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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Anelay of St Johns	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Whip
Lord Bates	Minister of State, Department for International Development
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government, Wales Office
Lord Bridges of Headley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Dunlop	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office and Northern Ireland Office
Lord Freud	Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Whip
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Lord Nash	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Baroness Mobarik	Whip
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Minister of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Lord Price	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
Lord Prior of Brampton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health
Baroness Shields	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office and Department for Culture Media and Sport
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Young of Cookham	Whip
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Monday, 21 November 2016

Housing Benefit and Universal Credit

[HLWS273]

Lord Freud: My Right Honourable Friend The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (The Rt Hon Damian Green MP) has made the following Written Statement.

One of the Government's key commitments is to protect the most vulnerable. Supported housing supports hundreds of thousands of the most vulnerable people across the country. A safe, stable and supportive place to live can be key to improving people's lives, and for many it is a stepping stone to independent living in the longer term. The Government values the role supported housing plays and is committed to protecting and boosting the supply of supported housing and ensuring it provides value for money and works for those who use it as well as those who pay for it.

On 15th September I announced how from 2019/20 we will be introducing a new funding model for Supported Housing. This will ensure that the sector continues to be funded at the same level it would have otherwise been in 2019/20, taking in to account the effect of the Government policy on social sector rents. From 2019/20, core rent and service charges will continue to be funded through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit up to the level of the applicable Local Housing Allowance rate. For costs above the level of the Local Housing Allowance rate, Government will devolve an amount of funding for disbursement locally. In England, we will devolve funding to local authorities to provide additional 'top up funding' to providers where necessary, reflecting the higher average costs of offering supported housing, compared to general needs. An equivalent amount will be provided to the Devolved Administrations and it will be for them to decide how best to allocate the funding. Until 2019/20 the application of the Local Housing Allowance rate to supported housing will be deferred. This measure confirms the Government will continue to provide support for those who require supported housing and ensures providers can have the confidence they need to invest in new development

I set out in my statement of 15th September 2016 my intention to consult on the implementation of this new funding model and committed to publishing a consultation. Today, along with my Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, we are publishing a consultation document to develop the detail that will underpin the new funding model. We are also publishing the evidence review of supported accommodation in Great Britain, jointly commissioned by my Department and the Department for Communities and Local Government at the end of 2014. The review has provided a helpful insight in to the scale, scope and cost of the sector.

Furthermore, I am able to announce today, a simplification and alignment of the application of the Local Housing Allowance policy for general needs accommodation, in light of the changes that have been made to supported housing. We propose to bring in the policy for general needs accommodation in the Social Rented Sector in 2019, instead of 2018 as previously announced, to align with the changes to supported housing.

For Housing Benefit it will apply, as announced at Autumn Statement 2015, to tenants who have signed new or re-let tenancies from 1 April 2016 and their social sector rent is higher than the Local Housing Allowance rate. Those on Housing Benefit who took their tenancy before April 2016 will not be affected.

For Universal Credit, to ensure simplicity and a streamlined process, Local Housing Allowance rates will apply to all new and existing tenants, again only where their social rent is higher than the relevant Local Housing Allowance rate.

People moved by the Department from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit after April 2019 whose overall benefit entitlement is lower will be protected, in cash terms, under transitional protection arrangements. On reaching state pension age Universal Credit claimants flowing back on to Housing Benefit with tenancies signed before April 2016 will also be protected.

Additional Discretionary Housing Payments were made available at Autumn Statement 2015 to protect the vulnerable and help people make the transition to the new rules.

Social Housing

[HLWS274]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: Today, My Hon Friend the Minister of State for Housing & Planning & Minister for London has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Social housing has a crucial role to play in supporting those in most housing need. To that end, powers were provided for in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to introduce an income based rents policy, requiring local authorities to set higher rents for higher income council tenants.

Since the summer, the Government has been reviewing this policy. We have listened carefully to the views of tenants, local authorities and others and as a result, and we have decided not to proceed with a compulsory approach. Local authorities and housing associations will continue to have local discretion.

The Government remains committed to delivering its objective of ensuring social housing is occupied by those who need it most. But we need to do so in a way that supports those ordinary working class families who can struggle to get by, and in a way which delivers real savings to the taxpayer. The policy as previously envisaged did not meet those aims.

This is why we are introducing the mandatory use of fixed term tenancies for new tenants in local authority housing. This will better enable councils to give priority to people with the greatest housing need. Councils will review tenancies at the end of each fixed term to ensure that tenants still need a socially rented home. The Government's guidance to councils will make clear that they should take into account a household's financial circumstances when looking at this, and that, except in exceptional circumstances, tenancies should be targeted on those on lower incomes.

We will also consider whether other options exist to ensure that high income tenants in social housing make a greater contribution to costs.

We are keen to work with local authorities to tackle housing tenancy fraud. In 2013, the National Fraud Authority estimated the cost of such fraud – largely illegal sub-letting and lying about circumstances to obtain tenancies – to be in the region of £850 million a year.

For most existing tenants, social housing represents a home for life at a rent well below market levels. The Government remains committed to ensuring it goes to those who need it most.

We have already announced for this spending period we are putting £8 billion into affordable housing delivery. Building more homes is central to this Government's vision of a country that works for everyone. We will publish a Housing White Paper shortly, setting out measures to help us deliver this ambition.

Written Answers

Monday, 21 November 2016

Abortion

Asked by **Lord Shinkwin**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the percentage increase in the number of abortions performed on the grounds of disability between 1986 and 2015. [HL3064]

Asked by **Lord Shinkwin**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the percentage increase in the number of late term abortions (after 24 weeks) performed on the grounds of disability between 1991 and 2015. [HL3065]

Asked by **Lord Shinkwin**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the percentage increase in the number of abortions for Down's syndrome between 1991 and 2015. [HL3066]

Lord Prior of Brampton: There was a 64% increase in the number of abortions performed under Ground E (fetal abnormality) between 1986 (1,963) and 2015 (3,213).

The number of abortions performed under Ground E after 24 weeks gestation increased from 58 to 177 between 1991 and 2015, a 205% increase. This data should be seen in the context of the overall number of conceptions each year, of which there were 829,690 in England in 2014 (the latest year for which data are available).

The number of abortions for Down's syndrome was not recorded in 1991 as there was no diagnosis code specific to Down's Syndrome in the International Classification of Diseases, therefore a comparison between 1991 and 2015 levels is not available. There are complex reasons why there has been an increase in abortion for fetal abnormality which reflect societal changes. The age at which women are giving birth is increasing and age is a known risk for some anomalies. Increasing levels of obesity may also be a factor. Screening techniques have also improved which means that anomalies can be more accurately detected.

Agriculture: Subsidies

Asked by **Baroness Byford**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many farmers are still awaiting grants or payments under the Basic Payment Scheme; and of those, how many are farmers or landowners holding land of (1) less than 250, (2) 250–750, and (3) more than 750, acres. [HL3020]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: As at 9 November, in addition to claims which the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) cannot pay due to legal reasons such as probate, there are 5 BPS claims to complete for England. This

figure is an increase of 3 compared to the number previously reported as the agency completes routine final checks on nil value claims. The Agency continues to review new queries.

4 claimants have declared less than 250 acres, 1 declared between 250 and 750 acres and 0 declared more than 750 acres.

Air Pollution

Asked by **Baroness Randerson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the High Court judgment on 2 November, *ClientEarth (No 2) v Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs*, making an order quashing the 2015 Air Quality Plan, on their plans for the extension of Heathrow. [HL3034]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Air quality is a significant health issue that this government takes very seriously. The Government believes that the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme can be delivered without impacting on the UK's compliance with air quality limit values, with a suitable package of policies and mitigation measures.

The Government remains determined to meet its air quality obligations in the shortest possible time and will carefully consider the High Court judgment, and next steps.

As announced by the Secretary of State for Transport on 25 October, the Department for Transport, Defra and HM Treasury have already embarked on a joint project to identify further ways in which we can tackle this issue. By the time a new runway opens in the next decade, we intend to have made very substantial progress in tackling air quality challenges across our nation as a whole.

Aircraft: Air Conditioning

Asked by **The Countess of Mar**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) discussed the emergency diversion of flight BA 286 to Vancouver on 25 October with the Aircraft Commander or any of the crew before deciding not to investigate reports of "toxic fumes" and what was the reason for the decision. [HL3059]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) were notified of the diversion of the British Airways flight BA 286 to Vancouver by the Canadian Transport Safety Board. Canada, as the State of Occurrence under the international protocols, is responsible for conducting any investigation.

The AAIB did not conduct any inquiries with the Aircraft Commander or crew. The Canadian Transport Safety Board, working closely with British Airways and Airbus technicians carried out an investigation, but were unable to determine the cause. The aircraft returned to

service and British Airways continue to monitor key flights. To date no further reports have been made.

Alcoholic Drinks: Older People

Asked by Lord Chadlington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to reach and support people over the retirement age who are drinking more than the recommended weekly limits. [HL3136]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The *UK Chief Medical Officers' Low Risk Drinking Guidelines* provide the public with the most up to date scientific information to help people make informed decisions about their own drinking. A copy of the Guidelines is attached.

Upper tier authorities have been given the responsibility to improve the health of their population. This includes responsibility for tackling problem drinking and commissioning appropriate prevention and treatment services. Over the next five years, we will invest more than £16 billion in local government public health services.

Public Health England (PHE) is also investing in, or otherwise supporting, a number of programmes to support people over the retirement age who are drinking more than the recommended weekly limits, including:

- The NHS Health Check which reaches adults aged 40-74 and includes an alcohol risk assessment. If found to be drinking above the lower-risk guidelines, patients are offered brief advice to encourage them to reduce their drinking.

- The One You website which offers advice and information about alcohol, and tools which help people monitor their drinking. These include:

- The interactive 'How Are You?' quiz which includes structured questions on alcohol consumption based on the short AUDIT C questionnaire and delivers personalised messaging, including information on units and tips to reduce consumption.

- The Drinks Tracker app – a mobile app designed to support users to accurately track their consumption, providing feedback on units and calories consumed and tips on ways to cut down.

- On Monday 14 November, PHE launched a web-based single occasion checking tool that will provide information and support to identify risk levels and reduce alcohol consumption.

NHS England's *NHS Five Year Forward View* commits the National Health Service to support national action on alcohol. The National Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) payments framework was set up in 2009-10 to encourage services providers to continually improve the quality of care provided to patients and to achieve transparency. To help deliver their commitment to reduce harmful alcohol consumption, NHS England has published a CQUIN to incentivise interventions to reduce risky behaviours and prevent ill health through alcohol

consumption. This has a number of components, including alcohol screening, brief advice and referral to specialist services.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UK CMO Low Risk Drinking Guidelines [HL3136 - UK CMOs Low Risk Drinking Guidelines.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-11-09/HL3136>

Alcoholic Drinks: Young People

Asked by Lord Chadlington

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of research published in *BMJ Open* on 25 October showing that, across a large number of countries, women are catching up with men in alcohol consumption and its associated harms and that this trend is most prevalent amongst young adults, what steps they are taking to support young people to limit their alcohol consumption. [HL3137]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Education plays an important role in helping to ensure that young people are equipped

with the information they need to make informed, healthy decisions and to keep themselves safe.

Public Health England is working on a range of actions to support young people limit their alcohol consumption, including:

- Delivering the 'Rise Above' campaign which is a digital platform that uses interactive and engaging content to delay and prevent young people from engaging in exploratory behaviours, including drinking alcohol.

- Helping schools to draw on expert advice and develop evidence-based practice, including funding the Alcohol and Drug Education and Drug Education and Prevention Information Service, run by Mentor UK.

- Managing the FRANK information and advice service that provides tailored information and advice to young people and to parents, to help them protect their children from drug and/or alcohol misuse.

Upper tier authorities have been given the responsibility to improve the health of their population, including responsibility for tackling problem drinking and commissioning appropriate prevention and treatment services. Over the next five years, we will invest more than £16 billion in local government public health services.

Antenatal Results and Choices: Finance

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total amount of public money given to Antenatal Results and Choices (ARC) or its precursor organisation, Support After Termination for Abnormality, in each of the last

10 years; and for what purposes the money was given. [HL3061]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Department has made a number of payments to Antenatal Results and Choices over a period spanning from 2009-10 to 2012-13. The Department's financial systems only allow full financial year reporting of expenditure from 2009-10 onwards.

The payments made by financial year are as follows:

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Payment</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
2009-10	£145.25	Reimbursement for meeting attendance
2010-11	£15,000.00	Grant to improve Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) antenatal support
2011-12	£5,000.00	Grant to improve BME antenatal support
2012-13	£14,000.00	Grant to improve care following a first trimester pre-natal diagnosis
2012-13	£5,450.00	Grant to improve care following a first trimester pre-natal diagnosis
Total	£39,585.25	

Apprentices

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they have given or will give to enable charities to engage with the Trailblazer process to develop charity-specific apprenticeship standards, including in fields such as financial management and governance. [HL3072]

Lord Nash: The Trailblazer process is open to any employer group that wishes to come forward to develop a new apprenticeship standard, provided it can meet the Department's published criteria. Once a new standard is approved for development, a dedicated Relationship Manager is provided to support employers throughout the Trailblazer process.

We welcome any proposals for new standards from the charity sector, where they feel a specific occupation exists that is not already covered by a standard and would meet our criteria. We have recently received a proposal from a group of employers to develop a standard in the occupation of Voluntary and Community Sector Worker. We are currently reviewing the proposal and a decision will be made shortly on whether it meets our criteria to be approved for development.

Apprentices: Taxation

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on the charity sector of the proposal to limit the proportion of the annual value of a qualifying employer's Apprenticeship Levy funding pot that can be transferred to another employer to 10 per cent. [HL3070]

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that registered charities paying the Apprenticeship Levy will receive benefits from the scheme at least equivalent to the cost of the Levy. [HL3071]

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the amount, if any, which (1) registered charities, and (2) private sector employers, paying the Apprenticeship Levy will lose as a result of funds in their digital account expiring because the employer was unable to spend them. [HL3074]

Lord Nash: We have made a commitment to allow employers to transfer digital funds to other employers in their supply chains, sectors or communities in 2018. We have suggested that this should initially be set at 10 per cent.

We have created a new employer working group, including the Charities Finance Group, to help us further develop proposals for a transfers system that works for employers. Alongside detailed research into the needs of employers of all sizes, this group will help us design how transfers should work, the level of funds that could be transferred and what controls are needed to protect the integrity of the apprenticeship system.

Unlike other taxes, levied employers can get back their contributions if they are committed to training sufficient numbers of high-quality apprentices. They will also receive a top up of 10 per cent on their digital funds.

There has been no specific assessment of the amount registered charities and private sector employers paying the Apprenticeship Levy will lose as a result of funds in their digital account expiring because the employer was unable to spend them. Last month we announced an extension to the period employers will have to spend their digital funds, from 18 to 24 months.

We have published estimates of levy payments, and apprenticeship spending, by sector in the attached document.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Information_on_apprenticeship_levy [HL3070 HL3071 HL3074 attachment.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-11-08/HL3070>

Asylum: France

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of the Centres d'Accueil in France and the Grande Synthe camp at Dunkirk have been visited by British officials to identify persons eligible to come to the UK; and whether they intend to ask the government of France to

provide English-speaking interpreters for those who need them in those centres. [HL3026]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The protection of migrants in France, including those present in the camp in Dunkirk, remains the responsibility of the French Government. We have supported the French in their efforts to move all children from the camp in Calais to safe alternative accommodation across France. We are absolutely committed to safeguarding and protecting these children. Home Office staff escorted children on coaches during this operation, and are attending these centres, along with social workers and interpreters, to make sure those children who may be eligible to come to the UK continue to be assessed.

Atrial Fibrillation

Asked by Baroness Walmsley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 1 November (HL2501), within the CCGs which have uploaded data to CHART online, what variation exists regarding the management of patients with atrial fibrillation. [HL3067]

Asked by Baroness Walmsley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 1 November (HL2501), whether they intend to publish the key findings from the data collected through the GRASP-AF tool, saved on CHART online, to allow variations in services, diagnosis and care for patients with atrial fibrillation to be identified and addressed. [HL3068]

Asked by Baroness Walmsley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 1 November (HL2501), what steps they are taking to encourage the 58 CCGs who have currently not uploaded data from GRASP-AF to CHART online to do so. [HL3069]

Lord Prior of Brampton: CHART Online allows NHS England's Sustainable Improvement Team to easily track the use of the Guidance on Risk Assessment and Stroke Prevention in Atrial Fibrillation (GRASP-AF) amongst general practitioner (GP) practices. However, there are a number of other tools in addition to GRASP-AF that are available to GPs to help audit management of atrial fibrillation (AF) patients. The Sustainable Improvement Team cannot easily track the use of these alternative tools, and many of the 58 clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) not using GRASP-AF, may be using one of these alternative tools. However, the Sustainable Improvement Team's partnership with NHS RightCare will enable it to revisit practices in these CCGs to confirm the use of an alternative tool and to encourage the use of GRASP-AF in those practices that are not using, currently using it or an alternative.

The Sustainable Improvement Team uses aggregate data at CCG level or higher to help raise awareness of its work and to promote local improvement in the management of AF and has published a paper on the use of GRASP-AF and what it shows about the management of AF. A copy of the paper *The use of anticoagulants in the management of atrial fibrillation among general practices in England* is attached. The team also shares high level CHART Online data with organisations such as the Atrial Fibrillation Association and Public Health England.

The following table sets out information on variation in the prevalence and management of patients with AF. ¹

CCG level variation in the recorded prevalence and management of patients with AF

	Mean	Range
AF Prevalence	1.88%	0.75-2.91%
% of AF patients at high risk of stroke (CHADSVASc of 2 or more ²):	58.6%	51.8-65.9%
% of AF patients at high risk and on oral anticoagulant (as recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence [NICE]):	63.5%	48.3-80.8%
% of AF patients at high risk and on aspirin alone (not recommended by NICE) ³ :	27.9%	11.3-42.5%

Source: NHS England

1. These figures include only those CCGs which have at least 50% of their practices uploading to CHART Online, to avoid the data being skewed by individual practices.

2. CHADSVASc calculates stroke risk for patients with atrial fibrillation.

3. The removal of aspirin from the Quality Outcomes Framework some time ago may filter into the system as will continued adoption of the NICE guidance from 2015.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

GRASP AF Article [10 11 2016 HL3067, HL3069, HL3068 Bns Walmsley GRASP AF etc.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-11-07/HL3067>

Belfast International Airport

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, and if so when, they were approached by the Northern Ireland Executive to establish if the proposal to provide public funds to ensure the continuation of the United Airlines flight between Belfast International Airport and Newark New Jersey was compliant with European Law. [HL3060]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Northern Ireland Executive sought advice from Her Majesty's Government on 8 August 2016 on how to approach the European Commission with this case. In giving this advice, Her Majesty's Government made it very clear that the UK had to honour all its obligations under the Treaty and continue to abide by the law.

Any decision on whether to notify the European Commission was ultimately a matter for the Northern Ireland Executive as the public authority giving the aid.

Brexit

Asked by Lord Hollick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, prior to the proceedings in the High Court, they received legal advice on the question of whether notification under Article 50 can be revoked after Article 50 has been invoked; and, if so, whether they will publish that advice. [HL3138]

Lord Bridges of Headley: A clear majority of the UK electorate voted to leave the EU and we will respect the will of the people. As Government lawyers made clear in the High Court, the Government's position is that once given, our notification will not be withdrawn.

Our efforts will be focused on getting the best deal possible for the UK in the negotiations with the EU.

Embryos

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 24 July 2015 (HL1524), why the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority does not hold data in its register regarding the number of embryos experimented upon; whether this lack of data applies to embryos created specifically for research; and if so, what measures they intend to take to regulate such activity effectively. [HL3079]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has advised that there is no statutory requirement for its register to hold information on the number of embryos experimented upon. HFEA licensed research centres are required to record information every year on the number of embryos donated, created and used for research purposes. Compliance with this requirement is verified by inspection.

Financial Services: Greater London

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on London's position as a financial centre if the UK were to leave the Single Market. [HL3038]

Lord Young of Cookham: The UK's great strengths as a financial centre – geographical location, high standards of regulation, stable legal system, highly skilled workforce and cluster of complementary professional services – have not changed following the referendum.

The Government is taking the time to understand the needs of the UK financial services sector – and indeed all UK sectors – in advance of activating Article 50.

It is important Britain maintains its status as a great place for financial services. This is why the Government stands ready to help the sector maximise the opportunities that leaving the EU presents.

Flood Control

Asked by Lord Wasserman

To ask Her Majesty's Government to what extent they have involved local Police and Crime Commissioners in their work to reduce flood risk across the country. [HL3120]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 provides the legal basis for Government's preparations for emergencies. The Act sets out provisions for Local Resilience Forums that compile local risk profiles and establish a planned, co-ordinate approach to dealing with realised risks. The Government encourages Local Resilience Forums to produce a local plan as this will help flood responders to engage to any flood event.

Chief Constables are leading members of Local Resilience Forums which are required to produce emergency plans for flooding and other civil contingencies.

Forests

Asked by Baroness Parminter

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Gardiner of Kimble on 2 November (HL2458), when they plan to extend procurement policy to other commodities associated with deforestation, such as soy and beef, in fulfilment of their commitment under the 2014 New York Declaration on Forests. [HL3031]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Through the Amsterdam Declaration "Towards Eliminating Deforestation from Agricultural Commodity Chains with European Countries", of which the UK is a signatory, we are working towards collective action to take forward pledges to address deforestation.

We do not currently have any plans to extend our procurement policies to soy and beef.

Gaza: Sewers

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the breakdown of sewage systems in Gaza, which

international body assesses the cleanliness of the sea off the coast of Israel; and whether they have issued warnings to visitors about the risks of raw sewage being present in the area. [HL3109]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We are unaware of any international body issuing a warning about this specific risk. We are, however, aware that a number of Israeli institutions and organisations have highlighted strong environmental concerns around water pollution and Gaza sewage.

There remains an urgent need for all the parties to reach an agreement that addresses the underlying causes of conflict in Gaza and to take the necessary steps to ensure Gaza's reconstruction and economic recovery. Any agreement should ensure that Hamas and other militant groups permanently end rocket and other attacks against Israel; the Palestinian Authority resumes control of Gaza and restores effective governance; and that Israel lifts its restrictions to ease the suffering of ordinary Palestinians.

Government Departments: Procurement

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of Government procurement expenditure is spent on small and medium-sized enterprises. [HL3052]

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen: In 2014-15, Central Government spent over £12 billion (27.1%) with small and medium sized businesses, directly and through supply chains. This shows a continued year on year increase in SMEs winning public procurements.

The Government is determined to deliver its new target of one third of spend with SMEs by the end of this Parliament.

Health Services and Social Services

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to integrate health and social care with local authorities. [I] [HL3055]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Better Care Fund (BCF), implemented from the beginning of 2015-16, is the first national, mandatory integration policy. Its overarching aims are to keep people living independently at home and prevent them from needing more support.

In 2015-16, it was a minimum £3.8 billion nationally and local areas pooled an additional £1.5 billion, taking the total to £5.3 billion. In 2016-17, it will be increased to a mandated minimum of £3.9 billion and early analysis of BCF plans indicates that local areas have once again pooled over and above the minimum, taking the total to approaching £6 billion.

The BCF has set the foundation, but we want to go further, faster, to deliver joined up care. The ways local areas integrate will be different, and some parts of the

country are already demonstrating different approaches, which reflect models the government supports.

It is hoped that devolution can act as an enabler of integration in health and social care. Where areas are excelling in their integration work, devolution has the potential to act as a next step for further opportunities, including greater integration between health and other public services.

We are currently designing the criteria and assurance process for the best-performing integration areas to graduate from the BCF. The *Integration and Better Care Fund Policy Framework for 2017-19*, due to be published later this month, will set out the requirements for BCF plans and further detail on the graduation process.

Hepatitis

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the UK's commitment to the elimination of viral hepatitis C by 2030 made at the World Health Organisation in May, what measures they are putting in place to achieve this aim in England, and whether they will reconsider the case for a national improvement framework for hepatitis C. [HL3153]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Several key measures contribute to the United Kingdom's efforts to achieve the aims of the global strategy, including the national programme of screening of blood donors and blood transfusions for blood-borne viruses to ensure safe supplies. 100% of blood donors are screened with quality assured methods, and national guidance and legislation around infection control in healthcare settings includes a policy for healthcare workers to prevent nosocomial transmission of blood-borne viruses. Prevention efforts focus on minimising harm in people who inject drugs through access to opiate substitution therapies and needle syringe exchange programmes, with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance *Needle and syringe programmes, 2014* to support these interventions. NICE guidance *Hepatitis B and C testing: people at risk of infection, 2012* has also been published to improve uptake of testing for hepatitis C in various settings. Copies of both publications are attached.

While treatment coverage has been historically low, in 2015, approximately 8000 people infected with hepatitis C were estimated to be treated, an increase of around 40% on the previous year which may reflect improved access to and acceptability of treatments, including the new Direct Acting Antivirals.

Public Health England has published hepatitis C metrics for the report *Hepatitis C in the UK 2016 report - Working towards its elimination as a major public health threat*. A copy of this report is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Hepatitis C in the UK report
[Hepatitis_C_in_the_UK_2016_report.pdf]

Needle and syringe programmes 2014 [needle-and-syringe-programmes.pdf]

Testing people at risk of infection 2012 [hepatitis-b-and-c-testing-people-at-risk-of-infection.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-11-09/HL3153>

Housing: Prices

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of relative increases in house prices and wages on the affordability of housing. [HL3040]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: The Government publishes live tables on the housing market and house prices here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-housing-market-and-house-prices>

In 2015, median house prices were more than nine times median incomes in 127 of 324 local authorities (39 per cent) for which data was available.

This Government is clear that to make housing more affordable we need to build many more homes. Our Housing White Paper will set out the steps we will take to make the housing market work for everyone. The Office for Budget Responsibility will include future forecasts for house prices and wages in their Economic and Fiscal Outlook alongside the Autumn Statement.

In Vitro Fertilisation

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Prior of Brampton on 11 July (HL1098) and 7 November (HL2544), which previous answers identified the members of the expert panel convened by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) who shared private and confidential correspondence with members of the HFEA Executive that had not been submitted to the Authority as part of any formal calls for evidence; and if they are unable to answer the questions, why they are unable to do so. [HL3076]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The members of the expert panel convened by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) who shared private and confidential correspondence with members of the HFEA Executive, that had not been submitted to the Authority as part of any formal calls for evidence, have not been identified. I refer the noble Lord to the answer of 7 November 2016 (HL2544). The HFEA has advised that it has nothing further to add, in respect of the correspondence between Professor Grifo and the expert panel, to that already set out in previous answers.

Institute for Apprenticeships

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government what efforts they have made to ensure appropriate representation of the charity sector on the board of the Institute for Apprenticeships. [HL3073]

Lord Nash: The Chair and Board members are being appointed in accordance with the public appointments process. It is expected that the members of the Institute's board will be comprised primarily of persons with a background as employers and business leaders. This is to ensure that employers continue to drive apprenticeship quality. Applications to join the Institute's board, which have now closed, were open to representatives of all organisations, including those from the charitable sector.

Israel: Bedouin

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are planning to discuss with the government of Israel the proposed resettlement plan for the Palestinian Bedouin Jahalin tribe living in Area C of the West Bank; and if so, what emphasis they will place on the case for a plan to provide good access to grazing land, markets, schools, water and electricity. [HL3086]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not discussed this specific situation with the Israeli authorities, we have made it clear that any forcible transfer would be a breach of international humanitarian law and would have serious ramifications on Israel's international standing. Together with EU partners, we continue to urge the Israeli Government to meet its obligations regarding the living conditions of the Bedouin population in Area C, including by halting forced transfer of population and demolition of Bedouin housing and infrastructure, ensuring access to water and addressing humanitarian needs.

On 3 November, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood), met Abu Khamis, leader of the Khan al Ahmar Bedouin community, and an official from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to discuss the situation in Area C.

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the conclusions to be drawn from the 2014 film *High Hopes* about the Jahalin tribe; and what response, if any, they have had to protests made by British ministers and MPs about the demolition of the village of Khan al-Ahmar in the E1 zone on the West Bank. [HL3139]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK is gravely concerned by Israeli proposals to relocate the Bedouin population from the E1 area, which the United Nations

have said could constitute forcible transfer. These plans could have a devastating impact on the communities concerned and will likely open the way for further settlement expansion – endangering the viability of the two-state solution.

We have been clear about our grave concerns with the Israeli authorities and we regularly raise this through our Embassy in Tel Aviv. On 3 November, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr. Ellwood), met Abu Khamis, leader of the Khan al Ahmar Bedouin community, and an official from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to discuss the situation of the Bedouin living in the E1 Zone of the West Bank.

Israel: Palestinians

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding the physical assault and injury of a 6-year-old Palestinian boy in Silwan (East Jerusalem) by an Israeli settler, as reported by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Protection of Civilians Weekly Report 18–31 October. [HL3110]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not raised this specific incident, we urge the Israeli authorities to conduct an investigation into all instances of alleged settler violence. We have repeatedly raised with the Israeli authorities our concerns about incidents of settler violence and intimidation, including the importance of bringing the extremist settlers responsible to justice and of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

Israel: Trees

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding reports of the illegal destruction by Israeli settlers of olive trees owned by Palestinians, including those of Hani Fanun. [HL3106]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli authorities, we note the particular sensitivities around olive trees given their status as a national symbol and the sole source of income for many Palestinian farmers. We have repeatedly raised with the Israeli authorities our concerns about incidents of settler violence (including the destruction of olive trees) and intimidation, including the importance of bringing the extremist settlers responsible to justice and of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

Judiciary

*Asked by **Lord Lester of Herne Hill***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps the Lord Chancellor intends to take, in relation to public attacks on the judiciary following the judgment of the High Court of Justice on 3 November, to uphold the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary. [HL3028]

Lord Keen of Elie: The Lord Chancellor has made clear in a number of statements that she considers an independent judiciary to be the cornerstone of the rule of law, and that it is her duty to defend that independence.

NHS: Finance

*Asked by **Lord Kennedy of Southwark***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the estimated total deficit level of NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts. [HL3054]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The National Health Service leadership bodies have set out their own plan for delivering financial sustainability for the NHS, in the *Five Year Forward View* (October 2014) and *Strengthening Financial Performance and Accountability* document (July 2016), in which NHS Improvement confirm their expectation is that providers will deliver a net deficit of £580 million in this financial year. A copy of this document is attached.

NHS Improvement reports progress against this plan for NHS providers on a quarterly basis. The *Quarterly performance of the provider sector as at 30 September 2016* report was published in November 2016 and is attached.

This confirms that the net deficit across all NHS providers was £648 million at the end of quarter two. Progress by the end of this quarter is encouraging, with 26% fewer NHS providers forecast to end the year in deficit than in the prior year and with the overwhelming majority of providers on track to hit the financial plans they have set out for the current year.

There is no room for complacency. That is why the NHS needs to stick to its strong financial plan, supported by our £10 billion investment and series of measures to help hospitals become more efficient and reduce the use of expensive agency staff.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Quarterly performance 30 September 2016

[Quarterly_performance_of_the_provider_sector_as_at_30_September_2016_-_Full_report (1).pdf]

Strengthening financial performance accountability

[Strengthening_financial_performance_and_accountability_in_2016-17_-_Final_2 (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-11-07/HL3054>

Asked by Lord Mawhinney

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 11 October (HL Deb, col 1787), how much resource has been taken out of acute hospitals since the inception of the five-year forward view on mental health; and of this how much has been transferred to (1) mental health care, (2) community care, and (3) primary care. [HL3097]

Lord Prior of Brampton: All trusts will see an increase in overall funding, as we are supporting the National Health Service's own plan by investing an additional £10 billion in real terms over the six years since the *Five Year Forward View* was published, including a £3.8 billion real terms increase this year alone. Official data on trusts' exact income levels will not be known until the end of the financial year.

Pakistan: Minority Groups

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have discussed with the government of Pakistan the incidence of children from minority backgrounds failing to complete their education and leaving without qualifications as a consequence of discrimination and negative attitudes towards minorities and its impact on poverty in Pakistan. [HL3012]

Lord Bates: According to UNESCO Pakistan has the second highest number of out of school children globally. DFID Pakistan's education programmes work with the provincial governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to increase enrolment and reduce the number of children out of school. We are concerned about every child that is out of school, whatever the reason for them being out of school. The Governments that we work with are committed to ensure that every child is able to go to school and to stay in school and we work with them to make that happen. Since 2011 UK Aid has benefitted 6.8 million children in primary education. DFID's national education campaign, Alif Ailaan, highlights and campaigns on key educational issues such as out of school children and learning outcomes for the poor and most marginalised.

Pregnancy: Screening

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government which groups the Department of Health met before making the decision to introduce non-invasive prenatal testing on the NHS. [HL3062]

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether an equality impact assessment was conducted before the decision was made to introduce non-invasive prenatal testing on the NHS. [HL3063]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Department takes advice on all aspects of screening from the independent UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) and has met with its Secretariat to discuss its recommendation on non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT) for Down's, Edwards' and Patau's syndromes as an additional test in the current NHS Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme.

NIPT presents a more accurate and safer screen for Down's syndrome and reduces the need for diagnostic invasive prenatal testing, which carries a risk of miscarriage. Modelling suggests that NIPT, as an additional test in the current screening pathway will result in the number of women offered invasive prenatal diagnosis (IPD) tests reducing from 7,910 to 1,434, leading to a reduction in IPD-related miscarriage of pregnancies from 46 to 3 per year. The new test will be offered to pregnant women whose chance of having a baby with Down's, Edwards' or Patau's syndromes is greater than 1 in 150.

As is standard practice, the UK NSC held a three month public consultation to enable stakeholders to feed into the review. 30 responses were received to the consultation from a wide range of stakeholders. A copy of the responses to the consultation is attached.

The Department is satisfied that the screening programme is compliant with its obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and that the Programme is compliant with any obligations under the Equality Act.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Consultation Responses [20161110 - HL3062 and HL3063 - UK NSC cfDNA Consultation Responses.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-11-07/HL3062>

Prescription Drugs: Prisons

Asked by The Earl of Sandwich

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent research they have carried out into the availability and effects of prescription medicines in HM Prisons, including the numbers of prisoners with prescriptions and the relationship between the use of prescription drugs and illegal drugs. [HL3155]

Lord Prior of Brampton: NHS England and Public Health England (PHE) recognise the effects of illicit use and abuse of prescribed medicines by people in prison - the focus of this is with medicines prescribed for pain as part of a wider programme to improve the medicines optimisation for people in prison. PHE and NHS England have undertaken a number of specific reviews, audits and guidance, including a *Review of Unclassified Deaths in Custody, 2013* and *Advice for prescribers on the risk of the misuse of pregabalin and gabapentin, 2014*. Copies of both publications are attached.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons published *Changing patterns of substance misuse in adult prisons and service responses - A thematic review* in December 2015, which included a look at the relationship between substance misuse and use of painkillers. A copy of the review is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Advice for prescribers [Advice for prescribers on the risk of the misuse of pregabalin and gabapentin.pdf]

Changing patterns of substance misuse thematic rev [Changing patterns of substance misuse in adult prisons and service responses - a thematic review.pdf]

Review of unclassified deaths in custody [A review of unclassified deaths in custody.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-11-09/HL3155>

Asked by **The Earl of Sandwich**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the recommendations of the British Medical Association and specialised charities on over-prescribed drugs and their effects have been shared with local doctors and health workers who regularly attend prisons. [HL3157]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Public Health England (PHE), Faculty of Pain Medicine, Royal College of Anaesthetics, the Royal College of General Practitioners and the British Pain Society have published a range of reviews, audits and guidance and these are widely disseminated to local clinicians and prison staff.

As a result of these publications, NHS England has delivered a Health and Justice medicines optimisation programme via the Health and Justice Clinical Reference Group in partnership with PHE, National Offender Management Service and national clinical networks. The aim of this programme is to ensure that medicines optimisation for people in prison is equivalent to that available for people in the community for all medicines and provided safely.

As part of this programme, NHS England published a National Prison Pain Management Formulary in December 2015 to support clinicians in the management of acute or persistent pain and neuropathic pain, taking into account the specific challenges of prescribing pain medicines in prisons. A copy of the *Pain Management Formulary for Prisons: The Formulary for acute, persistent and neuropathic pain* and the associated *Pain Management Formulary for Prisons : Implementation Guide* are attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Implementation guide [Pain management formulary for prisons - Implementation Guide.pdf]

Pain management formulary for prisons [Pain management formulary for prisons.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-11-09/HL3157>

Railways: Tickets

Asked by **Baroness Randerson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have undertaken a pilot project on the feasibility of providing season tickets on terms appropriate for part-time workers for use by rail passengers; and if so, when that pilot project was undertaken and what were the results. [HL3035]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) have recently concluded a trial on two routes (Horsham to London and Radlett to London) where passengers with a season ticket who travelled at off peak times were offered cashback for each journey undertaken. A feasibility report detailing the costs and benefits of introducing innovative flexible ticket types throughout the franchise will be provided to the Department shortly. Officials will then discuss with the operator how to proceed with this.

Customers on some routes are already benefitting from more flexible tickets. Arriva Trains Wales offer a Mobile Multi-Flex product using barcode tickets on smartphones, Great Northern offer paper-based carnets and c2c have launched their flexi-day season on their smartcard. Passengers who commute three times a week to London from Southend can save over £135 a year with the new ticket.

In addition to this, the South Western and West Midlands franchise competitions include the expectation that bidders will introduce new, more flexible products as part of their offer.

Refugees: Mediterranean Sea

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they are making for the introduction of safe and legal routes for refugees and migrants, or for secure holding areas in North Africa, to prevent further deaths by drowning in the Mediterranean; and what assessment they have made of plans other governments are making. [HL3027]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We operate several resettlement schemes, working closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to provide safe and legal routes to the UK for refugees: Gateway, Mandate, the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme and the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement scheme.

We are under no obligation to consider asylum claims lodged outside UK territory and it is not appropriate to do so. Those who need international protection should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach - that is the fastest route to safety.

Those granted refugee status or humanitarian protection in the UK are able to sponsor their pre-flight family members to join them under the family reunion policy. This includes those granted humanitarian protection in the UK under one of our resettlement schemes.

The UK has played an important role in framing the global response to the challenges of large-scale movements of refugees and migrants. The UK co-hosted the London-Syria Conference, the Wilton Park Protracted Displacement Forum and helped to deliver the World Humanitarian Summit.

Russia: Sanctions

Asked by Lord Northbrook

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the implications for the UK of proposed international sanctions against Russia. [HL3182]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Along with our allies in the EU and US, we continue to step up pressure on the Assad regime and its Russian backers to resolve the crisis in Syria. The UK will remain at the forefront of international efforts, including maintaining EU resolve on sanctions.

Saudi Arabia: Capital Punishment

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Saudi Arabia concerning the findings of the report by Reprieve which found that 72 per cent of those identified as facing execution in Saudi Arabia were sentenced to death for non-violent offences and that the use of torture to extract confessions was widespread. [HL3057]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK Government is firmly opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances and in every country, including Saudi Arabia. We make our position known very clearly in public and in private. We do not hesitate to express our views and the government of Saudi Arabia is well aware of our position.

Saudi Arabia remains a Foreign and Commonwealth Office human rights priority country, because of the use of the death penalty, limited access to justice, women's issues and restrictions on freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of religion or belief. The Saudi Arabian Government is well aware of our views.

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Reprieve which found that 72 per cent of those identified as facing execution in Saudi Arabia were sentenced to death for non-violent offences, and whether they will review their policy on the selling of arms to Saudi Arabia. [HL3058]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK Government is firmly opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances and in every country, including Saudi Arabia. We make our position known very clearly in public and in private. We do not hesitate to express our views and the Government of Saudi Arabia is well aware of our position.

The UK Government takes its arms export licensing responsibilities very seriously and operates one of the most robust arms export control regimes in the world. All export licence applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, taking account of all relevant factors at the time of the application. Risks around human rights abuses are a key part of our assessment. We do not export equipment where we assess there is a clear risk that it might be used for internal repression.

Sentencing Council for England and Wales

Asked by Lord Beecham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the announcement by the Cabinet Office in April 2011 that all non-departmental bodies would have to undergo a substantive triennial review in accordance with the Public Bodies Act 2011, whether the Sentencing Council has undergone such a review; and if so, with what result. [HL3018]

Lord Keen of Elie: Triennial reviews were developed by government to assess the ongoing need for the function of a non-departmental public body. Due to its unique role in maintaining the constitutional balance between the executive, legislature, and the judiciary, this question was not relevant to the Sentencing Council of England and Wales. The Ministry of Justice and Cabinet Office therefore agreed it would be exempt from the requirement to undergo a triennial review.

Tunisia: Travel Information

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's current travel guidance for Tunisia; when that advice was last re-assessed; and what assessment they have made of the prospects for increased tourism. [HL3025]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises against all but essential travel for Tunisia, bar several areas where we advise against all travel. Travel advice is kept under constant review. Our advice for Tunisia was last updated on 19 October 2016 and is available at <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/tunisia>. When determining travel advice, the safety of British Nationals is our sole concern; we have not forecast what the future levels of tourism might be in Tunisia.

Turkey: Human Rights

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 1 November (HL2451), what was the outcome of the representations made to the government of Turkey concerning the ongoing breaches of human rights and rights of press freedom. [HL3021]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK has an ongoing dialogue with the Turkish Government on human rights and press freedoms. We will continue to underline the importance of fundamental rights and the protection of freedom of expression, and to monitor the situation closely.

Turkey: Overseas Investment

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 8 November (HL2416), what is their assessment of the political and personal safety risks facing British-based businesses and business people of a Kurdish background seeking to operate in Turkey. [HL3099]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Government closely monitors the security situation for British national visitors of all backgrounds in 225 countries. Our travel advice for Turkey is regularly updated and contains advice about which parts of the country may present risks to visitors.

Turkey: Politics and Government

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making bi-laterally and multi-laterally to the government of Turkey about the detention of journalists in Turkey and its implication for the freedom of the press and free speech. [HL3048]

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making bilaterally and multilaterally to the government of Turkey on the arrest of Turkish Members of Parliament, the implications for democracy and stability, and the risk of stimulating extremism. [HL3094]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We continue to follow developments in Turkey closely and underline the importance of the rule of law and the protection of freedom of expression.

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Rutland and Melton (Sir Alan Duncan) raised these issues during his visit to Turkey on 19 October, and most recently with Turkey's Minister for Europe, Omer Celik, in a telephone call on 7 November. The Government also regularly discusses such issues in international fora. The EU issued a statement on 8 November expressing concern at recent events in Turkey, including the detention of Members of Parliament and journalists.

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Turkey about the detention of the co-chairs of the HDP Party, and a number of other MPs and elected mayors. [HL3084]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We continue to follow developments in Turkey closely and underline the importance of the rule of law and the protection of freedom of expression. The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Rutland and Melton (Sir Alan Duncan) raised these issues most recently with Turkey's Minister for Europe, Omer Celik, in a telephone call on 7 November.

Unmanned Air Vehicles

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what legislation covers the use of drones in the UK by (1) security forces, (2) other public bodies, (3) commercial and voluntary organisations, and (4) individuals; and what assessment they have made of the need for new legislation to regulate the use of drones. [HL3022]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government is working closely with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and industry to adapt and strengthen UK regulations as drone use and the related technology develops.

Small drones in the UK, those weighing 20kg or less, must be flown in accordance with Articles 94, 95 and 23 of the Air Navigation Order 2016 (ANO). Drones of more than 20kg are subject to all relevant provisions of the ANO. The ANO covers the use of drones by public bodies, commercial and voluntary organisations, and individuals, as well as the police and other security services. The use of drones in UK airspace by UK Armed Forces is regulated by the Military Aviation Authority.

Drones of more than 150kg are also subject to European safety legislation, in particular, the European Aviation Safety Agency Basic Regulation 216/2008. This Regulation is currently being revised and updated.

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