK, including from Northern Ireland, to discuss issues of mutual interest and Defra officials maintain regular contact with their counterparts in the devolved administrations on a range of dairy issues.

■ Fisheries: Quotas

Rachael Maskell:

[\[42283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she plans to take steps to rebalance inland water quotas for smaller locally-based fishing communities.

George Eustice:

The Government regularly reviews its quota allocation policy. In recent years, it has permanently realigned unused quota from Producer Organisations to the small-scale

fleet and allocated the first 100 tonnes, plus 10% of any remaining uplift in quota resulting from the introduction of the Landing Obligation, to the small-scale fleet.

These changes equate to over 1500 tonnes, or an additional £3 million worth of fish, for the small-scale fleet in 2016.

■ Flood Control: Ribble Valley

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[42428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate she has made of the cost of implementing long-term flood defence systems in areas vulnerable to flooding in Ribble Valley.

Rory Stewart:

A scheme to better protect the Preston and South Ribble area from fluvial and tidal flood risk is at an estimated cost of £32 million, with an allocation of £8 million Flood Defence Grant in Aid within the current six year capital investment programme. The difference is being sought through partnership contributions and through Flood Defence Grant in Aid allocations beyond the current six year capital investment programme.

A scheme to protect Clitheroe from flooding from Mearley Brook would cost £4.8 million. This scheme is not in the six year investment programme and is subject to an ongoing bid for funding.

A future scheme to protect Whalley from flooding from the River Calder would cost approximately £1.4 million. This scheme is not in the six year investment programme and the Environment Agency is currently evaluating the scheme prior to any funding bid.

Lancashire County Council is currently bidding for £2 million in Grant in Aid to address surface water flooding in Whalley and Billington.

Currently there is a review of flood risk in the Lower Calder catchment which will develop options and estimated costs to address the main river flooding. The Environment Agency aims to report at the end of the year. In 2017, a review of flood risk in Ribchester will commence, which will include an evaluation of future costs.

■ Mersey Forest

Luciana Berger:

[\[42418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her policy is on supporting Mersey Forest in its aim to increase woodland cover to 20 per cent of the Mersey Forest area.

Rory Stewart:

We certainly support this partnership of local authorities with organisations in the Defra Group, and its aim to increase woodland cover to 20 per cent of the Mersey Forest area. This supports our national commitment to plant 11 million more trees by the end of this Parliament and to continue to expand woodland cover in England.

The Mersey Forest partnership has transformed the Mersey area since it was set up in 1991. It has planted 9 million trees and doubled woodland cover in the area, providing great places for local people to enjoy as well as a wide range of economic and environmental benefits. The Mersey Forest is one of eight Community Forests in England that together deliver urban, economic and social regeneration, helping to transform areas that have seen significant industrial restructuring, by reclaiming brownfield land to create high-quality environments for millions of people. This wider network of Community Forests has planted over 10,000 hectares of new woodland and brought more than 27,000 hectares of existing woodland into management.

Whilst it is for the constituent local authorities to agree their ongoing commitment, Defra Group organisations will continue to support Mersey Forest in its ambition to increase woodland cover to 20 per cent.

■ Natura 2000

Caroline Lucas:

[\[42311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make it her policy that the Natura 2000 network of protected conservation areas in the UK will (a) continue to have the same level or stronger protection than they now have under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives and (b) remain part of the Emerald Network under the Bern Convention regardless of the outcome of the UK's negotiations to leave the EU.

Rory Stewart:

Until we leave the EU, current arrangements for our environment remain in place.

Defra will continue to ensure the right policies are in place for a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone.

The Government will wish to consider the Impacts of the decision to leave the EU, including for the UK's Natura 2000 and other protected sites, We have a manifesto commitment to produce a 25 Year Plan for the Environment. We all now have an opportunity to consider our long-term vision for the environment following the referendum vote.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Colombia: Peace Negotiations

Christian Matheson:

[\[42331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will take steps to ensure that there is a formal mechanism for Colombian civil society involvement in the decision-making process for allocation of the EU Trust Fund for the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia.

Mr Hugo Swire:

The EU Trust Fund will become established following formal signature of a peace agreement between the Government of Colombia and the FARC (Revolutionary Armed

Forces of Colombia). Civil society can play a key role in successful implementation of a Colombian peace deal. In discussions with the EU institutions, the UK has repeatedly encouraged inclusion of civil society organisations in the EU Trust Fund draft strategy, and continues to promote civil society involvement in delivering the Trust Fund priorities once the fund is operational. Through meetings in Bogota, the EU has set in place a consultation mechanism for civil society organisations. The first formal consultation with NGOs took place on 28 June.

HEALTH

■ Accident and Emergency Departments

Danny Kinahan:

[42250]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average waiting time in accident and emergency departments was in each of the last three years.

Ben Gummer:

The NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) measure accident and emergency (A&E) waiting times in England from arrival to assessment, treatment and departure. A table showing the mean and median waiting times for 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 is below. Data for 2015-16 is provisional and may be subject to in-year changes.

Mean and median ¹ time to assessment ², treatment ³ and departure ⁴ in all A&E departments in England, 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16

Year	DURATION TO ASSESSMENT ²		DURATION TO TREATMENT ³		DURATION TO DEPARTURE ⁴	
	Mean ¹ (minutes)	Median ¹ (minutes)	Mean ¹ (minutes)	Median ¹ (minutes)	Mean ¹ (minutes)	Median ¹ (minutes)
2013-14	38.2	9	70.2	51	144.6	129
2014-15	43.2	10	76.1	54	153.8	134
2015-16 ⁵ (provisional)	35.6	11	77.3	56	160.2	139

Source : Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Notes :

Activity in English National Health Service Hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector.

¹ Mean and Median: The mean (average) and median (middle in ranking when all values are sorted in order) duration in minutes to assessment, treatment or duration.

² Duration to assessment: This is the total amount of time in minutes between the patients' arrival and their initial assessment in the A&E department. This is calculated as the difference in time from arrival at A&E to the time when the patient is initially assessed.

³ Duration to treatment: This is the total amount of time in minutes between the patients' arrival and the start of their treatment. This is calculated as the difference in time from arrival at A&E to the time when the patient began treatment.

⁴ Duration to departure: This is total amount of time spent in minutes in an A&E department. This is calculated as the difference in time from arrival at A&E to the time when the patient is discharged from A&E care. This includes being admitted to hospital, dying in the department, discharged with no follow up or discharged and referred to another specialist department.

⁵ 2015-16 is provisional data and may be incomplete or contain errors for which no adjustments have yet been made.

■ Calderstones Hospital

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[42429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate his Department has made of the potential loss of jobs which would arise from closure of the Calderstones hospital.

Ben Gummer:

No estimate has been made. These are matters for the local National Health Service.

■ Cancer

Anna Turley:

[\[42411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people were diagnosed with cancer as a result of exposure to acetaldehyde in the (a) North East and (b) UK in the latest period for which figures are available.

Jane Ellison:

Information concerning the number of people diagnosed with cancer as a result of exposure to acetaldehyde is not available.

■ Health Services

Luciana Berger:

[\[42420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions Ministers of his Department have had with their counterparts in other departments on the NHS England Five Year Forward View since the publication of that paper in February 2016.

Alistair Burt:

We welcomed the recommendations of the Mental Health Five Year Forward View and are working with colleagues across Whitehall to embed these into our work programmes. We liaise regularly with other Government departments in developing our policies.

■ Health: Equality

Gloria De Piero:

[42294]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to reduce health inequalities in areas of high deprivation.

Jane Ellison:

Reducing health inequalities is a priority for this Government.

The Department takes a comprehensive and strategic approach to tackling health inequalities that addresses the wider social causes of ill health, promotes healthier lifestyles for all, tackles differences in both access to, and outcomes from, health and public health services. Action is led locally to ensure that the solutions put in place reflect the needs of individual communities.

Achieving measureable and sustained reductions in health inequalities is integral to the Department's *Shared Delivery Plan 2015-20*, and reflected in the Government's mandate to NHS England, Public Health England's (PHE's) *Evidence into Action* and supporting strategic and business plans at national and local level. NHS England's Business Plan for 2016/17 prioritises closing the gap for groups experiencing poorer health outcomes, a poorer experience of, and access to, healthcare. PHE is supporting local and national efforts to address health inequalities by providing knowledge and intelligence, and evidence-informed tools and advice.

To support this, the Department has published *Improving outcomes and supporting transparency: A public health outcomes framework for England 2013-16*. The framework's vision is to improve and protect the nation's health and wellbeing, and improve the health of the poorest fastest. It is focused on the two high-level outcomes we want to achieve across the public health system and beyond. The first is increased healthy life expectancy; the second is reduced differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities through greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities.

■ Lung Diseases: Mortality Rates

Gill Furniss:

[42011]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to reduce mortality rates for people diagnosed with lung diseases.

Jane Ellison:

The 2016/17 mandate to NHS England includes objectives to reduce premature mortality, including reducing early deaths (i.e. deaths under 75) from respiratory illness.

The NHS Outcomes Framework 2016/17 sets out the Department's priority areas for the National Health Service and includes reducing early deaths from respiratory disease as a key indicator.

In July 2011, the Department published an outcomes strategy for people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma in England, which sets out six high-level objectives to improve outcomes in these areas through high quality prevention,

detection, treatment and care services. In August 2012, we set out how the NHS could implement changes at a local level through the NHS Companion Document to the strategy.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published quality standards for both COPD and asthma setting out the markers of high-quality, cost-effective care. Implementation of the NICE quality standards will raise the standard of care people receive. NICE has also published quality standards on Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis pneumonia. NICE is also developing clinical guidelines on asthma diagnosis and monitoring.

Individuals requiring specialist respiratory treatment have access to a number of related services which are commissioned by NHS England, subject to meeting the relevant criteria. Further information and a copy of the relevant service specifications can be found on NHS England's website and accessed via the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/spec-services/npc-crg/group-a/a01/>

Today, Public Health England launched the national Be Clear on Cancer campaign, focusing on the key respiratory symptoms of a persistent cough and inappropriate breathlessness and encouraging people with these symptoms to see their doctor.

Diagnosing lung and heart disease early makes them more treatable. This can help tackle premature mortality – for example, around 68% of lung cancer patients in England are diagnosed at a late stage 1, when curative treatment is not possible. Earlier diagnosis can also help with the management of some conditions, such as COPD, and thereby improve the quality of life for people living with them.

■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People

Helen Hayes:

[42540]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he will publish the monitoring and governance framework for the implementation of the Future in Mind recommendations.

Alistair Burt:

There are no plans to publish information in relation to the monitoring and governance that is in place to support the delivery of the vision set out in *Future in Mind*.

Future in Mind describes an integrated whole system approach to driving improvements in children and young people's mental health, with the National Health Service, public health, voluntary and community, local authority children's services, education and youth justice sectors working together to deliver against that ambition.

The care delivery mechanism in making this happen is the system-wide publicly available, Local Transformation Plans (LTPs), that should cover the full spectrum of need for children and young people who have existing or emerging mental health problems. The LTPs can be accessed via the Local Government Association's website, under Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, at the following link:

<http://www.local.gov.uk/camhs>

■ Mental Health Services: Liverpool City Region

Luciana Berger:

[\[42419\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many mental health nurses there were in the Liverpool City Region in each year since 2010.

Ben Gummer:

Numbers of qualified mental health nurses in National Health Service trusts, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and primary care trusts (PCTs) covering the Liverpool City Region from 2010 to 2016 are given in the table below.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS): Qualified Mental Health Nurses in NHS Trusts, PCTs and CCGs in Liverpool City Region as at 30 September for each specified year and 31 March 2016

Full-time equivalent

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	MARCH 2016
Total	2,570	2,512	2,479	2,444	2,372	2,371	2,373
5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	722	702	689	702	679	675	685
Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust	3	3	3	3	4	3	3
Bridgewater- Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust		22	26	25	30	31	25
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	751	750	767	746	748	777	776

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	MARCH 2016
Halton and St Helens PCT	6	8	-	..	..	..	..
Knowsley PCT	9	10	-	..	..	..	..
Mersey Care NHS Trust	1,077	1,015	994	967	912	885	883
Wirral PCT	2	2	-	..	..	..	..

NOTES:

'..' denotes not applicable.

'-' denotes zero. For certain trusts, this may be because the trust did not yet exist, ceased to exist or merged with another organisation during the year specified.

Following a public consultation in 2015, categorisation of Trusts and staff groups has changed therefore restricting comparability with previous publications. Because of these changes, these statistics are classed as experimental.

More details regarding these changes can be found in the outcomes of the consultation document available at this link: <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/hchs>

DATA QUALITY:

The Health and Social Care Information Centre seeks to minimise inaccuracies and the effect of missing and invalid data but responsibility for data accuracy lies with the organisations providing the data. Methods are continually being updated to improve data quality. Where changes impact on figures already published, this is assessed but unless it is significant at national level figures are not changed. Impact at detailed or local level is footnoted in relevant analyses.

SOURCE:

Health and Social Care Information Centre, Provisional NHS Hospital & Community Health Service (HCHS) monthly workforce statistics.

■ NHS: Finance

Luciana Berger: [\[42447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the finding in the King's Fund report, entitled Deficits in the NHS 2016, published on 11 July 2016, that NHS providers and commissioners ended 2015-16 with a deficit of £1.85 billion, what steps he is taking to reduce that aggregate deficit.

Alistair Burt:

It is clear that the National Health Service faces a significant challenge, and this is why we are investing the additional £10 billion the NHS has said it needs to implement its own plan for the future, with £6 billion frontloaded by the end of this year.

We have introduced tough new financial controls to cut down on waste in the NHS - including introducing caps for agency staff and management consultants, and introducing central procurement rules. In 2016-17, we have introduced a £1.8 billion Sustainability and Transformation Fund to support providers to move to a financially sustainable footing. We will be providing intensive support to the most challenged NHS organisations through the new special measures programme.

■ Obesity: Children

Lucy Allan: [\[42565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent steps he has taken to reduce childhood obesity.

Jane Ellison:

Our Childhood Obesity Strategy, which will be launched in the summer, will look at everything that contributes to a child becoming overweight and obese. It will set out what more can be done by all.

■ Pain

Toby Perkins: [\[42566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will introduce a NHS strategy on supporting patients with chronic pain.

Jane Ellison:

The routine assessment and management of pain is a required competency of all healthcare professionals. Many patients with chronic pain can be successfully supported and managed through routine primary and secondary care pain management services. Approaches to treatment are not all pharmacological and for some patients education in self-management approaches for their condition may be also be appropriate.

It is important that patients with the most serious pain management issues are able to access specialist care. A patient whose pain is particularly difficult to manage may be referred to a specialised pain management service. Under the care of an expert multidisciplinary team, patients may be offered specialised pain management programmes specifically and more complex drug treatments. Such services are

commissioned nationally by NHS England as part of its remit to deliver specialised services.

To support clinicians in the management of pain, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has published several clinical guidelines on the treatment and management of different types of pain, such as migraine and back pain, as well as technical guidance on specific treatments, such as the use of opiates in palliative care and deep brain stimulation for chronic pain.

■ Pharmacy

Michael Dugher:

[\[42405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he took the decision to undertake an impact assessment for the purposes of the Public Sector Equality Duty of the changes to the budget for community pharmacy in 2016-17; and when work on that assessment commenced.

Alistair Burt:

The proposals for community pharmacy in 2016/17 and beyond that were published on 17 December 2015 were considered against my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health's duties, which include the Public Sector Equality Duty. An impact assessment has been developed during the consultation period and the Department is committed to publishing the impact assessment alongside any Drug Tariff determination.

■ Pharmacy: Internet

Helen Jones:

[\[42439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he has taken to review the health impact of prescribing from online pharmacies; and if he will make a statement.

Alistair Burt:

As health professionals, online prescribers are regulated by their respective professional regulator. The General Medical Council (GMC) expects all doctors to take account of its guidance on remote prescribing and relevant clinical and other guidelines, regardless of how they prescribe.

Doctors working independently or in private practice, including on-line prescribers, with a business based in England, are regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), if they provide a regulated activity and are within scope of the CQC registration. They are required to provide people with safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led care.

Online pharmacies, like other registered pharmacies, are regulated by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and are required to comply with the GPhC's standards for registered pharmacies. Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, working in online pharmacies, are also regulated by the GPhC and must comply with the GPhC's standards of conduct, ethics and performance.

The Department has not recently reviewed on-line prescribing.

Helen Jones:

[42442]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to restrict the quantities of drugs which can be bought from online pharmacies.

George Freeman:

There are no plans for additional controls on the quantities of drugs which can be bought from online pharmacies. In the United Kingdom, there are strict legal controls on the retail sale, supply and advertisement of medicinal products. These legal controls apply equally to medicines sold or supplied via the internet or e-mail transactions. Under medicines legislation, it is unlawful for medicinal products for human use to be marketed, manufactured, imported from a third country, distributed and sold or supplied in the UK except in accordance with the appropriate licences or exemptions. Prescription only and pharmacy medicines may only be legally sold or supplied by or under the supervision of a pharmacist on registered pharmacy premises. In addition, prescription only medicines may only be dispensed against a prescription written by a doctor, dentist or independent prescriber. There are also controls on quantities of certain pharmacy medicines that can be sold or supplied and that applies if the medicine is sold in a pharmacy or online.

■ Strokes

Glyn Davies:

[42146]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the quality of stroke care in rural areas.

Glyn Davies:

[42147]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what comparative assessment he has made of the quality of acute stroke care in rural areas and in metropolitan areas.

Glyn Davies:

[42148]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what comparative assessment he has made of the quality of post-acute and community stroke care in rural and in metropolitan areas.

Jane Ellison:

The Department has made no assessment of the quality of acute, post and community stroke care in rural and metropolitan areas. However, the Sentinel Stroke National Audit programme reports the results of the quality of both hospital and community care quarterly at trust and clinical commissioning group level. These data are in the public domain and can be found at:

www.strokeaudit.org

NHS England's *Five Year Forward View* sets out the healthcare strategy for the whole of England, including rural areas. Rural areas have their own health needs, which should be taken into account in planning and developing healthcare systems. It is for clinical commissioning groups to judge the needs of their local areas and make sure that they are reflecting the specific circumstances of those areas.

■ Strokes: Health Services

Nic Dakin: [42290]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership on funding allocated to the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme.

Nic Dakin: [42291]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the frequency of the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme's (a) clinical and (b) organisational audit.

Nic Dakin: [42292]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of acute hospitals in England participate in the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme.

Nic Dakin: [42293]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which audits his Department uses to monitor stroke services in England other than the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme.

Jane Ellison:

The Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme (SSNAP) is part of the National Clinical Audit and Patient Outcomes Programme, which is commissioned and managed by the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) on behalf of NHS England. The Department has therefore had no discussions with HQIP on the funding allocated to SSNAP.

Up until now, SSNAP has reported every three months. However, the last quarterly report was published in June and SSNAP will report three times a year from now on, with the next report expected in October/November 2016. 100% of all hospitals treating acute stroke patients submit data to SSNAP and it is estimated that around 95% of all stroke patients have their data entered.

The following link provides further information on SSNAP:

<https://www.strokeaudit.org/results/Organisational.aspx>

The only other audit relevant to stroke is the audit conducted by the Vascular Society on people who have carotid artery surgery, which can be found at:

<https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/projects/carotid-interventions-audit-cia>

There are no other national audits relevant to stroke patients.

■ Travellers: Health

Grant Shapps: [42164]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department has taken under the National Roma Integration Strategy to enhance the health integration of Gypsy Traveller Roma people.

Jane Ellison:

We have taken steps to improve the health of Gypsies, Travellers and Roma people as part of our broader social inclusion policies. The inclusion health programme sought to identify and promote good practice across the National Health Service and elsewhere. It has included: developing practical guidance on the commissioning of more inclusive services to help ensure the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups are taken into account in shaping local plans and priorities; working with primary health care professionals and others to improve access to services for these groups; and supporting the education and training of health professionals to enable them to work more effectively with these groups. This work is being carried forward across the health system.

■ **West Cumberland Hospital: Maternity Services**

Mr Jamie Reed:

[\[42309\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to his oral contribution of 5 July 2016, Official Report, column 734, if he will accord consultant-led maternity services at the West Cumberland Hospital the same level of priority as those in North Devon.

Ben Gummer:

Maternity safety is a priority for this Government and this applies to all maternity services nationally, including at West Cumberland Hospital.

In November 2015, we announced an ambitious campaign to halve the national rates of stillbirths, neonatal and maternal deaths and brain injuries occurring during or soon after birth, by 2030. The report of the National Maternity Review, *Better Births* was published in February. A Maternity Transformation Programme Board has been set up to drive forward the vision for maternity services as set out in *Better Births*. The Board is led by NHS England but it is cross-system and the Department will have an important role to play in leading the safety workstream, recognising that safety is a 'golden thread' running through the programme. The Board is independently chaired by Sarah-Jane Marsh and met for the first time on 8 June.

HOME OFFICE

■ **Asylum: Families**

Stuart C. McDonald:

[\[42276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will collect data on the reasons given for refusal of family reunion applications involving children and young people aged over 18 years of age.

Stuart C. McDonald:

[\[42277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which exceptional circumstances applied to each grant of family reunion made outside the rules during the last five years.

Stuart C. McDonald:

[\[42404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will collect regularly statistics on the (a) number of and (b) reasons for exceptional family reunion cases relating to children where indefinite leave to remain is granted at her discretion outside of the rules.

James Brokenshire:

The Home Office does not hold the specific information in the format requested. The questions cover a number of different casework operations and the information is not recorded centrally in a way which can be reported on directly.

To obtain the information would involve examining individual case records and would incur disproportionate cost. We do not currently plan to change the data that is centrally recorded and published on this category of applications.

■ Female Genital Mutilation

Thangam Debbonaire:

[\[42562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the modal age is of girls experiencing female genital mutilation; whether and how this modal age has changed over the last 15 years; and if she will make a statement.

Karen Bradley:

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a crime and it is child abuse. We will not tolerate a practice that can cause extreme and lifelong physical and psychological suffering to women and girls.

As set out in the new statutory multi-agency FGM guidance, FGM is usually carried out between infancy and the age of 15, however the age at which it is carried out varies enormously according to the community.

We will not stop FGM until we have changed attitudes within communities. We are working closely with community organisations, faith groups and survivors through the FGM Unit which is carrying out an ongoing programme of outreach with local community groups and professionals across England and Wales.

■ Immigration Controls: EU Nationals

Peter Grant:

[\[42307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance her Department has issued to staff working at border controls in UK airports on questions which can and cannot be asked to passengers arriving in the UK with EU passports.

James Brokenshire:

Anyone seeking entry or admission to the UK must on arrival establish their nationality and identity, as well as comply with other checks under the Border Force Operating Mandate.

■ Intelligence Services

Dr Tania Mathias: [\[42450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans for clause 187 of the Investigatory Powers Bill to apply to (a) class bulk personal datasets and (b) specific bulk personal datasets; and if she will take steps to ensure that the protection provided under that clause will encompass all types of warrants, as specified in the Investigatory Powers Bill, in the case of medical records.

Mr John Hayes:

Clause 187 of the Investigatory Powers Bill applies to specific BPD warrants and provides that, where one of the purposes of the warrant was to authorise the retention or the retention and examination of health records, the warrant may only be issued in exceptional and compelling circumstances.

On 5 July the Government tabled an amendment to the Bill which would make clear that class BPD warrants could not be used to retain, or retain and examine, bulk personal datasets that consist of, or include, health records.

Protections for other parts of the Investigatory Powers Bill relating to medical professionals and confidential information relating to an individual's health will be provided for in the statutory codes of practice made under the Bill. Draft codes detailing these protections were published on introduction of the Bill in March 2016.

■ Slavery

Paul Blomfield: [\[42403\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to issue statutory guidance for identifying and supporting victims as set out in section 49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Karen Bradley:

Guidance for identifying and supporting victims will be published once the National Referral Mechanism pilot has concluded. The guidance is being developed in consultation with NGOs and frontline agencies.

■ Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders

Paul Blomfield: [\[42399\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many slavery and trafficking prevention orders on sentencing have been (a) applied for and (b) made under section 14 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Paul Blomfield: [\[42401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many slavery and trafficking prevention orders on application have been (a) applied for and (b) made under section 15 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Paul Blomfield:

[\[42402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many slavery and trafficking risk orders on application have been (a) applied for and (b) made under the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Karen Bradley:

16 Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders (STPOs) have been made on sentencing in the Crown Court under section 14 of the Modern Slavery Act. Data on the number of STPOs applied for on sentencing is not collated centrally. No STPOs have been applied for or made in the Magistrates' Court.

No slavery and trafficking prevention orders have been applied for or made on application under section 15 of the Modern Slavery Act in the Magistrates' Court.

Nine Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders have been applied for on application to the Magistrates' Court, of which three have been made. Of the remaining six, two were refused, one was withdrawn and three cases were adjourned.

This data has been run specifically to answer this question and is not verified to the same standard as Official Statistics.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Developing Countries: Drinking Water

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[42370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking to ensure that water safe for drinking is available in countries which receive aid from her Department; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The UK government is committed to supporting the achievement of the Global Goals in countries which receive UK Aid and is prioritising programmes to ensure that everyone has access to sustainable drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). From 2010 to 2015 DFID supported 60 million people to gain access to sustainable WASH. We are committed to supporting a further 60 million people gain access to sustainable WASH up to the end of 2020. Providing a safe and reliable drinking water and sanitation is a key element of our work across all our country programmes.

JUSTICE

■ Pharmacy: Internet

Helen Jones:

[\[42440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many coroners' reports in the last five years have cited over-prescribing by online pharmacies as a (a) cause and (b) contributory cause of death; and what action the Government has taken as a result of those reports.

Helen Jones:

[42441]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will undertake a review of the law relating to the operation of online pharmacies; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Dinenage:

Until 31 March 2013 the Ministry of Justice published twice yearly updates on coroners' reports to prevent future deaths. The relevant information can be found in the links below to the four reports which cover the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2013:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summary-of-reports-and-responses-under-rule-43-of-the-coroners-rules>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summary-of-reports-and-responses-under-rule-43-of-the-coroners-rules--10>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summary-of-reports-and-responses-under-rule-43-of-the-coroners-rules-1984>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summary-of-reports-and-responses-under-rule-43-of-the-coroners-rules--12>

Reports since 1 April 2013 are posted on the Chief Coroner's website at

<https://www.judiciary.gov.uk/related-offices-and-bodies/office-chief-coroner/pfd-reports/>

Any review of the law relating to the operation of on-line prescribing would be the responsibility of the Department of Health.

■ Slavery

Paul Blomfield:

[42400]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, (a) who holds responsibility for training magistrates and (b) how many magistrates have received training on the use of (i) slavery and trafficking risk orders and (ii) slavery and trafficking prevention orders.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

Judicial training is the responsibility of the Lord Chief Justice and is exercised through the Judicial College.

To fulfil their judicial decision making responsibilities magistrates, their legal advisers and District Judges (Magistrates' Courts) receive comprehensive induction and continuation training in across the jurisdictions, which includes new legislation.

It is not however possible to identify where magistrates have received standalone or direct training on the use of slavery and trafficking risk orders or slavery and trafficking prevention orders.

■ Young Offenders: Reoffenders

Gloria De Piero:

[42295]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many juveniles convicted of serious offences have reoffended in each of the last three financial years.

Andrew Selous:

One year proven reoffending for juveniles cautioned, convicted at court for a non-custodial sentence or released from custody for a serious offence in financial years 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14.

	APR 2011 TO MAR 2012	APR 2012 TO MAR 2013	APR 2013 TO MAR 2014
Juvenile offenders with a serious index offence			
Proportion of offenders who reoffend (%)	39.4	39.9	39.6
Number of reoffenders	2,827	2,272	1,783
Number of offenders in cohort	7,172	5,693	4,501

The seriousness definition used can be found in Annex A of the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496925/proven-reoffending-definitions-measurement.pdf

Data Sources

These figures have been derived from administrative IT systems which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. A certain proportion of offenders who could not be matched to the Police National Computer (PNC) are excluded from the offender cohort. Therefore, these numbers do not represent all proven offenders.

NORTHERN IRELAND■ **Cross Border Cooperation: Northern Ireland**

Mr Nigel Dodds:

[\[42189\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent discussions she has had with the Northern Ireland Executive on the Joint Agency Task Force; and if she will make a statement.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

I attended a Security Interface meeting on 4 July 2016 with Clare Sugden MLA, Minister of Justice for Northern Ireland, representatives of PSNI and senior representatives of the Department of Justice. We received an update on the work of the Joint Agency Task Force. The Task Force has presented its first report to the meeting of Justice Ministers in the framework of the Intergovernmental Agreement on co-operation on criminal justice matters, with an update on operational activity undertaken to date.

■ Northern Ireland Office: ICT

Mr Nigel Dodds: [\[41985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how much her Department has spent on information technology and equipment since 2010.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

Since 2010, my Department has spent £3.96m on information technology and equipment, including IT support and maintenance. This represents expenditure up to the end of the 2015-16 financial year.

■ Police: Northern Ireland

Mr Nigel Dodds: [\[41988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many police officers there are per head of population (a) in Northern Ireland, (b) in the Metropolitan Police Service area and (c) on average for all police forces in the UK.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

There is currently 1 PSNI officer per 273 of the population in Northern Ireland.

The answers for part (b) and (c) are matters for the Home Office.

■ Stormont House Agreement

Mr Nigel Dodds: [\[41986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent discussions she has had with the Northern Ireland Policing Board about the implementation of the Fresh Start Agreement.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

I have regular discussions on implementation of the Fresh Start Agreement with the Minister of Justice for Northern Ireland and the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. I attended a review meeting on implementation of the Fresh Start Agreement on 29 June 2016 with the Northern Ireland Executive and the Government of Ireland. I have not had any recent discussions with the Northern Ireland Policing Board on implementation of the agreement.

Mr Nigel Dodds: [\[42186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what progress has been made on the establishment of an independent reporting commission under the Fresh Start Agreement.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

We are making significant progress in the arrangements to establish the Independent Reporting Commission (IRC) by the end of this year. We are working with the Government of Ireland to finalise the detail of the international treaty which will establish the Commission and I propose to bring forward supporting regulations on the appropriate immunities and privileges as soon as possible after the Treaty is signed.

■ Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Mr Nigel Dodds:

[\[42190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what funding has been provided to tackle terrorism in Northern Ireland under the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

The PSNI will receive Additional Security Funding totalling £160m over this parliament. Over the next 5 years £2.5 billion will also be invested in the Security and Intelligence Agencies to create a bigger more capable global security and intelligence network. This is significant funding. It matches the severity of the terrorist threat, it demonstrates our unwavering commitment to the brave men and women in the police and intelligence agencies, and it is helping to keep people safe.

SCOTLAND

■ Welfare State: Scotland

Natalie McGarry:

[\[42367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of welfare reform, including benefit sanctions and work capability assessments, on claimants in (a) Glasgow and (b) Scotland.

David Mundell:

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.

TRANSPORT

■ Cycling: Disability

Helen Hayes:

[\[42538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will amend the Cycle to Work scheme to incorporate a higher maximum allowance for disabled cyclists requiring specialist cycles.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We are currently in the process of updating the Cycle to Work Scheme guidance published on GOV.UK and we are considering reviewing the maximum allowance of £1,000. Discussions with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and HMRC will be arranged before we confirm any changes.

■ Driverless Vehicles

Richard Burden: [42306]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to include provisions in the Modern Transport Bill to (a) develop a licensing regime for the sale of safe driverless vehicles and (b) establish regulations for driverless vehicles in the testing phase.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

At this stage, we have not developed plans for changes to primary road traffic legislation other than relating to motor vehicle insurance for automated vehicles. We have also announced plans to change the Highway Code and regulations to support the safe use of advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS). The Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles launched a consultation on these issues on 11 July.

We will consider further legislative, regulatory, and guidance changes as ADAS and automated vehicles continue to develop and reach the market, so that people and businesses can safely take advantage of the benefits that they offer.

We do not consider that legislative change is needed to facilitate testing of automated vehicle technologies; testing of automated vehicle technologies can be carried out on any UK road as long as carried out in line with UK traffic laws and guidance – further details are set out in the *Code of practice for testing of automated vehicle technologies* - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/automated-vehicle-technologies-testing-code-of-practice>.

■ Govia Thameslink Railway: Standards

Kelvin Hopkins: [42134]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of non-planned Govia Thameslink Railway services were cancelled in each reporting period since July 2015.

Claire Perry:

There have not been, and there are, no 'non-planned' services.

Kelvin Hopkins: [42135]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether external consultants were involved in the design of the (a) Remedial Plan or (b) emergency timetable for Govia Thameslink Railway services.

Claire Perry:

The Department did not design either the Remedial Plan, or the revised timetable being introduced on 11 July. Emergency timetables are introduced by the rail industry in reaction to specific circumstances as they are responsible for operating the railway and do not need the prior approval of the Secretary of State.

Kelvin Hopkins: [42136]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department is required to consult (a) passenger groups, (b) trade unions and (c) Network Rail before the introduction of an emergency timetable on Govia Thameslink Railway services can take place.

Claire Perry:

Emergency timetables are introduced by the rail industry in reaction to specific circumstances as they are responsible for operating the railway and do not need the prior approval of the Secretary of State. GTR has introduced a revised timetable which seeks to use the resources that are likely to be available in order to provide a service that passengers can rely on. It is for the operator, in conjunction with Network Rail, to manage the timetable effectively.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Mrs Cheryl Gillan:

[\[42287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the total expenditure on the High Speed 2 project has been in each year since 2010.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The table below sets out the spend on HS2 project in each year since 2009/10. Data for 2015/16 is provisional and is currently not included, pending publication of the HS2 Ltd Accounts shortly at GOV.UK, which will set out the precise level of expenditure for 2015/16.

	2009/10 £M	2010/11 £M	2011/12 £M	2012/13 £M	2013/14 £M	2014/15 £M
<i>Total HS2</i>	9.43	24.3	54	207.6	318.2	362.7

Mrs Cheryl Gillan:

[\[42288\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the planned start date is for construction of High Speed 2 Phase One.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Construction is expected to begin in 2017.

Gloria De Piero:

[\[42303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the construction of High Speed 2 from Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The negotiation for Britain's future relationship with the European Union will begin under the new Prime Minister, and we now have to look at all the detailed arrangements. In the meantime, the Department will continue to work to deliver the Government agenda, including HS2.

■ Public Transport: Ribble Valley

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[42427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the travelling public of proposed reductions in spending on public transport in Ribble Valley.

Andrew Jones:

It is for Lancashire County Council, as the transport authority for Ribble Valley, to decide how to allocate funding for public transport, in consultation with its districts and communities. The County Council has received £6.054m from the Integrated Transport Block for 2016/17. In addition, £1.86m of Bus Operators Services Grant (BSOG) has been provided to support bus services.

■ Railways

Peter Kyle: [\[42304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made by his Department and train operating companies on ensuring compliance with the relevant legislative provisions by the expiry date of the (Commencement No. 3, Transitional Provisions, Savings and Consequential Amendments) (Amendment) Order 2016 in October 2016.

Claire Perry:

It is for the rail industry to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Consumer Rights Act when the services provisions of the Act come into force. Train companies, working with the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC), are currently reviewing their working practices to ensure that this is the case. The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) is a statutory enforcement body for the Consumer Rights Act for this sector.

The Department for Transport, ATOC and the ORR are working together to co-ordinate industry wide improvements in the way that rail passenger compensations schemes are publicised and administered.

■ Railways: East of England

Kelvin Hopkins: [\[42137\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to announce the award of the next franchise for passenger services on the Greater Anglia line.

Claire Perry:

The successful bidder for the East Anglia franchise will help us realise our ambitious plans for East Anglia's rail network. We have been clear that as a minimum they must provide a modern service with state of the art trains, and also introduce at least two 90-minute services each way between London and Norwich. In addition they must invest heavily in improving stations.

We continue to consider the bids and will announce the new operator in due course.

■ Railways: South Wales

Chris Elmore:

[\[42463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential benefits to local communities of rail electrification in South Wales.

Claire Perry:

The Government recognises the value to the Welsh economy and local communities that improved services from rail electrification, both to and in Wales, will bring in the form of regeneration and jobs. That is why we are prioritising the Great Western Mainline electrification and providing a £125m contribution to the electrification of the Valley Lines. The Valley Lines now forms part of the wider South East Wales Metro project which will transform travel in the Cardiff capital region. This project is the responsibility of the Welsh Government, and is further supported by a wider Cardiff Capital Region Investment Fund announced as part of the March 2016 City Deal.

■ River Thames: Tunnels

Adam Holloway:

[\[42305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 23 May 2016 to Question 37232, what assessment his Department made of the potential vehicular capacity of the two long tunnel options for the Lower Thames Crossing connected either (a) through junctions 2 and 30 on the M25 or (b) by direct connection to the motorway beyond the junctions.

Andrew Jones:

Both the long tunnel options between Darenth and South Ockenden would have a nominal capacity of approximately 8,000 vehicles per hour. In the morning peak hour at the year of opening in 2025, the (a) shorter tunnel option through junctions 2 and 30 on the M25 would have an initial forecast usage of 5,600 vehicles per hour and for (b) 3,400 for the longer beyond junction tunnel option.

■ Southern: Standards

Helen Hayes:

[\[42467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what level of change to train services by (a) scheduled departure and (b) number of carriages provided by Southern Railway Limited the Government has agreed under the conditions of its franchise with that company.

Claire Perry:

Timetabling and rolling stock allocation are a matter for the operator. We monitor their performance against the specified benchmarks as set out in the Franchise Agreement and the Remedial Plan.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES**■ Equality and Human Rights Commission**

Debbie Abrahams: [42433]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what funding her Department has provided to the Equality and Human Rights Commission in each year since 2010-11.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is an independent body, but wholly funded by Government. Full information on its budgets since 2010/11 can be found in its Annual Reports at the following links:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/corporate-reporting/annual-reports>

■ Equality and Human Rights Commission: Redundancy

Debbie Abrahams: [42430]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will recommend that the Equality and Human Rights Commission should commission an equality impact assessment of any future job losses at the Commission.

Debbie Abrahams: [42432]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the extent to which current and planned staffing levels at the Equality and Human Rights Commission are sufficient to enable the Commission to fulfil its statutory obligations.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is an independent body. It makes its own decisions about the allocation of its resources and its procedures for planning changes to its staffing against its business needs as set out in its one-year Business Plan and three-year Strategic Plan.

■ Government Equalities Office: Babies

Mr Mark Hendrick: [42214]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what facilities are available for (a) lactating mothers and (b) the changing of babies in the Government Equalities Office.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government Equalities Office is based at Sanctuary Building, London which has a facility for both nursing mothers and baby changing located on the lower ground floor. This room is clearly signed as a baby changing area and contains a baby changing fold down work top, wipes, and chairs for nursing mothers to sit comfortably.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Attendance Allowance

Neil Coyle: [\[42341\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when his Department plans to conduct an impact assessment of its proposal to pass responsibility for attendance allowance funding to local authorities.

Neil Coyle: [\[42359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether disabled people who are over state retirement age and who claim personal independence payment or disability living allowance will be affected by the proposal to transfer attendance allowance funding to councils.

Neil Coyle: [\[42361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of transferring attendance allowance funding to councils on older disabled people who live outside the UK and are unable to meet ordinary residence rules.

Neil Coyle: [\[42363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department plans to take to assess the potential effect of the transfer of attendance allowance to local authorities on the additional, passported support that older disabled people and carers receive as a result of their eligibility for that allowance.

Neil Coyle: [\[42365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of the transfer of attendance allowance to local authorities on older disabled people who apply for that allowance as a result of terminal illness under special rules currently in place; and whether fast track systems for applicants in similar circumstances will be available under future arrangements for that allowance.

Justin Tomlinson:

The consultation "Self-sufficient local government: 100% business rates retention", published 5 July 2016, sets out that the Government will consider giving more responsibility to councils in England to support older people with care needs – including people who, under the current system, would be supported through Attendance Allowance.

Any new responsibilities would be matched by the transfer of equivalent spending power. Any new policy would not affect existing claimants or any passported support they receive, including those already in receipt of Attendance Allowance due to the special rules in place for the terminally ill. Any localisation proposals would not affect those already in receipt of Attendance Allowance who currently live outside the UK.

Those claiming or in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment would not be affected by any change.

The consultation "Self-sufficient local government: 100% business rates retention" closes at 12.00am on 26 September 2016, and is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/self-sufficient-local-government-100-business-rates-retention>.

This is an open consultation and all interested parties are invited to respond. The Government would consult further, including on any models and the impacts associated with them, in good time if any changes are proposed.

Neil Coyle: [42362]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if his Department will publish any research it holds on attendance allowance claimants and how such claimants use that funding.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Department publishes its research and statistics on Gov.uk, with links to research available on <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about/research>. There are no current plans to publish any further research on Attendance Allowance claimants outside the regular statistical publications it produces.

■ Chemicals: Health Hazards

Anna Turley: [42412]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will commission a comprehensive assessment of the levels of acetaldehyde that workers are exposed to in the UK chemical industry.

Anna Turley: [42413]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department takes to monitor the levels of acetaldehyde that workers are exposed to in the chemical industry; and what steps he is taking to reduce routine exposure to acetaldehyde in that industry.

Anna Turley: [42414]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment the Government has made of the safe levels of acetaldehyde to which workers in the chemical industry can be exposed.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has no plans to commission an assessment of the levels of acetaldehyde that workers are exposed to in the UK chemical industry.

Acetaldehyde has been assigned a Workplace Exposure Limit (WEL). WELs are concentrations of hazardous substances in the air, averaged over a specified period of time, referred to as a time-weighted average (TWA). Two time periods are used; long-term (8 hours) and short-term (15 minutes). For acetaldehyde these are concentrations of 37 milligrams per cubic meter (mg.m⁻³) and 92mg.m⁻³ respectively.

Substances that have been assigned a WEL are subject to the requirements of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). COSHH requires employers to prevent or control exposure to hazardous substances. Under COSHH, control is defined as adequate only if a) the principles of good control practice are applied; b) any WEL is not exceeded; and c) exposure to asthmagens, carcinogens and mutagens are reduced as low as is reasonably practicable. As part of the assessment required under regulation 6 of COSHH, employers should determine their own working practices and in-house standards for control of exposure.

■ Equality and Human Rights Commission: Recruitment

Debbie Abrahams:

[[42431](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he has had discussions with the Equality and Human Rights Commission on its employment of disabled people.

Justin Tomlinson:

I have not had any meetings with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to discuss its employment of disabled people.

The Office for Disability Issues has frequent communication with the EHRC who are observers at the bi-annual Fulfilling Potential Forum that I chair which is attended by a range of disability-related stakeholders. Officials from the Office for Disability Issues are also in regular contact with the EHRC in relation to the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People, attending quarterly Treaty Monitoring review meetings.

■ Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit

Stuart C. McDonald:

[[42476](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans he has to update the list of medical conditions covered by industrial injuries disablement benefit.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Industrial Injuries Advisory Council (IIAC) is the scientific body with the statutory role of advising Ministers on the list of prescribed diseases under the Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit scheme. In particular, which diseases and occupations should be prescribed for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit purposes.

IIAC continually reviews the scientific literature to ascertain whether the necessary level of proof may have become available with regard to diseases and occupations not currently included or if further consideration is required in respect of those already listed.

IIAC will revisit any subject if new, sound and consistent scientific evidence becomes available. The Government will then give careful consideration to any advice the Council may provide, and consider legislative proposals in the light of that advice.

■ Personal Independence Payment

Ian Mearns: [42535]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people who previously claimed disability living allowance and were transferred to personal independence payments in the last three years have had their payments (a) reduced, (b) unchanged and (c) increased.

Ian Mearns: [42536]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants of disability living allowance have had their payments downgraded or removed following their transfer to personal independence payments in the last three years.

Justin Tomlinson:

The latest available data on personal independence payment (PIP) claims in payment, registrations, clearances and awards for both new claims and reassessed claims (for those previously in receipt of disability living allowance (DLA)) are published on Gov.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-independence-payment-statistics>.

In particular, breakdowns of reassessed claims in payment by type and rate of awards, and reassessment claims by type of clearance (i.e. whether the claim was awarded, disallowed or withdrawn), can be found at <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

Guidance on how to use Stat-Xplore can be found here: <https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/index.html>.

The Department does not have verified data on the number of DLA claimants who have had their benefit payments changed as a result of the move to PIP. We intend to provide more detailed breakdowns of DLA to PIP reassessment outcomes in due course. The Department is working to guidelines set by the UK Statistics Authority to ensure we are able to publish statistics that meet high quality standards at the earliest opportunity.

■ Whooping Cough: Vaccination

Richard Burden: [42446]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2016 to Question 41943, how many people have (a) claimed and (b) received payment under the vaccine damages payment scheme in respect of a vaccine used for whooping cough.

Justin Tomlinson:

I refer the honourable gentleman to my response to his question dated 31 May 2016. Information regarding claims and awards in respect of a particular disease or vaccine is unavailable.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

TREASURY

■ ECOFIN: 17 June 2016

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke):

[\[HCWS93\]](#)

A meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council took place in Luxembourg on 17 June 2016. EU Finance Ministers discussed the following items:

Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive

The Council reached political agreement to the Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive.

Financial Transaction Tax

A brief update was provided on the progress regarding implementing a Financial Transaction Tax in participating Member States. The UK is not taking part in the Financial Transaction Tax.

Strengthening the Banking Union

Council conclusions were agreed on measures to strengthen the Banking Union.

Current Legislative Proposals

The Presidency updated the Council on the state of play regarding a number of financial services dossiers.

State of play of the Banking Union

Belgium provided an update on its transposition of the Bank Resolution and Recovery Directive and the Deposit Guarantee Scheme Directive as the only remaining Member State yet to complete this.

Analysis by the Commission on temporary VAT derogations (reverse charge mechanism)

The Commission agreed to bring forward a legislative proposal to allow certain Member States to apply a generalised reversal of liability for VAT payments.

Implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact

The Council endorsed decisions to close the Excessive Deficit Procedures for Cyprus, Ireland and Slovenia.

Report of the European Court of Auditors on the Excessive Deficit Procedure

The Council adopted conclusions on a report of the European Court of Auditors regarding the Excessive Deficit Procedure. This item moved to an 'A' point with no discussion.

Contribution to the European Council meeting on 28-29 June 2016

The Council prepared a number of items ahead of June European Council. Specifically, Ministers endorsed the 2016 Country Specific Recommendations, part of the European Semester process.

Following this, views were exchanged on a number of issues including economic and fiscal governance and the investment plan for Europe. The item on National Productivity Boards moved to an 'A' point with no discussion.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ June Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Elizabeth Truss):
[[HCWS89](#)]

My Noble friend, the Lords Spokesman for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord Gardiner), represented the UK at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 27-28 June in Luxembourg.

Commissioner Hogan made a short presentation with an overview of the various agricultural commodity markets and summarised all the support measures already in place to support farmers. The Commissioner urged those Member States yet to declare their expenditure from the September package, to make full use of it. The UK distributed its share of targeted aid in December 2015 to help producers with their immediate cash-flow. The Commissioner concluded by confirming that he will bring forward a new package of measures at the July Council which was supported by a number of Member States, most notably Germany, France and Poland.

The Chair of the Agricultural Markets Taskforce (AMT), Cees Veerman, presented the Council with an update on the proposals being prepared for autumn 2016. The AMT is focussing on helping producers manage price volatility by identifying new structural measures.

The Presidency explained that their compromise text on Sustainable management of external fishing fleets, now took account of Member State requests to simplify the management systems and ensure consistency with the Control Regulation.

Commissioner Vella presented his policy orientation for the setting of fishing opportunities in 2017. He noted the good progress made in many seas and stocks, for example cod and plaice in the North Sea, but also the continuing problems in the Mediterranean. The UK argued that exceptions to reaching Maximum Sustainable Yield targets would need to be made in some cases in order to avoid clashes with other objectives of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy. Other MS, including the UK, pointed to the difficulties inherent in implementing the landing obligation, which will see an end to the wasteful practice of discarding of dead fish at sea.

Any other business items

- The Commission updated the Council on the various initiatives which were tackling the serious state of the Mediterranean's fish stocks.

- Finland called on the Commission to resolve an issue connected with an oversight in the Common Provisions' Regulation.
- Council conclusions for FLEGT were adopted.
- The Presidency announced the final report of the expert group on sustainable plant protection.
- Commissioner Andriukaitis presented the recent Commission Communication on endocrine disruptors.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Foreign Affairs Council (18 July 2016)

Minister for Europe (Mr David Lidington):

[\[HCWS87\]](#)

The Minister for Europe (Mr David Lidington): The Foreign Affairs Council will be chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini. The meeting will be held in Brussels.

Foreign Affairs Council

The agenda for the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) is expected to include Latin America, China, and external migration. Ms Mogherini is expected to raise in her introductory remarks a number of topics, including: climate diplomacy; Security Sector Reform and Capacity Building for Security and Development; the Quartet Report on the Middle East Peace Process; Afghanistan Ministerial Conference; and an EU External Action Service Iraq options paper. Ministers will have an informal discussion on the EU Global Strategy over lunch.

Latin America

On Cuba, discussions will focus on a new EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement. Ministers will also discuss preparations for the EU-Community of Latin America and Caribbean states (CELAC) Ministerial Summit, which will take place in the Dominican Republic in October. Council conclusions are expected on Venezuela.

China

The High Representative will update Ministers on the outcomes of the recent EU-China Summit, which she attended in Beijing on 13 July with Presidents Tusk and Junker. This was the first such meeting following the publication of the new EU-China Strategy in June 2016.

Migration

Ministers will discuss the June European Council conclusions on the *Commission Communication on establishing a new Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration*. We remain committed to helping tackle irregular migration flows to Europe and support the broad thrust of the proposed partnerships – improving coordination between the activities of EU institutions and Member States in targeted source and transit countries and making better use of all available tools. We also expect an exchange of views on priorities for the UNGA High Level Event on Large Movements of

Migrants and Refugees which provides an opportunity for the international community to build a sustainable global response to large population movements and the issue of irregular migration.

HEALTH

■ Infected Blood Payment Scheme: Publication of Consultation Response and decisions for a reformed scheme

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Jane Ellison): [\[HCWS88\]](#)

Infected Blood Payment Scheme: Publication of Consultation Response and decisions for a reformed scheme

On 21 January 2016 the Government launched its consultation on reform of the current ex-gratia payment schemes for individuals infected with HIV and/or hepatitis C following treatment with NHS-supplied blood or blood products before September 1991. It sought views particularly from the beneficiaries of the current schemes and their clinicians but the consultation was open to all to respond. The full analysis of the responses, the detail of the final decisions for the new scheme and an overview of the transition arrangements are set out in the Government's formal consultation response published today.

The response is attached and can be found on the Department of Health's website at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/infected-blood-reform-of-financial-and-other-support. The Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment will be published on the same website before summer recess.

The Government recognises the suffering experienced by people as a result of this tragedy and the Prime Minister apologised on behalf of the Government in March 2015. Since 1988, successive Governments have set up five schemes to provide financial and other support to those affected. This Government committed further funding of up to £100m (in January 2016) on top of the additional £25m pledged by the Prime Minister in March 2015 and the existing baseline budget. This additional money will more than double the Department of Health's annual spend on the scheme over the Spending Review period. This is significantly more than any previous Government has provided for those affected by this tragedy.

Over the years, there has been criticism from different groups of beneficiaries and their representatives about the way that the current system has been set up and operates. It was clear from this criticism that a more accessible and equitable system of care and support was needed.

In making its decisions for the new scheme, the Government has taken full account of the 1,557 formal responses to the consultation and considered other feedback such as backbench debates on the issue, 21 Parliamentary Questions and 69 individual pieces of correspondence related to the consultation. The detailed description of the reformed scheme is contained in the consultation response document published today.

The key principles for the reformed scheme are that support will be simple, equitable and responsive to individuals' circumstances, and available resource will be focused on those whose health is most affected.

Specifically, the key aspects for the reformed scheme will be:

All infected individuals will now receive an annual payment. These annual payments will be linked to the consumer price index (CPI) and include the £500 winter fuel payments as a standard payment without the need to apply for it:

- Those infected with hepatitis C at stage 1 will receive a new flat rate annual payment of £3,500 (rising to £4,500 from 2018/19) that is not linked to an individual assessment, as was proposed in the consultation – this will be the first time ongoing financial support will be provided for approximately 2,500 stage 1 beneficiaries.
- Those with hepatitis C at stage 2 or those with HIV will see their annual payments increase to £15,500 (rising to £18,500 from 2018/19).
- Those co-infected with HIV and hepatitis C at stage 1, will receive £18,500 (rising to £22,500 from 2018/19)
- For those co-infected with HIV and hepatitis C at stage 2, will receive £30,500 (rising to £36,500 from 2018/19)

Discretionary support will not only continue but will be enhanced from 2018/19

A new special appeals mechanism for those at hepatitis C stage 1 who consider that the impact of their infection on their health may mean they could qualify for stage 2 payments will be introduced from 2017/18

Continuation of a £50k lump sum payment for those infected with hepatitis C stage 1 who progress to stage 2

In addition, partners/spouses at the time of death of a primary beneficiary will be entitled to a £10,000 one-off lump sum where the HIV/hepatitis C infection contributed to the death of their partner/spouse. This will apply to those already bereaved and newly bereaved.

All elements of the published reform package apply to the current spending review period of FY 2016/17 to FY 2020/2021, during which a review of the scheme will be undertaken. This review will particularly take account of the numbers being treated for Hepatitis C and the implications for the future operation of the scheme.

All payments will continue to be ex-gratia, which means they are funded voluntarily by Government. These payments will also continue to be additional to any other income a person may receive, and are disregarded for the purposes of calculating income tax and eligibility for other state benefits.

Increased annual payments and new annual payments will take effect this year and be backdated to April 2016. Lump sum payments for bereaved spouses/partners will also be implemented this year. Arrangements for a single new scheme administrator will be progressed in the current financial year and become operational in 2017/18.

The proposals for scheme reform described in the consultation document are for beneficiaries infected in England. Information gathered through the consultation has been

shared with the health departments in the devolved administrations and we will continue to work closely with them.

[Consultation Response](#) (PDF Document, 544.58 KB)

This statement has also been made in the House of Lords: [HLWS91](#)

HOME OFFICE

■ Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (1 March 2016 to 31 May 2016)

The Minister of State for Security (Mr John Hayes): [\[HCWS92\]](#)

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

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

TPIM NOTICES IN FORCE (AS OF 31 MAY 2016)	1
TPIM notices in respect of British citizens (as of 31 May 2016)	1
TPIM notices extended (during the reporting period)	1
TPIM notices revoked (during the reporting period)	1
TPIM notices revived (during the reporting period)	0
Variations made to measures specified in TPIM notices (during the reporting period)	0
Applications to vary measures specified in TPIM notices refused (during the reporting period)	0
The number of current subjects relocated under TPIM legislation (as of 31 May 2016)	1

The TPIM Review Group (TRG) keeps every TPIM notice under regular and formal review. The TRG met on 22 and 23 March 2016 and 7 June 2016. The next TRG meetings will take place in September 2016.

SCOTLAND

■ Scotland Act - Commencement

Secretary of State for Scotland (David Mundell):

[\[HCWS90\]](#)

In March this year, Her Majesty the Queen gave Royal Assent to the Scotland Act 2016, marking an important milestone in fulfilling the UK Government's commitment to make the Scottish Parliament one of the most powerful devolved parliaments in the world.

On 23 May, two months since Royal Assent, a number of important provisions in the Act came into force. These included new powers in relation to consumer advocacy and advice, gaming machines, equalities and transport, and marked an important milestone in the devolution of powers to the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government.

The Joint Ministerial Working Group on Welfare met in June to take forward discussions on commencement of the welfare sections of the Act. This was the first meeting of the Group since the Scotland Act 2016 gained Royal Assent and since the new Scottish Parliament was elected. The UK and Scottish Governments both agreed an approach to commencing the welfare and employment support powers set out in the Act. This approach included bringing into force eleven welfare sections of the Scotland Act 2016.

I can today inform the House that, with the agreement of the Scottish Government, we will now commence the following sections of the Scotland Act 2016:

Section number: section title

24: Discretionary payments: top-ups of reserved benefits

25: Discretionary Housing Payments

26: Discretionary payments and assistance

28: Powers to create other new benefits;

29: Universal credit: costs of claimants who rent accommodation

30: Universal credit: persons to whom, and time when, paid

31: Employment support

32: Functions exercisable within devolved competence

33: Social Security Advisory Committee and Industrial Injuries Advisory Council

34: Information-sharing

35: Extension of unauthorised disclosure offence

Commencing these powers brings into force substantial new levers which will allow the Scottish Government to design a welfare system tailored to local needs, while maintaining our social union and the benefits of being part of the United Kingdom. For example, these regulations bring into force the power for the Scottish Parliament to create their own new benefits in any area of devolved responsibility.

The UK and Scottish Governments have been working together constructively to enable this and will continue to do so. We recognise the importance of ensuring the safe and secure

transition of powers. Work is continuing on the remaining welfare sections of the Act and both Governments are committed to reaching an agreed approach on how they should be commenced. A further meeting of the Joint Ministerial Group on Welfare is expected to take place in the autumn.

I am pleased that the commencement regulations also include Section 65 of the Scotland Act which enables Scottish Ministers to appoint a member to the Ofcom Board. The section also requires Scottish Ministers to lay Ofcom's annual report and accounts before the Scottish Parliament and underlines my commitment to implementing the Scotland Act 2016 and the Smith Commission Agreement.

The commencement regulations I have made today represent another milestone in making the Scottish Parliament one of the most powerful devolved parliaments in the world.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

■ The quality of the December 2015 electoral registers in Great Britain

Spokesperson, Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission (Mr Gary Streeter):
[\[HCWS91\]](#)

The Electoral Commission has today published the last in its series of reports on the transition to Individual Electoral Registration (IER) in Great Britain. This final report presents the findings from its study on the accuracy and completeness of the registers published in December 2015, at the end of the transition. The report also makes clear the Commission's gratitude for the hard work done by parliamentarians, civil servants and, most significantly, electoral registration teams around the country to deliver this historic change to our electoral system.

The Commission's study on the last household registers from 2014 found both accuracy and completeness to be 86% for the parliamentary registers, and 87% and 85% respectively for the local government registers. The new study on the December 2015 registers shows that the Parliamentary registers were 85% complete and 91% accurate, whilst the local government registers were 84% complete and 91% accurate.

This means that, during the transition to IER between 10 June 2014 to 1 December 2015, the overall accuracy of the registers increased by an estimated four percentage points, and that completeness, whilst broadly appearing to be stable, has seen a decline of just under one percentage point. The Commission estimates that, in December 2015, between 7.6 and 8.3 million eligible people were not correctly registered to vote.

These findings suggest that most, but not all, of the entries removed at the end of the transition to IER in December 2015 were inaccurate, largely due to people moving home, although not all of the improvement in accuracy can be attributed to the removal of entries at the end of the transition.

Parliament chose to bring the end of the transition (and hence the deletion of these entries) forward from December 2016 to December 2015. At the time, the Commission recommended that the end of the transition should not be brought forward as they had no

data on which to judge the nature of the entries that would be removed. In the absence of data, they also believed there was a risk that removing the entries ahead of the planned May 2016 polls would put the onus on individual voters to need to re-register rather than on EROs to check the accuracy of these entries.

These accuracy and completeness findings suggest that there was no notable effect on the completeness of the registers from the removal of these entries and that the main impact is likely to have been the improvement in accuracy.

The Commission has identified issues which need addressing. On the 1 December registers, there has been a decline in completeness among nearly all the younger age groups, including an approximate nine percentage point decrease for those aged 18 – 19. There have also been declines among other groups associated with a more mobile population such as those renting from a private landlord.

These estimates of accuracy and completeness are for December 2015, a 'snapshot' in the lifecycle of the registers. Historically, the December registers, published at the end of the canvass, were at their most accurate and complete.

However, evidence indicates that, under IER, people are increasingly likely to register to vote in the run-up to an electoral event compared to at other points during the year. The [size of the electorate](#) was larger in May 2015 and in June 2016 than it was in December 2015. At the EU referendum, the Commission announced that there were 46,500,001 entries on the registers compared to the 43,478,635 that were on the equivalent 1 December 2015 registers, an increase of nearly 5% between December and June. This and other evidence indicate the completeness of the registers was likely to be higher in May 2015 and May/June 2016, when high-turnout polls took place, than it was in December 2015.

The Commission is clear that more work is needed to improve the system of electoral registration and to ensure that as many voters as possible are registered.

It has made a number of recommendations for improving the system and has called on the Government to both respond and then move on these quickly. These recommendations include that Government should explore how the online system can be upgraded so that people can check whether they are registered and also begin a programme of feasibility studies to examine in more detail how future systemic changes could be delivered, with pilots conducted to support this. The Commission has suggested that initial priorities for this should include exploring options for the automatic registration of 16 and 17 year olds and a focus on ways to ensure home movers are less likely to drop off the register. These should be the start of a coordinated strategy to move to a system of more automatic registration that could also eventually lead to 'election day registration'.

The Commission welcomes the work currently being undertaken to introduce online registration for electors in Northern Ireland.

The Commission is aware that legislation for the current review of UK Parliamentary constituencies has already been approved by Parliament. It has, however, invited the UK and Scottish Parliaments to consider whether it would be more appropriate in future to base

constituency and boundary reviews on electorate data taken from the registers used for elections, instead of a snapshot of the electoral registers from December.

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.