

Daily Report

Wednesday, 25 January 2017

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 25 January 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:08 P.M., 25 January 2017). 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

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Hate Crime

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[60575\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what guidance his Department provides to ensure the consistent prosecution and assessment of hate crime by the regional Crown Prosecution Service offices.

Robert Buckland:

Hate crime creates fear and can have a devastating impact on individuals and communities. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is committed to tackling hate crime in any form. In 2015-16, the CPS prosecuted 15,442 hate crime prosecutions, the highest number to date.

The CPS has published Public Policy Statements on all monitored strands of hate crime as a public consultation to demonstrate its understanding and commitment and to encourage public confidence. These statements were developed in partnership with community stakeholders, an approach which is being delivered nationally.

The CPS policy for dealing with hate crime cases is delivered by consistent application of national legal guidance. Legal guidance is available on all strands of monitored hate crime and incorporates relevant case law and good practice. It assists prosecutors to assess the issues in hate crime cases, make the right charging decisions and build robust prosecutions. The CPS ensures the policy and legal guidance is applied nationally by delivering national training to ensure effective application. The hate crime training is mandatory for all prosecutors.

There are Hate Crime Coordinators in every CPS Area and they meet twice a year to share best practice and inform national guidance. Since January 2015, the CPS has also operated a Hate Crime Assurance Scheme to ensure consistency in prosecuting cases. To assist the consistent prosecution and assessment of hate crime, the CPS nationally and locally, seeks the practical input of individuals with experience and expertise in supporting victims of hate crime.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Centre for Maritime Intelligent Systems: Staff

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[60685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many people are employed by the Centre for Maritime Intelligent Systems.

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[60688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the 2016-17 budget is of the Centre for Maritime Intelligent Systems.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Centre for Maritime Intelligent Systems is an industry-led initiative supported by the Defence Growth Partnership. It received a £400,000 Local Enterprise Grant offer in 2014 and this grant is open to Centre for Maritime Intelligent Systems (CMIS) to access on a match funded basis until 31 March 17. In FY2016-17 they expect to draw down c. £25,000 of this grant. Industry provides all other resources for CMIS to operate.

■ Horizon 2020

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[60308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will prioritise maintaining access to Horizon 2020 funding for UK researchers during negotiations on the UK leaving the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

This Government wants the UK to be the go-to place for innovators and investors across the world, and we intend to secure the right outcome for the UK research base as we exit the European Union.

As my Rt hon. Friend the Prime Minister has said, we would welcome an agreement to continue to collaborate with our European partners on major science, research, and technology initiatives. However it is too early to speculate on the UK's future relationship with specific EU research programmes, including Horizon 2020 and successor programmes.

The Government is committed to ensuring the UK remains a world leader in international research and innovation.

■ Research: Scotland

Callum McCaig:

[\[60972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he plans to take to protect UK R&D investment that has been made in Scottish universities after the UK leaves the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government is committed to ensuring the UK remains a world leader in international research and innovation. As my Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister has said, we would welcome an agreement to continue to collaborate with our European partners on major science, research, and technology initiatives. The Chancellor announced in August that the Treasury will guarantee all successful competitively-bid-for EU research funding applied for before the UK leaves the EU, so that UK

participants, and their international partners, can be confident that they will have the funding necessary throughout the life of their Horizon 2020 funded project.

At the Autumn Statement 2016, the Government committed an extra £2 billion per year to research and development funding by 2020-21, including for the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. This funding is additional to the protection of science resource funding that was announced at the spending review in autumn 2015, where science resource funding was protected in real terms, at £4.7 billion per year, for the rest of the Parliament. In the current financial year, total research and innovation funding is over £6bn.

My Rt Hon Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has also confirmed a further £100m support for collaboration between universities across the range of knowledge exchange activity, and a further £100m for Innovate UK for the Biomedical Catalyst, from 2017/18 to 2020/21. The devolved administrations, including Scotland, will receive funding through the Barnett formula in the usual way in respect of any funding announced for England.

This Government wants the UK to be the go-to place for innovators and investors across the world, and we intend to secure the right outcome for the UK research base as we exit the European Union.

■ **Tidal Power: Swansea Bay**

Grant Shapps:

[\[60120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he expects the Swansea Bay tidal lagoon power plan to be complete and operational.

Jesse Norman:

The commissioning date of the proposed project is a matter for the developer. It would be dependent on a range of factors outside the control of Government, including the securing of all necessary regulatory permissions. It would also be subject to the successful conclusion of any Contract for Difference negotiation and state aid clearance.

■ **UK Defence Solutions Centre: Staff**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[60686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many people are employed by the UK Defence Solutions Centre.

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[60687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the 2016-17 budget is of the UK Defence Solutions Centre.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The UK Government and the defence industry have committed matched-resource totalling c£3.5m to the UK Defence Solutions Centre (UKDSC) in the financial year

2016-17. As of 1 Jan 2017, there were 4 staff directly employed by the UKDSC and 22 secondees from the defence industry.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Prostate Cancer

Jim Shannon: [\[60338\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many men have been diagnosed with prostate cancer in each of the last five years.

Chris Skidmore:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Letter to Member - Prostate Cancer [PQ_Letter_60338_V1.pdf]

■ Small Businesses: Closures

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[60288\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of small businesses that have closed in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

Chris Skidmore:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Letter to Member - Small Business Closure [PQ60288 v.02.pdf]

TREASURY

■ Companies: Ownership

Dr Rupa Huq: [\[60459\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the private registers of beneficial ownership currently being created by the UK's Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies will be incorporated into the UK's existing exchange of information pertaining to beneficial ownership with France, Spain, Germany and Italy.

Jane Ellison:

The UK launched an initiative with the EU G5 for the systematic exchange of beneficial ownership information in April 2016. More than 50 jurisdictions, including all Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories with a significant financial sector, have now signed up. Work is ongoing on the development of the initiative.

■ Credit Reference Agencies

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[60542\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his Department will takes step to ensure that consumers are not financially penalised after being erroneously designated by a company as a financial debtor.

Simon Kirby:

The government has fundamentally reformed regulation of the consumer credit market. Responsibility for regulation was transferred from the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) in April 2014.

The FCA has binding rules for firms, actionable with the full range of enforcement powers. These rules strengthen consumer protection and provide greater clarity to firms on what is expected of them. Firms are required to comply with the FCA's high-level principles, including 'treating customers fairly'.

FCA rules require firms to take reasonable steps to ensure that they maintain accurate and adequate data (including in respect of debt and repayment history). This mitigates the risk that a consumer who is not the true borrower is pursued for repayment of the debt, or that the borrower is pursued for an incorrect amount.

Firms must also ensure that information they hold about customers is made available to those involved in debt recovery processes. This information includes, for example, whether a customer is in financial difficulties or is particularly vulnerable; if the customer has disputed the debt; or whether there is a repayment plan or forbearance in place.

If consumers are concerned about erroneous entries on their credit file, they should contact the Information Commissioner (ICO). The ICO is an independent UK supervisory authority that oversees and enforces compliance with both the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000.

■ Debts

Mike Kane:

[\[60983\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the Financial Conduct Authority's statutory deadline is for an authorisation for regulated activity once an application for a licence has been lodged.

Mike Kane:

[\[60984\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many commercial debt management companies have been authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority in the last five years.

Mike Kane:

[\[60985\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the average cost to the Financial Conduct Authority is of each appeal process.

Mike Kane: [\[60986\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many commercial debt management companies that have been refused a licence by the Financial Conduct Authority have appealed its decision in the last five years; and how many of those companies won their appeal.

Mike Kane: [\[60987\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many commercial debt management companies have applied for a licence but have been declined by the Financial Conduct Authority in the last five years.

Simon Kirby:

This is an operational matter for the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), which is operationally independent from Government.

The questions have been passed on to the FCA. The FCA will reply directly to the Honourable gentleman by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

■ Revenue and Customs: Southend on Sea

James Duddridge: [\[60629\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will review the (a) plans for and (b) timings of the planned closure of the HM Revenue and Customs facility in Southend.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC's) plans to move to regional centres is part of the wider Government strategy to develop Government hubs. This will help to maximise flexibility, collaboration and customer service while reducing costs to the taxpayer. HMRC is not intending to make any significant changes to its already announced strategy.

■ Rural Areas: Food Supply

Jim Shannon: [\[60340\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what fiscal steps he plans to take to support rural communities and enable the UK to become self-sufficient for food.

Mr David Gauke:

The government will continue to support rural communities, and has guaranteed structural and investment funds which are signed before we leave. These will be honoured for their lifetime, even after we have left the EU. The government has also guaranteed existing levels of CAP Pillar 1 funding across the UK until the end of the Multi-annual Financial Framework in 2020. This provides direct support to farmers, giving needed certainty while we develop a new British agricultural policy. I have written to each devolved administration to give a similar level of assurance to that offered to UK government departments.

The government is considering how best to support the farming industry after our exit from the EU. Defra will shortly publish a Green Paper setting out our ambitions for food and farming. We will then work with the industry, rural communities and the wider public to shape our plans and future arrangements outside of the EU.

■ Tax Allowances

Conor Burns:

[\[60464\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much has accrued to the public purse through the removal of personal allowances for annual incomes in excess of £100,000 in each of the last three years.

Jane Ellison:

The taper of the Personal Allowance for those earning above £100,000 is estimated to have accrued £2.7 billion in income tax in 2015-16, £2.4 billion in 2014-15 and £2.2 billion in 2013-14. Changes to the tax system affecting high income individuals involve significant behavioural responses which can impact revenues from such measures.

The Personal Allowance taper was introduced by the last Labour government. While the Government recognises that this feature of the income tax system can cause high marginal tax rates, the continued pressure on the public finances mean that the Government has been unable to remove it to date.

The estimates in this response are based on the 2013-14 Survey of Personal Incomes, projected to 2015-16 using economic assumptions consistent with the Office for Budget Responsibility's November 2016 Economic and Fiscal Outlook.

■ Tax Evasion

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[60460\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the cross-agency task force investigating the so-called Panama Papers will make its first progress report to Parliament.

Jane Ellison:

On 8 November, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Home Secretary updated the House on the progress of the cross-agency taskforce that was set up to analyse and take action on the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists' Panama Papers data leak (HCWS247).

As part of this update, they confirmed that HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) had opened civil and criminal investigations into 22 individuals for suspected tax evasion, and has placed 43 high net worth individuals under special review while their links to Panama are further investigated.

HMRC will engage the relevant prosecuting authorities to bring any identified wrongdoing before the courts. On 7 December, it confirmed that two arrests had been made as part of a criminal investigation involving the use of a number of offshore companies to disguise the beneficial ownership of UK property.

As stated previously, Parliament will be kept updated on any significant developments.

■ **Tugboats: Tonnage Tax**

Richard Burden: [\[60660\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many emergency towing vessels are registered with company groups who qualify for the tonnage tax scheme.

Jane Ellison:

It is not possible to identify the type of vessel used by each company qualifying for Tonnage Tax from the data held.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ **Accommodation Agencies: Fees and Charges**

John Healey: [\[60219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, when he plans to bring forward legislative proposals to ban letting fees for tenants; and when he plans for that ban to come into effect.

Gavin Barwell:

As my Noble Friend, Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth, said in the House of Lords on 19 January 2017, the Government is committed to introducing legislation as soon as possible to implement the ban on letting agent fees for tenants. We will consult in the Spring on the detail of the ban and will consider the views of property agencies, landlords, tenants and other stakeholders before introducing legislation. Impact assessments will follow the consultation and support the detail of banning fees to tenants.

■ **Affordable Housing**

John Healey: [\[60366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 16 January 2017 to Question 59492, if he will place in the Library the modelling, workings and data on which the impact assessment of changes to affordable housing announced in the Autumn Statement 2016 were based which include the assessment of the effect of those policy changes on the (a) number and (b) tenure of affordable homes.

Gavin Barwell:

The Government estimated at Autumn Statement that the additional £1.4 billion to the Affordable Homes Programme will create a further 40,000 affordable housing starts by 2021. The flexible and expanded £7.1 billion programme will deliver 225,000 affordable homes including shared ownership, rent to buy, affordable rent and supported housing.

The Department did not carry out a public impact assessment on the changes to the affordable housing programme in the Autumn Statement 2016. The fiscal impact of the changes on public finances was included as part of the OBR's policy costings for Autumn Statement 2016, which can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571402/Policy_Costings_AS_2016_web_final.pdf

■ Communities and Local Government: Iron and Steel

Tim Farron:

[60072]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, (a) how much steel in weight his Department has procured, (b) for what purpose that steel was procured and (c) what the countries of origin of that steel were in each of the last five years.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The department did not collect this data over the period in which the coalition government was in power and so we are unfortunately not able to provide this information.

In Autumn 2015, Government issued guidance to central government departments on how to take social and economic factors into account in their procurements to help level the playing field for UK steel producers. This guidance has now been extended to the wider public sector.

Since publication of the guidance, Government has been working closely with departments to monitor its impact and ensure delivery. There are no plans to share Government level data publicly, due to its provisional nature.

On 13th December 2016, the Government published its indicative future steel requirements to 2020, to enable UK steel manufacturers to better plan in advance of future government contracts.

■ Council Tax and Non-domestic Rates: Dorset

Mr Christopher Chope:

[60671]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the level of (a) council tax arrears and (b) non-domestic rate arrears was on 31 March 2016 in (i) Purbeck District Council, (ii) North Dorset District Council, (iii) West Dorset District Council and (iv) Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.

Mr Marcus Jones:

[Holding answer 23 January 2017]: The requested figures are in the table 'Quarterly return of Council Tax and non-domestic rates QRC4, 2015 to 2016' at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/collection-rates-for-council-tax-and-non-domestic-rates-in-england-2015-to-2016>. Please note that this is only the second time we have collected non-domestic rate arrears data so they must be regarded as experimental data and could be revised in subsequent data collections.

■ Exercise**Lyn Brown:****[60766]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate the Government made of how much each local authority spent on physical activity services per capita in the last 12 months.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Local government spending on physical activity has not been formally analysed by the department. Local authorities receive a ring-fenced public health grant from the Department for Health but physical activity is a non-prescribed public health function. Local authorities are best placed to assess and deliver the services their communities need and are locally accountable for those decisions.

■ Help to Buy Scheme**Richard Burgon:****[60405]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many people have received assistance from the Government's Help to Buy scheme in (a) Leeds East constituency, (b) Leeds, (c) West Yorkshire and (d) the UK in each year since 2010.

Gavin Barwell:

Since the launch of the Help to Buy: Equity Loan, Help to Buy: Mortgage Guarantee and Help to Buy: NewBuy schemes, the total number of households which have received assistance from all three schemes is 201,322 in the UK, 2,875 in Leeds local authority, 520 in Leeds East and 7,960 in West Yorkshire metropolitan county.

The total number of people who have received assistance from the Help to Buy ISA is 38,595 in the UK, 850 in Leeds, 65 in Leeds East, and 1902 in West Yorkshire. The Help to Buy ISA figures are based on the number of bonuses paid (per person) rather than per property.

Stephen Timms:**[60975]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many people have received assistance from the Government's Help to Buy scheme in (a) the UK, (b) Greater London, (c) the London Borough of Newham and (d) East Ham constituency.

Gavin Barwell:

Since the launch of the Help to Buy: Equity Loan, Help to Buy: Mortgage Guarantee and Help to Buy: NewBuy schemes, the total number of households which have received assistance from all three schemes is 201,322 in the UK, 10,956 in Greater London, 326 in the London Borough of Newham and 137 in East Ham constituency.

The Help to Buy: ISA figures are based on the number of bonuses paid (per person) rather than per property. In the UK, 38,595 bonuses have been paid out towards 27,222 properties; in Greater London, 3,114 bonuses have been paid out towards 2,354 properties; in the London Borough of Newham, 116 bonuses have been paid out towards 92 properties, and in East Ham constituency, 44 bonuses have been paid out towards 35 properties.

■ Holiday Accommodation

Ben Howlett:

[60815]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to enable regulation of short-term holiday lets in line with the regulation of bed and breakfast properties.

Gavin Barwell:

The Government currently has no plans to introduce legislation to bring short term holiday lets in line with bed and breakfast property regulations.

Local authorities have powers to inspect residential properties where they consider action would be appropriate under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

■ Housing: Construction

James Cartlidge:

[60927]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 21 September 2016 to Question 46112, in what proportion of those planning permissions where building has not yet commenced (a) a developer has an option to build or is otherwise working in partnership with the landowner, (b) a developer owns the land and (c) no developer is in place.

Gavin Barwell:

The Department does not hold this information.

The Government is clear that where sites have planning permission they should move ahead as quickly as possible. That is why we are actively taking a number of steps to tackle some of the factors which can delay the start of development, including the measures in the Neighbourhood Planning Bill to improve the use of pre-commencement conditions.

■ Internet: Hate Crime

Nusrat Ghani:

[61017]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what data his Department holds on the volume of anti-Semitic and other hate material available (a) online, (b) on Twitter and (c) on Facebook.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Incidences of illegal hate crime online should be reported to the police who are supported by third party organisations such as the Community Security Trust. National statistics on hate crime are published annually. In addition, figures produced by the National Police Chiefs' Council provide a breakdown of police recorded religious hate crimes and show that in 2015/16, 786 anti-Semitic hate crimes were recorded by police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: http://www.report-it.org.uk/files/faith_hate_crime_true_vision_2015-16_v2.pdf Data is not available to show how many of these offences were committed online.

As part of the Government's Hate Crime Action Plan, officials from across Whitehall are working with academics who are analysing social media platforms to better understand the nature and extent of the harm caused by online hate crime and the effectiveness of counter-narrative measures.

■ **Non-domestic Rates**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[60286]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many businesses paid business rates in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) nationally in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Marcus Jones:

We do not collect this data. Data on the number of hereditaments that are liable for business rates in England are available from the Valuation Office Agency at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/valuation-office-agency-non-domestic-rating-statistics>

■ **Non-domestic Rates: Bedfordshire**

Alistair Burt:

[60816]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the effect of the Government's proposal to allow local government to retain 100 per cent of the business rates they raise locally on Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire local authority budgets.

Mr Marcus Jones:

By the end of the Parliament, local government will retain 100% of taxes raised locally, giving councils control of additional £12.5 billion of business rates to spend on local services. In order to ensure that the reforms are fiscally neutral, these new powers will come with additional responsibilities, as well as phasing out some grants from Whitehall. This move towards self-sufficiency and away from dependence on central government is something councils have long campaigned for. In addition, the Government is undertaking a Fair Funding Review of councils' relative needs and resources. The Review will set the funding baselines local authorities will receive under the 100% Business Rates Retention system.

Last week, we introduced the Local Government Finance Bill that will establish the framework for the reformed system. All relevant documents can be found here: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/localgovernmentfinance.html>. We will continue to work closely with local government during the passage of the legislation, to shape the detail of the reforms.

■ Social Networking: Antisemitism

Nusrat Ghani:

[61016]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what recent discussions he has had with social media companies on anti-Semitic content on their platforms.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Formal negotiation with the internet industry to tackle online hate crime, including anti-Semitic content, has been led by officials from across government, primarily within the Cyber-Hate Working Group and latterly within the Internet Sub-Group of the European Commission High Level Group on Hate Crime. Both of these have led to voluntary agreements being drawn up concerning the code of conduct of industry bodies and their response to complaints from members of the public, for example:

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/hate_speech_code_of_conduct_en.pdf

The Government's Hate Crime Action Plan, published last July, includes a commitment to bring Ministers from across Whitehall together with industry bodies, victims and academics to discuss challenges and future opportunities to collaborate.

■ Social Rented Housing: Construction

Richard Burgon:

[60406]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many social rented homes have been built in (a) Leeds East constituency, (b) Leeds, (c) West Yorkshire and (d) the UK in each year since 2010.

Gavin Barwell:

The numbers of additional social rent dwellings provided in local authorities across England since 1997 is published in live table 1006C available here:

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

Figures are not available at constituency level.

■ Temporary Accommodation: Southwark

Ms Harriet Harman:

[60990]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many households in temporary accommodation in the London Borough of Southwark (a) are single-parent households, (b) are pensioner households and (c) have occupants with mental health conditions.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Information on the number of single parent households in temporary accommodation in each local authority in England has been published in section 6 of the following table:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness#detailed-local-authority-level-responses>

The Department does not hold data on the numbers of pensioner households and those with mental health conditions in temporary accommodation.

We have embarked on a project to redesign our homelessness data collection system. The new system will capture information on all households receiving homelessness assessments from local authorities, as well as recording the assistance received and the outcome. This will provide a much clearer understanding of the causes of homelessness and the effectiveness of responses.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Digital Economy Bill****Helen Goodman:****[58011]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the oral contribution of the Minister of State for Digital and Culture of 28 November 2016, column 1345, when that Minister plans to write to the hon. Member for Bishop Auckland on amendments 25 and 26 to the Digital Economy Bill.

Matt Hancock:

A response was submitted to the hon. Member on January 23rd 2017.

■ Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility Measures Review**Margaret Hodge:****[60760]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what plans she has to meet representatives of (a) local authorities, (b) the gambling industry, (c) charities and (d) other relevant bodies ahead of the publication of the formal recommendations of the Review of Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility Measures.

Tracey Crouch:

I will be meeting with representatives from local authorities, the gambling industry, campaign groups and other interested parties to discuss the Review of Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility Measures over the coming weeks. My officials have also met with representatives of these bodies as part of the review and other gambling related matters.

■ Lotteries: Regulation**Philip Davies:**[\[60937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when she plans to publish the report her Department received from the Gambling Commission on updating the regulations governing society lotteries.

Tracey Crouch:

The Government's response to the CMS Select Committee's report on society lotteries advised that it intended to explore all the recommendations further, with advice from the Gambling Commission. We are carefully considering the issues raised by the Select Committee and continue to take advice from the Gambling Commission as we consider policy options.

We expect that the Gambling Commission will publish their advice in due course, when Government has made an announcement on its conclusions.

DEFENCE**■ Armed Forces: Fraud****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[60345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) officers and (b) non-commissioned personnel in the armed forces have been (i) investigated and (ii) convicted for the offence of fraud in each year since 2010.

Mark Lancaster:

Information on the number of Armed Forces personnel investigated and convicted for the offence of fraud in each year since 2010 is shown below.

YEAR	NUMBER INVESTIGATED	NUMBER OF CONVICTIONS
2010	226	28
2011	231	48
2012	159	18
2013	149	18
2014	94	13
2015	98	16
2016	81	10

Mr Kevan Jones:[\[60347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the cost to the public purse was of acts of fraud committed by armed forces personnel in each year since 2010.

Mark Lancaster:

Information on the cost to the public purse of fraud committed by Armed Forces personnel in each year since 2010 is shown below.

YEAR	VALUE OF ALLEGED OFFENCE	AMOUNT RECOVERED
2010	£463,014	£408,805
2011	£777,656	£300,723
2012	£211,340	£172,193
2013	£182,227	£202,672
2014	£49,624	£51,812
2015	£22,662	£0
2016	£21,735	£17,183

Notes

1. There is variation in the values of the alleged offence and the amounts recovered due to the way the information is recorded; the value of the alleged offence and amount recovered can be recorded in different years due to the time over which the investigation process occurs.
1. The information provided only reflects that reported centrally within the Department.

■ **Armed Forces: Medical Equipment**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[60910]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what EU regulations apply to medicines and medical equipment used by (a) medics and (b) medical officers in the (i) Royal Navy, (ii) Army and (iii) Royal Air Force.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) complies with the European Council Directive 93/42/EEC of 14 June 1993 regarding medical devices. Where applicable, the MOD also complies with EC Guidelines 2013/C 343/01 of 5 November 2013 on Good Distribution Practice of medicinal products for human use. More generally, the MOD complies with the relevant UK legislation, within which EU Regulations and Directives might be incorporated.

■ **Armed Forces: Staff**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[60362]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many military assistants his Department employs.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence employs 151 Military Assistants.

■ **Armed Forces: Training**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[60344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) officers, (b) officer cadets and (c) non-commissioned personnel from non-UK military forces receiving training in the UK have been subject to a criminal investigation in each year since 2010.

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[60346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) officers, (b) officer cadets and (c) non-commissioned personnel from non-UK military forces receiving training in the UK have been convicted for an offence in each year since 2010.

Mark Lancaster:

Information on the number of non-UK military forces receiving training in the UK who have been the subject to a criminal investigation in each year since 2010 is shown below. The Military Court Service confirmed that no non-UK military personnel have been convicted by UK Courts Martial between 2010 and 2016.

The Military Court Service can only comment on cases that have been subject to the service justice system. There is no central record held by the Ministry of Defence of non-UK nationals who appear in civilian criminal court.

YEAR	OFFICER	OFFICER CADET	WARRANT OFFICER/SENIOR NON COMMISSIONED OFFICER/NON COMMISSIONED	TOTAL
			OFFICER	
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	1	0	1	2
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	1	0	0	1
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
Total	2	0	0	3

■ Armed Forces: Uniforms

Mr Kevan Jones: [60907]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the country of origin is of each garment in each of the (a) Royal Navy, (b) Army and (c) Royal Air Force categories by order of uniform.

Harriett Baldwin:

This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr Kevan Jones: [60908]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the country of origin is of each piece of personal protective equipment issued to personnel deployed on operations overseas in the (a) Royal Navy, (b) Army and (c) Royal Air Force.

Harriett Baldwin:

This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ Defence: Innovation

Mr Kevan Jones: [60682]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many awards have been made under his Department's Innovation Challenge Fund; and what the value of those awards was.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence has established an Innovation Fund of around £800 million over 10 years, to provide the freedom to pursue and deliver innovative solutions. The Fund will take forward the best ideas, from inside and outside of Defence, in an open competitive process. The Innovation Fund will be open for bids early in 2017. This will allow the best ideas to be selected in time for the first funds to be disbursed in April 2017.

The prospectus for the Defence Innovation Initiative is available at www.gov.uk at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advantage-through-innovation-the-defence-innovation-initiative-prospectus>

■ Fuels: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [60490]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much fuel was procured by his Department in 2015-16.

Mr Kevan Jones: [60491]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's current fuel hedging arrangement is.

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[60492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much of the fuel procured by his Department in 2015-16 was financially hedged.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) undertakes substantial purchases of fuel commodities. Exposure to fluctuations in the market prices of these commodities is hedged to obtain budget certainty on price rather than seek speculative gains.

The Department hedges up to three years in advance and usually trades quarterly to further spread price risk. This approach has been used for fuel hedging since 2010.

Information on the volume of fuel procured by the Department is not centrally held but in Financial Year 2015-16 the MOD procured approximately £356 million of fuel and consumed £333 million of fuel.

■ **Military Aircraft**

Douglas Chapman:

[\[60456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the total cost is of integrating the Brimstone 2 missile on the (a) Joint Strike Fighter and (b) Typhoon aircraft.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK has no plans to integrate the Brimstone 2 missile onto the F-35B Lightning II aircraft. Cost estimates for the integration of Brimstone 2 on Typhoon will be available when the Ministry of Defence's Project Performance Summary Table is published shortly as part of the Equipment Plan.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Undocumented Migrants**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[60912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many people his Department employed in each of the last five years who were subsequently found to be illegal immigrants.

Mark Lancaster:

This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ **Royal Navy Police**

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[60905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 17 October 2016 to Question 47540, how the process to collect feedback from the victims of crime operates; what plans he has to monitor the performance of that process; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Lancaster:

The Royal Navy Police (RNP) has developed a web based survey for victims of crime. The survey assesses whether the RNP investigating the allegation(s) have

fulfilled their obligations in accordance with the November 2015 code of practice to the victims of crime. The survey can be submitted either electronically or by post. The results of the survey are monitored by the RNP Professional Standards Unit and they in turn report any recommendations direct to Provost Marshal (Navy).

EDUCATION

■ Apprentices: Standards

John Pugh: [60559]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will list the approved apprenticeship Trailblazer Standards which do not include recognised qualifications.

John Pugh: [60560]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many Trailblazer groups developing new apprenticeship standards have had their draft Trailblazer Standard rejected because it includes a qualification which does not meet her Department's rules.

John Pugh: [60561]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many Trailblazer groups developing new apprenticeship standards have been advised that their draft Trailblazer Standard should not include a qualification because it does not meet her Department's rules.

Robert Halfon:

All approved apprenticeship standards, including those that do not contain mandated qualifications, can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-standards>.

Qualifications can only be specified in the standard if they are either a legal requirement, needed for professional registration or where an apprentice would be at a significant disadvantage as they try to progress in their career without them. The rationale for restricting the inclusion of qualifications is that the end-point assessment will provide definitive evidence of whether the apprentice has acquired full occupational competence thus negating the need for on-programme qualifications. Not mandating qualifications in standards unless absolutely necessary also ensures that individual employers have the freedom to choose the most appropriate training to enable their apprentices to achieve full competence.

This means that Trailblazers that would like qualifications in their standards but can't meet one of the criteria are advised not to include them, and Trailblazers that submit standards including qualifications without providing the evidence that their inclusion meets one of the criteria are either rejected or approved subject to the removal of the qualifications.

However, with over 215 Trailblazers having developed or developing nearly 500 standards, we do not hold information about the number of times this kind of advice has been provided.

John Pugh:

[\[60562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to evaluate the effectiveness of her Department's policy on the value of reorganised qualifications in apprenticeship standards.

Robert Halfon:

Qualifications should not generally be needed within an apprenticeship as the end-point assessment will provide definitive evidence of whether the apprentice has acquired full occupational competence. Not mandating qualifications in standards unless absolutely necessary ensures that individual employers have the freedom to choose the most appropriate training to enable their apprentices to achieve this.

Qualifications can only be specified in the standard if they are either a legal requirement, needed for professional registration or where an apprentice would be at a significant disadvantage as they try to progress in their career without it.

The Institute for Apprenticeships will take over responsibility for ensuring the quality of Apprenticeships standards from April 2017 and will advise the Government on policy implications or trends emerging through the standards approvals process.

■ Apprentices: Taxation

Mr Gary Streeter:

[\[60466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what definition of the workforce will be used for the purposes of deciding the percentage of apprentices to be engaged by a school under apprenticeship levy proposals.

Robert Halfon:

The Government is committed to raising the quality and quantity of apprenticeships and achieving 3 million apprenticeship starts by 2020. This includes all aspects of the public sector, from policy makers to frontline services.

Following the consultation on setting apprenticeship targets for public bodies, and wider engagement with representatives from across the public sector, the Government is intending to publish its response to the consultation shortly. That document will detail what definition of the workforce within schools and other public sector bodies will be used when setting the target.

When considering which employers, including schools, will make payments towards the apprenticeship levy we do not base this assessment on the number of staff but rather on those employers with a pay bill of more than £3 million.

■ Children: Carers

Stephen Timms:

[\[60977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many young carers are registered at schools in (a) the UK, (b) Greater London, (c) the London Borough of Newham and (d) the East Ham constituency.

Edward Timpson:

The Department does not collect data on the numbers of young carers registered at schools. According to figures from the national census published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), there were around 166,000 young carers aged 5 to 17 in England in 2011. The national and regional figures can be found at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census-analysis/provision-of-unpaid-care-in-england-and-wales--2011/sty-unpaid-care.html>

■ **Education: Staff**

Stephen Timms: [58976]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) school teachers and (b) education sector workers have been on leave of absence from work due to mental illness in each year since 2010.

Nick Gibb:

The information requested is not collected centrally.

■ **English Language: Education**

Paul Scully: [58544]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information her Department holds on the number of people employed in English language colleges in each region and constituent part of the UK.

Robert Halfon:

English language colleges are independent organisations that are responsible for their own staffing. My department does not hold any information on the numbers of people employed in such organisations in England.

As education is a devolved matter, any assessment of English language college's staff numbers outside of England is a matter for the relevant devolved authorities.

■ **Further Education: Business**

Chris Leslie: [59471]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what investigations (a) her Department and (b) the Further Education Commissioner has undertaken into the educational impact and value for money of the Gazelle Colleges Group, and if she will make a statement.

Robert Halfon:

The Gazelle College Group is an independent organisation, not funded by Government. Decisions taken by Colleges to join or fund independent sector bodies are for their Corporations as charitable trustees, who should ensure they receive value for money for any expenditure incurred.

■ Further Education: Sussex

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[59406]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on what exact date the Sussex Area Review was published; and on what date copies of that review were sent to hon. Members.

Robert Halfon:

The report of the Sussex area review was published on 29 November 2016 and can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sussex-further-education-area-review-report>. Copies of the draft report were sent to Hon members on the 23 June 2016, in advance of their meeting with officials to discuss the recommendations arising from the review prior to publication.

■ NHS: Migrant Workers

Norman Lamb:

[60013]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to extend an Immigration Skills Charge to (a) new and (b) existing NHS clinical staff recruited from the European Economic Area (EEA) in the event of the UK leaving the EEA.

Norman Lamb:

[60015]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the potential annual cost to the NHS of the introduction of the Immigration Skills Charge (a) from April 2017 and (b) in the event of that charge being extended to cover nationals of countries within the European Economic Area after the UK has left the EU.

Robert Halfon:

The Immigration Skills Charge will be paid by UK employers recruiting workers from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) through the Tier 2 skilled worker route. There are no plans to extend the charge to employers recruiting from the European Economic Area post-Brexit.

We have not estimated the potential annual cost to the NHS of the Immigration Skills Charge. The cost to the NHS will depend on its use of the Tier 2 skilled worker route.

■ Schools: Mental Health Services

Judith Cummins:

[60620]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of school-based counselling services in Wales and Northern Ireland in improving young people's educational attainment and attendance in schools; and what her policy is on whether such services should be established in England.

Edward Timpson:

Good mental health and wellbeing are a priority for the Department.

Schools are best placed to make decisions on the most appropriate support to provide for their pupils, including school-based counselling, based on their individual circumstances. We know that many primary and secondary schools already provide

counselling services and we want to encourage all schools to make these services available to their pupils. To help them to do this, we have published a blueprint for school counselling services which provides schools with practical, evidence-based advice on how to deliver high quality school-based counselling to all pupils, including vulnerable children who have a higher prevalence of mental health issues. This was drawn up with experts in the field and took account of the evaluations made of practice in other countries, including the devolved administrations.

We are currently conducting a large-scale survey of schools and colleges about what they offer to support the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils and students. The results should be available in the Spring and will provide the first nationally representative estimates of the different types of support available in schools and colleges, including school-based counselling, as well as information about how this support is provided and how effective schools think it is. This will inform the new green paper on children and young people's mental health that we are developing with the Department of Health.

■ Sexual Offences: Universities

Jim Shannon:

[60481]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the number of sexual attacks and rapes at universities.

Joseph Johnson:

This Government takes any form of sexual violence in universities, as elsewhere, extremely seriously. In November 2015, Universities UK (UUK) was asked by Government to set up a sexual violence and harassment taskforce. The UUK Taskforce reported its findings in October 2016 in the report 'Changing the Culture'. The report can be found at: <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2016/changing-the-culture.pdf>.

This sets out that universities should embed a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and hate crime. The Taskforce made a series of recommendations to universities on preventing and responding to sexual violence, harassment and hate crime in universities. UUK plan to assess institutions' 'progress' in implementing the recommendations, and report later this year.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture: Ammonia

Michelle Donelan:

[60899]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment has been made of including the permeable ammonia-recycling crust within the Farming Ammonia Reduction Grant.

George Eustice:

In order to deliver grants to farmers under the scheme by the European Commission's deadline of 30 September 2017, it was necessary to use equipment that had already been costed by Natural England. The permeable ammonia-recycling crust was not on the list of equipment that had been previously costed.

■ Agriculture: Subsidies**Cat Smith:**[\[60445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether partial Basic Payment Scheme payments to customers made by the Rural Payment Agency are included in the Agency's published performance results.

George Eustice:

All Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) 2016 payments issued, and included in the published performance results, are complete based on the current 2016 claim information held by the Rural Payments Agency. Those who have received a BPS Financial Support Payment are not and therefore not included in the reported figures paid.

■ Fisheries**Oliver Colvile:**[\[60652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether fishing policy will be national or regional after the UK leaves the EU.

George Eustice:

We want to deliver a Brexit that works for the whole of the UK. We will work very carefully to ensure the right powers are returned to Westminster and the right powers are passed to the devolved administrations. No decisions currently taken by the devolved administrations will be removed from them.

■ Flood and Water Management Act 2010**Rachael Maskell:**[\[60713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what post-legislative assessment her Department has carried out on the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 since it was brought into force; if she will place in the Library a copy of that assessment; and if she will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Department has submitted a post-legislative scrutiny memorandum on the Flood and Water Management Act to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee. The memorandum was laid in the House on Tuesday 24 January 2017.

■ Food Supply

Jim Shannon:

[\[60339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to make the UK self-sufficient for all food.

George Eustice:

Food security is dependent on a number of factors including increasing production sustainably, reducing waste and ensuring open markets around the world to facilitate trade.

The UK's current production to supply ratio is 76% for indigenous-type foods and 61% for all foods. This has remained steady over the last decade and is typical in the context of the last 150 years.

The Government wants to grow more and sell more British food and will be publishing a 25 year Food and Farming Plan.

■ Maize: Genetically Modified Organisms

Caroline Lucas:

[\[61037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the Government's policy is on the authorisation for the placing on the market for cultivation of genetically modified maize which is scheduled for a decision on 27 January 2017 at the European Commission under Directive 2001/18/EC; what account she has taken in formulating that policy of representations from the devolved administrations; and if she will make a statement.

George Eustice:

The Government takes a science-based approach on the authorisation of genetically modified (GM) products, and is consulting the devolved administrations (DA) on the proposed approval of three types of GM maize to be considered at an EU meeting on 27 January. An EU decision permitting the cultivation of these crops will not apply in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland because the DAs have an agreed exemption.

Nor would the crops be expected to be grown in England, because they are designed to control insect pests that are not a problem for farmers in the UK.

■ School Milk

Julie Elliott:

[\[60828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if her Department will continue to implement the provisions of the European school milk scheme after the UK leaves the EU.

George Eustice:

The EU School Milk Scheme under which the UK claims around £3.5 million of EU funding annually plays a valuable role in encouraging the consumption of dairy products and contributing to the development of healthy eating habits from an early age. A much larger nursery milk scheme for children under 5 is funded by UK Health

and Education departments and is worth £67million a year. We will continue to participate in the new EU school scheme from 1 August 2017. We will need to consider the longer-term approach to school milk provision as part of future domestic policy and we will ensure consultation with stakeholders in relation to any future scheme for the UK.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Brexit

Catherine West: [\[60980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether it remains his policy to trigger Article 50 by the end of March 2017.

Mr David Jones:

We are committed to triggering Article 50 by the end of March.

Catherine West: [\[60981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what his policy is on the other EU member states requesting an extension to the two-year negotiating period following the triggering of Article 50 in the event that a deal is not secured within that timeframe.

Mr David Jones:

The Prime Minister has set out the timetable for triggering Article 50 by the end of March and we remain committed to that timetable.

Our focus is on working closely with other Member States and our partners in the EU institutions, including the European Parliament, to negotiate a successful outcome and the best deal for the UK. We want to have reached an agreement about our future partnership by the time the two-year Article 50 process has concluded.

Catherine West: [\[60982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what his policy is on seeking an alternative deal with the EU in the event that Parliament rejects the deal brokered by the Government.

Mr Robin Walker:

We have been clear that we are not going to speculate around hypotheticals. The Prime Minister has set out what the basis is for a good deal, and we expect to be able to achieve that. The most important thing is that the Government is determined to respect the result of the referendum.

As the Prime Minister has said, the Government will put the final deal that is agreed between the UK and the EU to a vote in both Houses of Parliament, before it comes into force, as both the Exiting the European Union Committee and the Opposition have requested.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Recruitment**Catherine West:** [\[60441\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many negotiators his Department has recruited to date.

Mr Robin Walker:

All departments are equipping themselves with the resources they need to get the best deal for the UK. We are not in a position to give a final total for particular groups of staff as recruitment is ongoing and we will not be giving a running commentary. The Department for Exiting the European Union now has over 300 staff, and is growing fast.

■ State Retirement Pensions: British Nationals Abroad**Alison Thewliss:** [\[60252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of the effect of the UK leaving the EU on state pensions paid to UK nationals living in EEA countries.

Mr David Jones:

The reciprocal entitlements that will apply following the UK's exit are subject to the wider negotiation on our future relationship with the EU. We will approach negotiations with the full intention of securing a deal that delivers the best possible outcome for the UK and its nationals wherever they are living. It goes without saying that we want a smooth and orderly exit from the EU, and will look at the best way to deliver that.

■ Trade Unions**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[60756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what advice his Department has received from trade unions on the Government's forthcoming negotiations on the UK leaving the EU.

Mr David Jones:

We will ensure that all views are reflected in the British Government's analysis of the options, priorities and opportunities for the UK as it exits the European Union.

We are listening and talking to as many organisations, companies and institutions as possible, including Trades Unions.

We have made it clear that workers' rights will be protected and enhanced by this government.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ British Antarctic Survey****Catherine West:**[\[60440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has been in contact with staff at the British Antarctic Survey since the removal of staff at the Halley Base.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Director of the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) contacted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office ahead of the announcement that they would be withdrawing personnel from Halley station for the 2017 Austral winter. The Director confirmed this was a precautionary decision taken in the interests of safety as a result of the growth of a new crack in the ice shelf, the effects of which BAS scientists are currently unable to predict with certainty. The Director confirmed that BAS remained committed to operating Halley Station. BAS personnel currently remain on station and will do so until March, returning to the station in November for the start of the next Austral Summer.

The Government remain firmly committed to our responsibilities under the Antarctic Treaty and to our sovereignty over the British Antarctic Territory.

■ Burma: Overseas Aid**Catherine West:**[\[60443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for International Development on problems in getting aid into Burma; and if he will raise that issue with UN counterparts.

Alok Sharma:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development (DFID) work side by side in Burma. DFID is co-located with the British Embassy in Rangoon and in London policy is agreed through the cross-departmental Whitehall Burma Unit. We are also closely aligned at Ministerial level. I last discussed Burma with my DFID counterpart – the Minister of State for International Development, my Hon Friend the Member for Penrith and The Border (Rory Stewart) – on 25 October. Together we are intent on ensuring unfettered humanitarian assistance to Rakhine, Kachin and the Shan States. We both raised our concerns about humanitarian access in Rakhine State with the Minister for Construction when he visited London in November. We are actively engaged in the UN on Burma and play a leading role on Burma in the UN Security Council, where we raised concerns about humanitarian access in Rakhine State on 17 November. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) visited Burma from 20-21 January 2017 and discussed with the Home Minister, who is heavily involved in the security response,

the need for full humanitarian access. He also raised this issue with State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, and the new National Security Advisor, U Thaung Tun.

■ **Burma: Rohingya**

Lyn Brown:

[60305]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Burmese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aung San Suu Kyi, on (a) human rights for the Rohingya and (b) reports received from human rights organisations that military forces have allegedly committed acts of physical and sexual violence against Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine.

Alok Sharma:

We are aware of a number of recent reports by human rights organisations indicating the Burmese military has used violence against the Rohingya during security operations in Rakhine since 9 October. We view these reports with deep concern. The Government has repeatedly raised concerns about the plight of the Rohingya community in Burma. I last raised this when I met the Burmese Minister for Construction on 29 November. The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Noble Friend, the Rt Hon. Baroness Anelay of St Johns also raised our concerns with a range of Ministers including the Minister for Defence and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs when she visited Burma from 9-12 November. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Boris Johnson) visited Burma from 20-21 January 2017 and discussed with the Home Minister, who is heavily involved in the security response, the need for a restrained security approach, full humanitarian access and the importance of ending discrimination against the Rohingya. He also raised these issues with State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, and the new National Security Advisor, U Thaung Tun.

Catherine West:

[60442]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the humanitarian situation for the Rohingya in Rakhine State, Burma.

Alok Sharma:

We remain deeply concerned by the humanitarian and human rights situation in Rakhine. We are particularly concerned by reports from a range of human rights organisations of human rights violations by the security forces following the attack on border posts on 9 October, and the subsequent security response to these attacks. We are also concerned about the humanitarian impact if aid is not resumed quickly, particularly impacting those already affected by malnutrition. We have made numerous representations to the government of Burma and called for humanitarian access both through our Ambassador and also through Ministerial contacts. The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Noble Friend, the Rt Hon. Baroness Anelay of St Johns visited Burma from 9-12 November 2016 and

urged Burmese Government Ministers to ensure the full resumption of humanitarian aid; and to set up an independent investigation into allegations of human rights violations. I also raised this in person with the Burmese Minister for Construction when he visited London on 29 November. In addition, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Boris Johnson) visited Burma from 20-21 January 2017 and discussed with the appointed Home Minister, who is heavily involved in the security response, the need for a restrained security approach, full humanitarian access and the importance of ending discrimination against the Rohingya. He also raised these issues with State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, and the new National Security Advisor, U Thaung Tun.

■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Elections

Stephen Gethins:

[\[60220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on presidential elections in that country in 2017.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We welcome the political deal signed on 31 December between the government of the DRC and the main political parties and applaud the perseverance of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Congo (CENCO) in achieving this. As I said in my statement of 6 January, it is imperative that this deal is implemented as soon as possible so that elections can take place this year.

Both the DFID Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Mr Wharton and I visited the DRC last year and met with senior government and opposition figures. We pressed the need for swift elections and the respect of human rights. We continue to encourage the Government and the opposition to cooperate and consolidate the progress they have already made.

The UK has earmarked £11.4 million to support a transparent electoral process provided that a realistic budget and timetable are released, and all the conditions set out in the Constitution and in UN Security Council Resolution 2277 are met. The EU and a number of nations, including the US have made similar pledges.

■ Ilois: Resettlement

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[60248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the Supreme Court judgment in Bancoult in June 2016, if he will restore the right of abode to the Chagossian people.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Supreme Court Judgment in June 2016 ruled that the 2008 House of Lords decision (which confirms that the BIOT Constitution Order 2004 is lawful) stands and

as such there are no plans to restore the right of abode in the British Indian Ocean Territory.

■ **Norfolk Island**

Catherine West: [\[60765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions the Government has had with the Australian government on administrative and constitutional changes to the arrangement of government of Norfolk Island.

Alok Sharma:

As I have previously made clear the governance of Norfolk Island is a matter for Australia. In the course of our regular discussions, Government officials, including our High Commissioner in Canberra, have been briefed by the Australian Government about administrative and constitutional changes to the government of Norfolk Island.

■ **North Korea: Nuclear Weapons**

Sir Hugo Swire: [\[60630\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the threat posed to the international community by North Korea's nuclear programme.

Alok Sharma:

In my written Ministerial statement of 14 December 2016 I updated the House on recent developments regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the international response and what actions the Government is taking. The UN Security Council in resolution 2321, adopted on 30 November, expressed its gravest concern that the DPRK's ongoing nuclear and ballistic missile-related activities have further generated increased tension in the region and beyond, and determined that there continues to exist a clear threat to international peace and security. The Government shares that assessment.

Sir Hugo Swire: [\[60635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of North Korea's nuclear programme.

Alok Sharma:

In my written Ministerial statement of 14 December 2016 I updated the House on recent developments regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the international response and what actions the Government is taking. The UN Security Council in resolution 2321 expressed its gravest concern that the DPRK's ongoing nuclear and ballistic missile-related activities have further generated increased tension in the region and beyond, and determined that there continues to exist a clear threat to international peace and security. The Government shares that assessment.

■ **Pakistan: Ahmadiyya**

Richard Burden:

[60700]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has (a) received and (b) made to the government of Pakistan on reports of persecution and mistreatment of the Ahmadi community in Pakistan.

Alok Sharma:

I am aware of reports of the persecution of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan. I condemn the attack on the Ahmadiyya mosque in Chakwal on 12 December. The Government strongly condemns the persecution of all minorities, including the targeting of people based on their beliefs.

We regularly raise our concerns about the protection of minority communities, including religious minorities, with the Government of Pakistan. During my visit to Pakistan earlier this month, I discussed the protection of religious minorities, including the Ahmadiyya, with Kamran Michael, Pakistani Minister for Human Rights, and Barrister Zafarullah Khan, the Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Human Rights. The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), raised religious tolerance and the importance of safeguarding the rights of all Pakistan's citizens when he visited Pakistan in November 2016. The Government continues to urge Pakistan to honour in practice its human rights obligations, including those related to religious minorities, and to uphold the rule of law.

■ **Ravil Mingazov**

Tom Brake:

[60398]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 17 January 2017 to Question 58526, whether the Government has received a request from the US administration to allow Ravil Mingazov, who is detained in Guantanamo, to be reunited with his family in the UK.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Government received a request from the US Government to allow the transfer of Ravil Mingazov from the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay to the UK. After careful consideration, the Government declined this request. Mr Mingazov was transferred to the United Arab Emirates on 19 January 2017.

■ **Russia: Conflict, Stability and Security Fund**

Stephen Doughty:

[60807]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what funding has been provided through the Conflict Stabilisation and Security Fund to projects in Russia in each of the last five years.

Sir Alan Duncan:

[Holding answer 24 January 2017]: The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) has been operational since April 2015. Our programme work in the Russia Federation is limited to the North Caucasus. The funding goes to NGO's that focus on areas such as radicalisation and extremism. The current allocation for FY 2016-17 is £375,000. In FY 2015-16 our programme spend was £391,262. Under HMG's Conflict Pool fund, we spent £703,777 in FY 2014-15, £780,000 in FY 2013-14 and £767,476 in FY 2012-13.

■ **Syria: Military Intervention****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[60357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 13 January 2017 to Question 59273, how much funding from the public purse has been given for projects to train and equip Syrians to collect evidence of human rights violations and abuses; and what the names of those projects are.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Through the Conflict Pool and its successor, the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund, the UK has provided over £8 million in funding for projects which train Syrians to collect evidence of human rights violations and abuses. The project names are: Human Rights Training to ensure Accountability for Human Rights Violations; Justice and Accountability – Evidence gathering; Expanding local networks of Syrian human Rights Defenders; Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) - support to secure Justice and Accountability; PSVI – Capacity Building for Doctors in producing Evidence of Torture and Rape; Enhancing Investigative Efforts on War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity perpetrated in Syria; Documenting Human Rights Abuses.

■ **USA: Climate Change****Vicky Foxcroft:**[\[60401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 10 January 2017 to Question 908045, whether the incoming US administration has agreed to work with the Government to tackle climate change.

Sir Alan Duncan:

We expect to take this and other issues forward in our future discussions with them.

■ **Yemen: UN Resolutions****Keith Vaz:**[\[61036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Government plans to table its resolution on Yemen at the UN Security Council meeting on 25 January 2017.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Discussions over a UN Security Council Resolution for Yemen are ongoing in New York.

It is important that any resolution endorses a meaningful process and will lead to the cessation of hostilities, peace-building and access to humanitarian aid needed in Yemen.

HEALTH

■ Alzheimer's Disease: Diagnosis

Jim Shannon:

[\[60484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the timetable is for making MRI scans for early detection of Alzheimer's available on the NHS.

David Mowat:

Magnetic resonance imaging scans for early detection of Alzheimer's disease are currently available on the National Health Service.

■ Ambulance Services: Camberwell and Peckham

Ms Harriet Harman:

[\[60989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many ambulances based in Camberwell and Peckham have responded outside the (a) Category A and (b) Category C response-time target in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The information in relation to category A is shown in the following table.

Number of Category A incidents responded to outside of the Category A response time target NHS Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group (which covers Camberwell and Peckham), 2012-13 to 2016-17

YEAR	TOTAL CATEGORY A INCIDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF CATEGORY A INCIDENTS OUTSIDE OF THE EIGHT MINUTE TARGET RESPONSE TIME	TOTAL NUMBER OF CATEGORY A INCIDENTS OUTSIDE OF THE 19 MINUTE TARGET RESPONSE TIME	CATEGORY A WITHIN EIGHT MINUTES (PERCENTAGE)	CATEGORY A WITHIN 19 MINUTES (PERCENTAGE)
2012-13	16,564	3,225	259	80.5%	98.4%
2013-14	17,672	3,571	427	79.8%	97.6%
2014-15	18,718	6,194	1,262	66.9%	93.3%
2015-16	18,862	5,732	1,086	69.6%	94.2%
2016-17*	13,207	3,430	626	74.0%	95.3%

*2016/17 data is from 1 April 2016 to 30 November 2016

Source: NHS Improvement

Category C calls are not formally reported on response times as there is no national response time standard.

■ Cancer: Medical Treatments

Jim Shannon: [\[60352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make the silicone cooling cap available on the NHS for cancer patients receiving chemotherapy, to prevent hair loss.

David Mowat:

In the absence of guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, decisions on the availability of medical devices are for individual National Health Service organisations taking into account the available evidence.

Jim Shannon: [\[60483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when will the Parsotix system to filter and collect cancer cells will be available on the NHS.

Nicola Blackwood:

In the absence of guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, decisions on the availability of individual medical devices are for National Health Service organisations, taking into account the available evidence.

■ Cervical Cancer

Catherine West: [\[60693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans his Department has to support Cervical Cancer Prevention Week.

David Mowat:

Ministers welcome Cervical Cancer Prevention Week. We are fully supportive of the work Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust does to raise awareness of cervical cancer and the importance of cervical screening for eligible women. We are providing a supportive quote to Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust and will be active on social media throughout the week.

Human papillomavirus vaccine has been given to more than three million teenage girls across the United Kingdom since our vaccination programme started in 2008 and coverage is amongst the highest in the world. The number of young women with pre-cancerous lesions is falling and protection is expected to be long term helping to protect women against cervical cancer, eventually saving hundreds of lives each year.

■ Colorectal Cancer: Screening

Mary Creagh:

[60525]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NHS trusts offer faecal occult blood testing for suspected bowel cancer.

David Mowat:

All hospital trusts are able to offer Faecal Occult Blood testing (FOBt) for patients if clinically appropriate. New guidelines by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence published in June 2015 state that general practitioners should offer FOBt to assess for colorectal cancer in adults without rectal bleeding who are aged 50 and over with unexplained abdominal pain or weight loss. FOBt should also be offered to adults aged under 60 with changes in their bowel habit or iron deficiency anaemia, and to adults aged 60 and over who have anaemia even in the absence of iron deficiency.

The NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme in England offers screening by FOBt to men and women aged 60 to 75, with five laboratories processing the testing kits. NHS England is working with Public Health England to replace FOBt with a new screening test, the Faecal Immunochemical Test for haemoglobin, in 2018. This comes in addition to the introduction of bowel scope screening into the programme for men and women aged 55, which has been commissioned by NHS England since April 2016 with full roll-out across England expected to be completed by 2020-21.

■ Dense Deposit Disease: Eculizumab

Thangam Debbonaire:

[60369]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 7 November 2016 to Question 51102, on Dense Deposit Disease: eculizumab, when he plans for the new policy proposition for the use of eculizumab in treating Dense Deposit Disease before a patient has had a kidney transplant to be considered during 2017; and when the Clinical Priorities Advisory Group will report on its consideration of the policy on the treatment of C3 glomerulopathy after kidney transplant.

David Mowat:

The Clinical Priorities Advisory Group (CPAG) considered the policy proposition on the treatment of C3 glomerulopathy after kidney transplant in November 2016 but this was not supported, primarily on the grounds of affordability. It was agreed that this policy would be given further consideration by CPAG in spring 2017.

A policy proposition for pre-transplant patients to receive eculizumab was considered by the NHS England Specialised Commissioning Clinical Panel in December 2016. The Clinical Panel concluded there was insufficient evidence to support development of a policy and, therefore, this topic will not enter the policy work programme at this stage. NHS England will liaise with the National Institute for Health Research to discuss the potential for an international clinical group to develop an international trial.

■ Dermatitis

Jim Shannon: [60605]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate his Department has made of the number of adults with atopic dermatitis in (a) Strangford and (b) the UK.

Jim Shannon: [60606]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to raise awareness of (a) atopic dermatitis and (b) other skin diseases.

Jim Shannon: [60608]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to reduce geographic variation in access to dermatology services for patients with (a) skin diseases and (b) adult atopic dermatitis.

Jim Shannon: [60609]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of management of adult atopic dermatitis across the UK.

David Mowat:

The Department has not made an estimate of the number of adults with atopic dermatitis in Strangford or in England. Health is a devolved subject; therefore it would be for the devolved administrations to comment on atopic dermatitis in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) estimates that atopic eczema (atopic dermatitis) is common skin condition that affects between 15–20% of school-age children and 2–10% of adults.

Clinical commissioning groups are responsible for commissioning the majority of dermatology services and are best placed to understand the needs of their local population. Most patients - adults and children - with skin problems can be well managed by primary care with support from dermatology departments in the community or local hospitals. The management and treatment of atopic eczema is well established.

To support local commissioners and clinicians to shape and manage high quality services, in 2007 NICE produced the guideline Atopic eczema in under 12s: diagnosis and management,

which sets out best practice in the diagnosis and management of the condition.

Diagnosis and treatment at an early stage will of course benefit children as they reach adulthood. NICE has also developed a clinical knowledge summary for the management of atopic eczema in adults. Both the clinical knowledge summary and the guideline can be found at the following links:

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg57/resources/atopic-eczema-in-under-12s-diagnosis-and-management-975512529349

<https://cks.nice.org.uk/eczema-atopic>

In order to understand the effectiveness of atopic eczema treatment and services, NICE recommends the use of validated patient experience tools including the Dermatology Life Quality Index. This assesses a patient's quality of life and response to treatment.

For those patients with the most severe forms of atopic eczema, who cannot be managed through routine access to treatments provided through primary or secondary care, a referral to a specialised dermatology service may be appropriate. NHS England commissions services for people with rare and complex skin conditions and has set out what providers must have in place in order to offer specialist dermatology care, supporting equity of access for patients wherever they live. These services may provide more intensive therapies with the involvement of a range of health and care professionals, subject to a patient's needs. More information can be found at the following link:

www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/a12-spec-dermatology.pdf

There is a range of information to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of skin conditions such as atopic eczema on the NHS Choices website. In addition to this, in June 2014 Public Health England (PHE), in conjunction with the Department and NHS England, ran a Be Clear on Cancer campaign in the South West of England to raise awareness of the signs of skin cancer including information on how to reduce the risks of getting skin cancer. An interim evaluation report for the campaign was published in February 2016 and we will continue to work with PHE to assess how we take this work forward.

■ Doctors: Waiting Lists

Danny Kinahan:

[60399]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average referral time for doctors seeing patients was in each NHS trust area in the last 12 months.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS England publishes data on the median waiting time in weeks for patients admitted to hospital and non-admitted outpatient pathways each month. The table attached shows the data for each National Health Service trust that submitted data in the last 12 months.

Attachments:

1. PQ60399 attached document [PQ60399 attached document.xlsx]

■ Epilepsy: Medical Treatments

Jim Shannon:

[60488]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the timetable is for making available new medication for Lennox-Gastaut syndrome.

Nicola Blackwood:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance, The diagnosis and management of the epilepsies in adults and children in primary and secondary care, published in January 2012, sets out best practice for clinicians on the diagnosis, treatment, care and support of people with epilepsy. This guidance recommends that children with Lennox–Gastaut syndrome should either be referred straight to a specialist or that a specialist should be consulted on how best to manage that patient. First line treatment for patients with this condition is sodium valproate, with lamotrigine prescribed as an adjunctive treatment if sodium valproate is ineffective or not tolerated. Consideration of other anti-epileptic drugs and approaches to management should only be undertaken by a specialist.

■ **European Medicines Agency****Stephen Timms:**[\[60978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on patient access to new medical treatments of the European Medicines Agency relocating outside the UK.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government is fully assessing how the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union will impact medicines regulation in the UK, including the potential relocation of the European Medicines Agency (EMA). However, whatever the future relationship between the UK and EMA, the Government will ensure that patient access to medicines will not be adversely impacted.

■ **General Practitioners****Richard Burgon:**[\[60400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the GP to patient ratio was in (a) Leeds East constituency and (b) the UK in each year since 2010.

Richard Burgon:[\[60402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many GPs were practising in the Leeds Primary Care Trust and its successor clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) in each year since 2010; and what the national average number of GPs practising in a primary care trust and its successor CCGs was in each year since 2010.

David Mowat:

The information requested is in the attached documents.

It should be noted that health is a devolved subject, therefore the Department only holds information on general practitioner numbers in England, rather than for the whole of the United Kingdom.

Attachments:

1. PQ60400 attached document [PQ60400 attached document.xlsx]
2. PQ60400 attached file [PQ60400 attached file.xlsx]

■ General Practitioners: Insurance

Alex Chalk:

[60413]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress his Department is making on identifying the most effective ways of addressing the root causes of the rising costs of indemnity for GPs.

David Mowat:

Over the summer of 2016, the Department and NHS England established the General Practice Indemnity Review as a short-term, focussed piece of work which sought to examine the extent of inflation in general practitioner (GP) indemnity, the root causes of this, and to identify proposals for improving the situation.

Following that review, the Department and NHS England committed to further work to address the growing cost of claims in relation to clinical negligence claims.

This work has now been incorporated into the Department's core business. Officials have been working with stakeholders including the Medical Defence Organisations, NHS Litigation Authority and Ministry of Justice to understand and address the root causes of rising indemnity costs – which are similar in both primary and secondary care.

The Department is considering a number of policy options to address rising costs, one of which is a Fixed Recoverable Costs Scheme that would limit recoverable legal costs in clinical negligence claims. A consultation on this measure will be launched shortly.

Work on other policy options will continue over the next year.

■ Guy's and St Thomas NHS Foundation Trust

Ms Harriet Harman:

[60988]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many admissions were made to medical facilities operated by Guy's and St Thomas' Trust in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Data is collected by National Health Service trust. The information is in the table below.

Elective and urgent admissions made to Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust in each of the last five years

YEAR	NUMBER OF ELECTIVE AND URGENT ADMISSIONS
2011/12	137,919
2012/13	134,718
2013/14	138,253

YEAR	NUMBER OF ELECTIVE AND URGENT ADMISSIONS
2014/15	144,161
2015/16	151,655

Source: HES data, NHS Digital

■ Guy's and St Thomas NHS Foundation Trust: Accident and Emergency Departments

Ms Harriet Harman:

[\[60992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people attending A&E in Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals waited longer than four hours to receive treatment in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The information requested is shown in the table below.

Number of people attending accident and emergency (A&E) in Guy's and St Thomas' who waited longer than four hours from arrival to be admitted, transferred or discharged, 2011-12 to 2015-16

YEAR	NUMBER OF A&E ATTENDANCES	NUMBER OF PATIENTS SPENDING MORE THAN FOUR HOURS IN A&E FROM ARRIVAL TO DISCHARGE, TRANSFER OR ADMISSION
2011-12	162,571	6,289
2012-13	167,522	8,167
2013-14	176,019	6,551
2014-15	182,720	7,965
2015-16	186,534	12,954

Source: NHS England: A&E attendances and emergency admissions

■ Heart Diseases: Drugs

Jim Shannon:

[\[60482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the timetable is for the Ticagrelor drug to be available on the NHS to reduce the risk of fatal heart attacks.

Nicola Blackwood:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published final technology appraisal guidance in December 2016 recommending ticagrelor, in combination with aspirin, for preventing atherothrombotic events in adults who had a myocardial infarction and who are at high risk of a further event. National Health Service commissioners are legally required to make funding available for treatments recommended by NICE within three months of the publication of final guidance.

Heart Diseases: Greater London**Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[60461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of the costs associated with the expansion of staff and facilities at units required to accommodate the transfer of services from the Royal Brompton Hospital as a result of the proposed closure of congenital heart disease services at that hospital will be met by (a) NHS England and (b) Trusts.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS England will make a decision on its proposals for changes to adult and children's congenital heart services in England following a consultation. It has worked, and will continue to work, with providers and other stakeholders to assess the impact of these proposals. NHS England intends to publish an impact assessment and other relevant information when its consultation on the proposals for congenital heart disease services begins.

Heart Pacemakers**Jim Shannon:**[\[60351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make the Biotronik closed loop stimulator available on the NHS.

Nicola Blackwood:

In the absence of guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, decisions on the availability of medical devices are for individual National Health Service organisations, taking into account the available evidence.

Homeopathy**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[60306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency's online guidance, Register a homeopathic medicine or remedy, first published on 20 January 2015, what the evidential basis is for the statement that homeopathy aims to trigger the body's natural system of healing; and if he will make a statement.

Nicola Blackwood:

The purpose of the statement is simply to provide a description of the philosophy of homeopathy for the general public. It is not included or referred to in the approved

product information for any homeopathic medicines authorised or registered in the United Kingdom.

■ Hospitals: Complaints

Jonathan Reynolds:

[60462]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what procedures are in place for NHS hospital complaints to be processed in a timely fashion; and what recourse patients and their relatives have in the event of delays in the processing of such complaints.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 provide the legislative framework within which complaints to the National Health Service must be handled. When a complaint is acknowledged, the organisation receiving the complaint must offer to discuss with the complainant the period within which the response is likely to be sent. There is a further requirement in the regulations for local arrangements to ensure that complaints are dealt with efficiently. Where a complainant believes their complaint has not been handled in a timely manner, they may complain to the commissioner of the service.

If a complainant is unhappy with an outcome at a local level, they can refer the matter to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) who is independent of the NHS and Government. However, the PHSO normally requires a complaint to have been subject to 'local resolution' although she has powers to intervene prior to this if deemed necessary. Whilst the PHSO wishes to encourage the local resolution of complaints, if a complaint is unduly or unreasonably delayed at a local level a complainant can contact the PHSO and ask them to intervene.

■ Medical Records: West Yorkshire

Mary Creagh:

[60615]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many complaints have been made against Primary Care Support England regarding the transfer of patient records in West Yorkshire, in each month since 1 September 2015.

David Mowat:

NHS England has received no complaints concerning Primary Care Services England, which make reference to the transfer of patient records in West Yorkshire, since 1 September 2015.

■ Medical Treatments

Mary Glendon:

[60450]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with clinical representatives bodies on the Commissioning through Evaluation process; and if he will make a statement.

David Mowat:

NHS England's Commissioning through Evaluation (CtE) programme was established in direct response to national clinical experts identifying treatments that, whilst not currently routinely funded by the National Health Service due to inadequate evidence of relative clinical and/or cost effectiveness, nonetheless showed significant promise for the future.

The CtE programme is therefore specifically designed to generate new valuable evaluative data that would otherwise not be available from current or planned clinical (research) trials, so that it can be considered in future reviews of published clinical commissioning policy.

Potential new schemes are identified by NHS England's clinical reference groups which include representation from professional clinical representative bodies as well as national clinical and patient experts in over 40 specialised service and specialty areas.

Mary Glendon:[\[60451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when NHS England informed stakeholders involved with the Commissioning through Evaluation process of the two phases of that programme.

David Mowat:

The two phases of Commissioning through Evaluation have been part of the programme since its inception in 2013. Clinical and patient stakeholders have been directly involved in designing and overseeing each of the schemes as they have progressed.

Mary Glendon:[\[60452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when NHS England decided on the process of describing the two phases of the Commissioning through Evaluation programme.

David Mowat:

NHS England's Commissioning through Evaluation (CtE) programme was established in 2013 and from its inception, included an initial recruitment phase (during which eligible patients would receive treatment as part of a time limited formal evaluation programme undertaken in a limited number of selected participating centres), followed by a separate analysis phase during which recruited patients would continue to receive appropriate follow up care, but no new patients would be treated.

The schemes are specifically intended to gather valuable new evaluative information to support subsequent review of the relevant NHS England clinical commissioning policy. A 'Methods' document will be published in March to help stakeholders with an interest in the CtE programme to better understand the process from scheme identification through to the review of the policy concerned.

■ Mental Health Services: Finance

Ms Harriet Harman: [\[60991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he has plans to ring-fence mental health funding to clinical commissioning groups; and if he will make a statement.

Nicola Blackwood:

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are best placed to make decisions on commissioning mental health services for their communities based on local need but they are required to increase their spending on mental health each year at least in line with the growth in their overall funding allocation.

In the Last year mental health spending through CCGs has increased by 8.4%, in comparison to an average overall allocation growth of 3.7%.

■ Neuromuscular Disorders: South East

Caroline Ansell: [\[60683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that people with muscle-wasting conditions living in Kent, Surrey and Sussex have access to a neuromuscular care advisor close to their home.

David Mowat:

NHS England has published a service specification for neurological care, which sets out what providers must have in place to offer evidence-based, safe and effective services. NHS England advises that, until summer 2016, a neuromuscular care advisor was in post at King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, the main neurosciences centre for the south east, and provided a co-ordinator service to London and the south east of England.

Following a review by the Trust, funding for the post has now been agreed and the remit and job description are currently being finalised. A post to cover Surrey and Sussex, linked to Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, is being discussed by the relevant clinical commissioning groups.

■ NHS: Procurement

Alan Johnson: [\[60206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what account the NHS Business Services Authority plans to take in its decision-making on the future procurement of NHS products of results from NHS Clinical Evaluation Teams.

David Mowat:

Information from the Clinical Evaluation Team will be used by NHS Business Services Authority to support development of procurement strategy.

Alan Johnson: [\[60255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what criteria are used to review NHS products by the NHS Clinical Evaluation Team.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Clinical criteria will vary dependent upon the product range to be reviewed. The Clinical Evaluation Team has published an operating manual which explains the process of developing defined clinical quality criteria for each product group and is described in stage 4 of their pathway, as set out on pages 23 - 24 of the operating manual.

Alan Johnson:[\[60257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment the NHS Clinical Evaluation Team plans to make of manufacturers' feedback in the product review process.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Any feedback received from key stakeholders, including manufacturers, is reviewed as and when it is received by the clinical specialist lead and will be considered as part of the product review process.

Alan Johnson:[\[60258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the NHS Business Services Authority has taken to provide right of appeal by patients and industry as part of the NHS Clinical Evaluation Team's process to review NHS products.

David Mowat:

The Clinical Evaluation Team is not seeking to establish a set of standards for products, nor does it purport to make any recommendations for the National Health Service to use (or not use) particular products. Suppliers are to be given the opportunity to review the Clinical Evaluation Team's reviews for their product(s) at least 72 hours in advance of publication so that any factual and material errors can be rectified. Any concerns expressed will be given appropriate consideration.

■ Ovarian Cancer: Diagnosis**Jim Shannon:**[\[60486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to increase early diagnosis of ovarian cancer.

David Mowat:

Improving early diagnosis of cancer is a priority for this Government.

NHS England's Accelerate, Coordinate, Evaluate pilots are exploring new models for delivering a diagnosis of cancer quickly and effectively, including piloting multi-disciplinary diagnostic centres, which we hope will be particularly effective for patients with vague or unclear symptoms. If successful, NHS England will work with Cancer Alliances to support wider roll out across the country in future years.

An updated suspected cancer referral guideline by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) was published in June 2015 and supports general practitioners (GPs) in identifying patients and urgently referring them as appropriate where cancer is suspected. NICE noted that more lives could be saved each year in

England if GPs followed the new guideline, which encourages GPs to think of cancer sooner and lowers the referral threshold.

Public Health England is developing a new strategic approach to the Be Clear on Cancer awareness raising campaigns which will enable them to cover a range of symptoms in one campaign. A regional pilot campaign to test the approach is planned to run in the East and West Midlands from February to March 2017 to raise awareness of a range of abdominal symptoms that can indicate a wider number of cancers, including ovarian cancer. The regional pilot will be evaluated and results will help inform decisions about how to expand this campaign in the future.

■ **Pancreatic Cancer: Medical Treatments**

Jim Shannon:

[\[60478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make available on the NHS the new treatment for pancreatic cancer to clear cysts.

Nicola Blackwood:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is currently appraising a number of drugs that are expected to receive a marketing authorisation for treating pancreatic cancer.

Under the new arrangements for the appraisal and funding of cancer drugs introduced in July 2016, NICE aims to publish draft guidance on new cancer drugs before licensing. If the draft guidance published by NICE is positive, interim funding will be provided from the Cancer Drugs Fund from the point of licensing until final guidance is published and the technology is moved into routine commissioning.

■ **Personal Care Services: Injuries**

Jim Shannon:

[\[60348\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of people who have attended (a) a GP surgery and (b) A&E for injuries sustained in hair salons in each of the last five years.

David Mowat:

The Department has not made an estimate of the number of people who have attended general practitioner practices and accident and emergency departments due to injuries sustained in hair salons.

■ **Physiotherapy: Shropshire**

Daniel Kawczynski:

[\[60617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the availability of NHS physiotherapists in Shropshire.

David Mowat:

The provision of physiotherapy services is a matter for the local National Health Service. As such, the Department has made no assessment of the adequacy of the availability of NHS physiotherapists in Shropshire.

Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group advises that it will be carrying out a full review of musculoskeletal physiotherapy in Shropshire in the near future.

■ Pregnancy: Sodium Valproate**Jim Shannon:**[\[60477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with (a) the Royal College of Nursing and (b) other health bodies on the risks to pregnant women of taking sodium valproate.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency have held extensive discussions and communications with Royal Colleges involved in prescribing and dispensing of valproate, professional bodies, health organisations, patient groups and relevant charities to inform the development and dissemination of materials to aid communication between health professionals and women and girls on the risks of valproate in pregnancy. The Royal College of Nursing has been made aware of the matter as part of our communications. Further work is ongoing with stakeholders to monitor the effectiveness of the action taken.

■ Radiotherapy**Mary Glendon:**[\[60448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NHS patients have been treated with Selective Internal Radiation Therapy under the Commissioning through Evaluation programme since September 2013.

David Mowat:

It is expected that around 530 patients will have accessed Selective Internal Radiation Therapy via the Commissioning through Evaluation programme by the end of March 2017.

Mary Glendon:[\[60449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will include a stakeholder consultation with clinicians, patient advocacy groups and manufacturers during the analysis period of the Commissioning through Evaluation process for Selective Internal Radiation Therapy; and if he will make a statement.

David Mowat:

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) acts as an independent evaluator for NHS England's Commissioning through Evaluation (CtE) programme and therefore leads on the production of the final report for each of the funded CtE schemes.

NHS England has agreed that manufacturers known to have a direct business interest in Selective Internal Radiation Therapy will be given an opportunity to comment on the draft report. However, given the potential conflicts of interest, the main responsibility for aiding the review of NICE's independent report prior to publication will sit with the CtE Steering Group, which includes representation from both patients and national clinical experts.

■ **Royal Brompton Hospital**

Sarah Olney: [60967]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment NHS England has made of the potential effect of the proposed dispersal of Royal Brompton's congenital heart disease research team on the quality of care provision.

Mr Philip Dunne:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 24 January to Question [60727](#).

■ **Skin Cancer and Sunbeds**

Jim Shannon: [60343]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to reduce the prevalence of skin cancer; and what guidance he has issued on the safe use of sunbeds.

David Mowat:

Our ambition is for England to become one of the most successful countries in Europe at preventing premature deaths from cancer.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence published guidance on skin cancer prevention in January 2011, which has been partially updated by guidance on 'Sun Exposure: benefits and risks' which was published in February 2016. The guideline is for commissioners, managers and practitioners with public health or social care as part of their remit working within the National Health Service, local authorities and the wider public, private, voluntary and community sectors.

In June 2014, Public Health England (PHE) in conjunction with the Department and NHS England ran a local Be Clear on Cancer campaign in the South West of England to raise awareness of skin cancer including information on how to reduce the risks of getting skin cancer. Campaign information is available at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/be-clear-on-cancer/symptoms/skin-cancer>

An interim evaluation report for the campaign was published in February 2016 and we will continue to work with PHE to assess how we take this work forward.

PHE provides information to increase awareness of the public health risks of excessive exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun, and to encourage people at home and abroad (Mediterranean countries) to protect themselves as necessary which is available at:

<https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/uv-index-graphs>

The NHS Choices website also provides sun safety information and advice to the public, which can be found at:

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/skin/Pages/Sunsafer.aspx

Finally, the Sunbeds Regulation Act 2010 came into force in April 2011 in England and Wales to prohibit under-18s from using sunbeds. Local authorities are responsible for enforcing this and the Department has published guidance to support them. PHE is looking into non-regulatory methods of discouraging sunbed use, such as targeted risk communication methodologies.

■ **Skin Cancer: Screening**

Jim Shannon:

[60354]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to introduce new tests for detecting melanoma skin cancer in the NHS.

David Mowat:

There are no plans to introduce new tests for detecting melanoma skin cancer in the National Health Service, the current method for diagnosis is biopsy.

■ **Social Services: Staff**

Alison Thewliss:

[60253]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect of the UK leaving the EU on the level of workforce availability in the social care industry.

David Mowat:

The Department is working on ensuring the best outcome for the health and social care system. All policy teams within the Department are involved with this work and assessing the implications of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union on their area.

■ **Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Ophthalmology**

Jess Phillips:

[60208]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans his Department has to respond to the finding in the Care Quality Commission's report on Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, published in August 2016, on patients' eyesight deteriorating owing to delay in ophthalmology treatments; and if he will make a statement.

David Mowat:

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for commissioning hospital eye services and for holding providers to account in terms of contract performance.

The Department expects patients who require further planned stages of treatment in line with their agreed care plan to receive this treatment without undue delay when clinically appropriate.

NHS Improvement advises that Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has implemented a comprehensive quality improvement plan for its ophthalmology service. Southend CCG is also developing an Essex-wide Ophthalmology strategy to improve services and reduce waiting times.

■ **Thromboembolism: Diagnosis**

Jim Shannon:

[\[60485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have been diagnosed with blood clotting disorders in each of the last five years.

David Mowat:

The Department does not collect information about the number of people diagnosed with blood clotting disorders in England.

Health is a devolved subject; therefore the data collection on the number of diagnoses of blood clotting disorders in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland would be a matter for the devolved administrations.

HOME OFFICE

■ **Burglary: Greater London**

Lyn Brown:

[\[60924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of resources to attend to reported burglaries in (a) London and (b) West Ham constituency on 28 December 2016.

Lyn Brown:

[\[60925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average time taken was for police to visit a burglary scene following a reported burglary in each police force area in England and Wales in the most recent period for which figures are available.

Brandon Lewis:

Decisions on the allocation of the Metropolitan Police's resources are a matter for Chief Officers, in association with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). The police have the resources to do their important work.

We have provided a fair provisional funding deal for 2017/18. It provides stable funding for the police and enables essential policing reform and transformation to go further and faster so that we help the vulnerable, cut crime and support our communities.

The information requested on the average time for the police to visit a burglary scene is not captured centrally by the Home Office.

■ Drugs: Misuse

Mary Glendon: [60969]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the Government's Drug Strategy is to be published; and if she will make a statement.

Sarah Newton:

We are currently developing the new Drug Strategy, working across government and with key partners. The new strategy will be published soon.

■ Football: Racial Discrimination

Craig Whittaker: [60970]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of racism in football were recorded or reported during 2016.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office annually publishes statistics on football-related arrests and banning orders connected with regulated international and domestic football matches involving English and Welsh clubs and the national teams.

The 2015 to 2016 football season for football-related arrests covers the period 1 July 2015 to 10 July 2016. In this season there were 17 football-related arrests in connection with racist and indecent chanting.

The current football-related arrests and banning orders publication can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/football-related-arrests-and-banning-orders-england-and-wales-season-2015-to-2016>

■ Harassment: Internet

Lyn Brown: [60216]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of the policing budget in England and Wales was spent on investigation of online harassment in each of the last five years.

Lyn Brown: [60218]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of the policing budget in England and Wales was spent on prevention of online harassment in each of the last five years.

Lyn Brown: [60359]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much was spent from the policing budget for England and Wales on the investigation of online harassment in each of the last five years.

Lyn Brown:

[60360]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much was spent from the policing budget for England and Wales on the prevention of online harassment in each of the last five years.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office does not hold this information. How much of the policing budget is allocated to a specific workstream or activity within a police force area is a matter for individual Police and Crime Commissioners in consultation with their Chief Constable. The Government is absolutely clear that harassment and abuse in whatever form and whoever the target is totally unacceptable. This includes harassment committed in person, or using phones or the internet.

There is a robust legal framework to tackle offline and online harassment and abuse provided by the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, and offences in the Malicious Communications Act 1998 and the Communications Act 2003.

New Authorised Police Professional Practice on stalking and harassment is currently being developed by the College of Policing, and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate will shortly be commencing a joint inspection of how stalking and harassment are handled by police forces and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), including the service received by victims.

■ Home Office: Conflict, Stability and Security Fund

Stephen Doughty:

[60808]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what projects by (a) name and (b) value her Department funded from the Conflict Stabilisation and Security Fund; and which of those projects were categorised as contributing towards Overseas Development Aid.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Conflict Stability and Security Fund is a cross Whitehall fund. The Home Office contribution to that Fund is contained in the written evidence provided to the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy at this link.

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/national-security-strategy-committee/conflict-stability-and-security-fund/written/40690.html>

■ Human Trafficking: Hertfordshire

Oliver Dowden:

[60380]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the prevalence of human trafficking in (a) Hertfordshire and (b) Hertsmere constituency.

Sarah Newton:

The National Crime Agency regularly publishes statistics relating to the number of potential victims of modern slavery referred to the National Referral Mechanism, broken down by police force area. These can be found here:

www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/national-referral-mechanism-statistics.

The Home Office has not made an assessment of the prevalence of human trafficking and modern slavery in Hertfordshire or the Hertsmer constituency.

■ Immigration**Mr Steve Reed:****[59765]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for (a) leave to remain outside the immigration rules and (b) indefinite leave to remain have been awaiting allocation to a casework unit for over three months.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Data on UK Visas and Immigration temporary and permanent migration activities including In-Country Work In Progress Casework, and Percentage of Temporary and Permanent Migration in-country visa applications for each Route, processed within Service Standards, is published at

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

■ Universities: EU Nationals**Callum McCaig:****[60971]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to minimise barriers for EU-resident staff and students who plan to come to Scottish universities after the UK has left the EU.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The precise way in which the Government will control the movement of EU nationals to the UK after the UK has left the EU is yet to be determined and will be subject to the wider negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU. We are committed to getting the best deal for the whole of the United Kingdom.

■ Visas: Iran**Alison Thewliss:****[60744]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish data on the levels of non-compliance of visa conditions granted to Iranian nationals visiting the UK in each year since 2012.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I am sorry but the Home Office does not hold the information requested.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Department for International Development: Contracts**

Stephen Doughty: [\[61003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, which (a) projects, (b) tenders and (c) contracts have been suspended or cancelled by Ministers of her Department in each of the last 12 months.

Rory Stewart:

The information is not held in the form requested and can only be collated at disproportionate cost.

■ Developing Countries: Schools

Mr Ivan Lewis: [\[60457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to improve school attendance in countries receiving assistance from cash transfer schemes from the UK.

Rory Stewart:

The UK is committed to ensuring all children are able to complete a full cycle of quality education. The UK's approach combines strengthening education systems to ensure better delivery of education; improving accountability for results, within systems and between citizens and service providers; and improving what happens in classrooms.

Over the last five years, UK Aid has supported over 11 million girls and boys into primary and lower secondary schools. DFID has pledged to help another 11 million children gain a decent education between 2015 and 2020.

DFID directly supported cash transfer programmes in 19 countries between 2011 and 2015. Of these 11 countries had cash transfer programmes with education targets, which aim to enable poor and vulnerable children to go to school. The education benefits from cash transfers are either direct if the transfer is made conditional on attendance, or indirect if recipient families choose to spend the transfer on the costs of education. For example in Ethiopia the cash transfer programme did not have an education target but transfers have helped improve school attendance and learning.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ Developing Countries: Exports**

Stephen Gethins: [\[60204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on exporters from developing countries.

Mark Garnier:

I refer the hon Member for North East Fife to the answer I gave him on 23 January 2017, UIN: 59936.

■ **Trade Fairs: USA****Barry Gardiner:**[\[60968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, for what reasons his Department provided financial assistance to companies attending the consumer electronics show in Las Vegas on 5 to 8 January 2017; and what criteria were used in allocating funds to each such company.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade supports UK businesses to attend over 600 events, trade fairs and shows annually with the aim to increase their export growth. For a UK business to access funds in the form of a Tradeshow Access Programme grant the criteria are available on Gov.uk.

■ **Trade Promotion: Central America****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[60250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, where in Central America has a permanent UK trade office.

Mark Garnier:

Central America sits within the Department for International Trade's (DIT) Latin America regional directorate. DIT currently has staff in 12 countries in the region. Following the machinery of government changes after the appointment of the Prime Minister in July 2016, updated details of Trade Offices will be published in due course. In the meantime, details can be found within the Exporting country guides on Gov.uk.

Andrew Rosindell:[\[60291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 17 October 2016 to Question 47641, on Trade promotion: Central America, what campaigns have received resources to access high-value sectors in Central America; and what resources each of those campaigns has received.

Mark Garnier:

Central America and Mexico are currently part of the following high value trade campaigns: Automotive, Defence, Technology, Airports, Education, Financial Services, Food & Drink, Healthcare, Mining, Oil & Gas, Railways and Water. The Department for International Trade (DIT) resource delivering these campaigns includes staff time and business development activity. The level of resource varies according to the scale of the opportunity for UK companies to export to each market.

JUSTICE**■ Dangerous Driving: Sentencing**

Jack Dromey: [\[56460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Government's press release, entitled Killer drivers to face life sentences, published on 4 December 2016, if she will take further steps to improve the enforcement of offences related to dangerous driving.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

On Monday 5 December we launched a consultation on offences and penalties relating to causing death and serious injury.

How police enforce the law is the responsibility of individual Chief Police Officers, taking into account the specific local problems and demands with which they are faced. When an apparent offence is reported or they observe an apparent offence, they will decide on the appropriate course of action.

■ Legal Aid Scheme

Ian Lavery: [\[59911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that people on low incomes are able to access essential legal advice and support.

Sir Oliver Heald:

The Government's reforms will modernise the courts and tribunal system and improve the experience of everyone who comes in to contact with it; particularly, and most importantly, for victims and witnesses. We need to make sure that the provision of legal support is also updated to reflect the new way in which the justice system will work.

We have already made sure that legal aid continues to be available in the most serious cases, for example where people's life, liberty, or housing is at stake or where their children may be taken into care. The operation of, and expenditure on, the legal aid scheme is continually monitored by the Ministry of Justice and the Legal Aid Agency.

We will, however, work closely with the legal sector; victims and witnesses and others to look across the board at the types of support needed in a modernised justice system.

■ Ministry of Justice: Equality

Paula Sherriff: [\[58240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, who the diversity champion is on her departmental board.

Dr Phillip Lee:

Justin Russell (Director General for Prisons, Offender and Youth Justice Policy) is the Overall Diversity Champion for the Ministry of Justice. Justin took over this role on the 25 October 2016.

■ Ministry of Justice: Translation Services**Royston Smith:**[\[59198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2016 to Question 57404, on Ministry of Justice: translation services, which authority sets the quality threshold; and what score is required to reach that threshold.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The MoJ set the quality threshold in line with Public Procurement Regulations (December 2015). The score required to reach that threshold and proceed to the final stage of evaluation was 80.

■ Pupil Exclusions**Catherine West:**[\[60444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what data is collected by her Department and HM Courts and Tribunals Service on unlawful or improperly reported pupil exclusions.

Sir Oliver Heald:

HMCTS does not hold data on unlawful or improperly reported pupil exclusions.

PRIME MINISTER**■ Brexit: Devolution****Stephen Gethins:**[\[60618\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she discussed the role and place of the devolved administrations in forthcoming EU negotiations during her conversations on 17 January 2017 with EU Council President Tusk, EU Commission President Juncker, German Chancellor Merkel and French President Hollande.

Mrs Theresa May:

I spoke to EU Council President Tusk, EU Commission President Juncker, German Chancellor Merkel and French President Hollande to discuss the UK's objectives in the negotiations and future relationship with the EU.

The UK Government is committed to working with the Devolved Administrations as we prepare for our negotiations with the EU which is why we set up the Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations.

SCOTLAND■ **Food Banks: Scotland**

Alison Thewliss: [\[60506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what plans he has to visit a food bank in February 2017.

David Mundell:

I currently have no plans to visit a food bank in February 2017 in my capacity as Secretary of State for Scotland.

TRANSPORT■ **Aviation: Carbon Emissions**

Richard Burden: [\[60654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to respond to the recommendation of the Airlines UK report, Responding to the carbon challenge, published on 15 January 2017.

Mr John Hayes:

I welcome the report, which demonstrates the UK Airline sector's engagement in this serious issue. I note the recommendations, which Government will consider as part of work to develop a new Aviation Strategy.

The Government is working on an Aviation Strategy to replace the 2013 Aviation Policy Framework and this will include consideration of available policy measures to address the climate change impacts of aviation, including those proposed by industry. We remain open and willing to consider all feasible measures to ensure that the aviation sector contributes fairly to UK emissions reductions.

■ **Bus Services: Disability**

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[60613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what guidance his Department plans to publish as a consequence of the Supreme Court judgment in FirstGroup Plc v Paulley, issued on 18 January 2017.

Andrew Jones:

Buses provide an essential service for many in our communities and it is therefore vital that they are accessible to all who wish to use them.

We will consider carefully the Supreme Court's ruling on reasonable adjustments for bus passengers in wheelchairs, and will review with disabled people and the bus industry what action may be required to ensure that they are provided.

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[60614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure compliance with requirements set out in the Supreme Court judgment on *FirstGroup Plc v Paulley*, issued on 18 January 2017.

Andrew Jones:

Buses provide an essential service for many in our communities and it is therefore vital that they are accessible to all who wish to use them.

We will consider carefully the Supreme Court's ruling on reasonable adjustments for bus passengers in wheelchairs, and will review with disabled people and the bus industry what action may be required to ensure that they are provided.

■ **Bus Services: Hemsworth**

Jon Trickett:

[\[61004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make available increased support for rural bus services in Hemsworth constituency; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Jones:

The Government recognises the importance of bus services to rural communities, which provide vital links to local services. In recognition of this, in 2016/17, we have provided the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive – Metro – with over £2 million through the Bus Service Operators Grant scheme (BSOG) to help them support bus services in their area, including around Hemsworth. Decisions on which individual bus services in rural areas they wish to subsidise are, of course, a matter for individual local authorities. On top of this, we provide several million pounds a year direct to bus operators via BSOG for running services in West and South Yorkshire, including for the number 30 bus route.

We are also currently piloting the Total Transport initiative, which is exploring how local authorities and other agencies can work together to commission transport services more effectively in rural and isolated areas.

■ **c2c**

Caroline Lucas:

[\[60543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what representations he has received on the legal basis for the proposed sale by National Express of the c2c franchise to Trenitalia; what discussions he has had with (a) Cabinet colleagues and (b) external stakeholders on that proposed sale; and if he will make a statement.

Paul Maynard:

The Secretary of State has received a request from National Express Group to give his consent to a Change of Control for them to sell the Essex Thameside franchise to Trenitalia. The Secretary of State's role is to give or withhold consent to the sale as provided for in the Franchise Agreement. This is at the Secretary of State's discretion, and is exercised on a case by case basis. General guidance on process

can be found on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rail-franchise-change-of-control-policy-statement/rail-franchise-change-of-control-policy-statement>.

The Secretary of State has not discussed the proposed Change of Control externally.

■ Electric Vehicles

James Cartlidge: [60812]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many electrical vehicle charging (a) points and (b) devices are available to the public in England and Wales.

James Cartlidge: [60890]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what his most recent estimate is of the number of electric vehicle charging points in full working order in England and Wales.

James Cartlidge: [60895]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what his target is for the proportion of electric vehicle charging points that are fully functioning.

James Cartlidge: [60896]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to allocate the £80 million expenditure announced for electric vehicle charging points in the Autumn Statement 2016; and if he will make a statement.

James Cartlidge: [60898]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to improve the flexibility of electric vehicle charging points to ensure such points operate across networks and connector types.

Mr John Hayes:

At Autumn Statement 2016, the Chancellor announced additional funding of £80m for charging infrastructure for the period 2017 to 2021 and Government is considering how best to allocate this funding to meet the needs of drivers and deliver value for money.

There are more than 11,000 publicly accessible charging devices already available in the UK, many of which are privately funded. The Department does not maintain a comprehensive register of the UK's electric vehicle chargepoints, but chargepoints funded by the Office for Low Emission Vehicles must be registered on the National Charge Point Registry. The National Charge Point Registry is an open source data set containing information on the type and geographical location of chargepoints, and is available online at: www.national-charge-point-registry.uk. Additionally, many network operators make this information available on their websites. We want to ensure that motorists are able to charge their electric vehicles easily, conveniently and reliably.

Government has recently consulted on proposals that would require chargepoint operators to make information openly available including chargepoint location, functionality and availability in real-time. Proposals were also made to require a more easily accessible and interoperable UK network, including connector types. Following this consultation, we will respond shortly on the next steps in taking forward these measures.

■ **High Speed Two: Staff**

Liam Byrne:

[\[60632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, (a) how many and (b) what proportion of permanent HS2 Ltd employees are based in Birmingham.

Andrew Jones:

The number of permanent HS2 Ltd employees based in Birmingham has risen to 399 (as of December 16), representing 41% of the permanent workforce. HS2 Ltd is currently advertising and recruiting a further 34 new permanent positions in their Snow Hill Offices. The number of staff based in Birmingham will increase in the coming months as HS2 Ltd continues to recruit for roles that relocate from London.

■ **Motor Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions**

Richard Burden:

[\[60653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the oral contribution of the Minister of State for Transport of 12 January 2017, Official Report, column 451, what discussions he has had with (a) Volkswagen and (b) Ministers of his Department on further investigation on emissions fixing.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government continues to take the actions of Volkswagen extremely seriously. I hold regular meetings with the company to press them on important matters including the progress of the technical 'fixes'. On the 16th January Volkswagen informed me that they have applied 'fixes' to approximately 350,000 vehicles in the UK, and are currently implementing them at a rate of 20,000 a week.

■ **MV Herakles**

Richard Burden:

[\[60658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the total cost to the public purse was of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's charter of the Herakles emergency towing vessel.

Mr John Hayes:

The total cost of chartering the Emergency Towing Vessel, HERAKLES, from June 2012 to 31 December 2016 was £10,158,019. This is broken down as £9,511,287 as charter costs and £646,732 for fuel and lubes.

■ MV Ievoli Black**Richard Burden:****[60659]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the (a) crewing and (b) training requirements are for the Ievoli Black emergency towing vessel chartered by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

Mr John Hayes:

Within the Invitation to Tender for the new Emergency Towing Vessel (ETV) Contract, the 'ETV Statement of Requirements' specified the performance and service specifications to be fulfilled as follows:

(a) "ETVs will be manned in accordance with the requirements laid down by her Flag State, and commensurate with the tasking of an Emergency Towing Vessel, but not less than 10 crew including the Master." The ETV, IEVOLI BLACK, complies with this requirement; and

(b) "Crew competency is to be maintained at the highest operational standard. Tenderers must confirm that they have the operational capability to respond, as directed by the MCA, to any incident within the area. Master(s) and crew members directly involved in towing operations should have proven emergency rescue towing and ocean towage experience. Documentary evidence of crew capability and experience is to be provided by the tenderer."

The Assessment Panel was satisfied that the IEVOLI BLACK complies with this requirement.

In addition; "The contractor will be expected to work with the charterer (the MCA) in developing and implementing a training programme designed to maintain crew skills. Vessel capability and crew competence will be audited annually."

The vessel programme, issued by the MCA will support the achievement and maintenance of this requirement.

■ Railways: Franchises**Caroline Lucas:****[60544]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what role he has in granting authorisation for one rail franchisee to sell its potential franchise to another commercial organisation; if he will set out the process and procedures for any such sale; and if he will make a statement.

Paul Maynard:

The Secretary of State's role is to give or withhold consent to the sale as provided for in the Franchise Agreement. This is at the Secretary of State's discretion, and is exercised on a case by case basis.

General guidance on process can be found on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rail-franchise-change-of-control-policy-statement/rail-franchise-change-of-control-policy-statement>.

■ Volkswagen

Richard Burden:

[\[60639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the European Commission on infringement procedures it is taking against the UK and other EU countries related to the Volkswagen Group and obligations under EU vehicle type approval legislation.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government received an Infringement Notice from the European Commission on 8th December 2016 and is required to reply within two months. We have not discussed this with the Commission, but will respond in the strongest terms.

WALES

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Wayne David:

[\[908313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent assessment he has made of the potential effect on the Welsh economy of the UK leaving the EU.

Alun Cairns:

The Welsh economy approaches its departure from the EU in a very strong position. Since 2010, Wales has been the fastest growing part of the UK outside London and exports to countries outside the EU have increased by £400 million.

Last week my Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister set out this Government's plan to build a stronger, fairer, more global Britain. I am confident that Wales will grasp the opportunities presented and play its role as part of a stronger United Kingdom.

■ Electricity: Wales

Danny Kinahan:

[\[908311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what assessment he has made of the security of electricity supply in Wales.

Guto Bebb:

The UK's electricity supply remains the most reliable in Europe. Wales plays an important role in contributing to our diverse energy generation mix.

■ Iron and Steel: Wales

Kelvin Hopkins:

[\[908316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent assessment he has made of the performance of the steel industry in Wales.

Alun Cairns:

I recognise that the steel industry is still dealing with very challenging global economic conditions. I am in regular contact with the Secretary of State for Business

Energy and Industrial Strategy, the steel unions and continue my dialogue with the Welsh government and local authorities. The Government has left no stone unturned supporting the steel sector. We will continue to engage with the sector, as well as with the industry stakeholders, as we seek to find a long-term viable solution for the industry.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Child Maintenance Service: Complaints

Angela Crawley: [60566]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many complaints the Child Maintenance Service has received from victims of domestic violence.

Caroline Nokes:

Data is collected clerically and breakdowns based on personal circumstances of the complainant, such as whether they are a victim of domestic violence, is not routinely recorded and could only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

Statistics on the number of complaints received under the Child Maintenance Service are published in the Child Maintenance Service 2012 Scheme - Experimental Statistics.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/2012-statutory-child-maintenance-scheme-aug-2013-to-aug-2016-experimental>

■ Child Maintenance Service: Training

Angela Crawley: [60565]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many members of staff at the Child Maintenance Service are qualified to advise victims of domestic violence.

Caroline Nokes:

During the Child Maintenance application process, clients can identify to us that they were subject to domestic violence. Whilst we do not specifically advise clients on domestic violence caseworkers across both Child Maintenance Service and Child Support Agency are trained to be sensitive and to signpost clients to relevant organisations where appropriate.

As of 30 September 2016, there were over 6500 dedicated caseworkers working across all Child Maintenance Schemes. This number excludes team leaders and all managers who would also be able to undertake similar signposting as required.

■ Disability: Employment

Debbie Abrahams: [61042]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his Department's policy is on halving the disability employment gap by 2020.

Penny Mordaunt:

Making progress on the government's manifesto ambition to halve the disability employment gap is central to our social reform agenda, by building a country and economy that works for everyone, whether or not they have a long-term health condition or disability.

We have seen nearly 600,000 more disabled people in employment over the past three years. Over the same time we've seen the employment rate for disabled people increase by nearly 5 percentage points, where it now stands at 48 per cent. But we know that there is much more that needs to be done, so that everyone who can work is given the right support and opportunities to do so. We know that halving the disability employment gap is ambitious, and will take time to achieve.

The Green Paper 'Improving Lives: The Work and Health Disability Green Paper' (published on 31st October 2016) sets out the short-term action we intend to take to bring about change. It also asks questions on ideas for longer-term reform over this Parliament and beyond through a formal national consultation, so that our systems, sectors and social attitudes all work together to help achieve the ambition of halving the disability employment gap.

■ Employment and Support Allowance**Debbie Abrahams:****[61043]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Improving Lives green paper, published in October 2016, what recent progress his Department has made in undertaking (a) research and (b) a trial to provide support to help individuals in the employment and support allowance support group to move closer to the labour market.

Penny Mordaunt:

We announced that we will undertake comprehensive research with claimants in the Support Group in the Health, Work and Disability Green Paper. Currently, we are in the process of appointing independent, external contractors to undertake the research, which we expect to commence in Spring 2017.

Findings from the research, and engagement with external stakeholders will be used to develop a large scale trial to test and learn from different approaches of offering employment and health support for those in the Support Group.

Participation in the research and/or trial will be entirely voluntary for claimants in the Support Group and based on informed consent.

■ Employment Schemes: Disability**Neil Gray:****[60973]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the funding will be for each of the employment support programmes set out in Improving Lives: The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper, Cm9342, published in October 2016; and if he will make a statement.

Neil Gray:

[\[60974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much the Government plans to spend on employment support services for disabled people by 2020.

Penny Mordaunt:

We announced a real terms increase in investment in employment support for disabled people and people with health conditions at Spending Review 2015.

At Summer Budget 2015, the Chancellor announced a support package of £330m over four years to provide support for people with limited capability for work from April 17 which will rise from £60m in 2017/18 to £100m in 2020/21. 'Improving Lives, The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper' provides further details of this Personal Support Package for people with health conditions and disabilities, with a range of new interventions and initiatives designed to provide support that is tailored to the individual needs of claimants.

The Package will be delivered through Jobcentre Plus, including following the Work Programme with a smaller, but more focused Work and Health Programme, coupled with significant new investment in a new Health and Work Conversation for all ESA claimants and additional Disability Employment Advisers in Jobcentres.

In addition to the £330m announced at Summer Budget 2015, the 2015 Spending Review announced funding rising to at least £130 million a year by 2019/20 for the new Work and Health Programme.

■ **Jobcentre Plus: Staff**

Debbie Abrahams:

[\[61041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many disability employment advisers are employed by his Department.

Penny Mordaunt:

The number of Disability Employment Advisers employed by the Department for Work and Pensions is 320 at November 2016.

■ **Mortgages: Government Assistance**

Debbie Abrahams:

[\[61040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on older people of the changes made to the Support for Mortgage Interest scheme in the Welfare and Reform Work Act 2016.

Caroline Nokes:

The Support for Mortgage Interest scheme will continue to deliver the same level of support at the point of need as is currently provided. This means that benefit claimants will receive the same level of protection from the threat of repossession as they do now.

From April 2018, this support will be provided via a loan rather than as a benefit. However, loans will not have to be repaid until the property is sold. Recovery will be limited to the amount of available equity. Where this is insufficient to enable the loan to be fully recovered, the outstanding balance will be written off.

■ Social Security Benefits: Glasgow Central

Alison Thewliss:

[\[60754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in Glasgow Central constituency have had their benefit payments reduced after transferring from disability living allowance to personal independence payments in each of the last three years.

Penny Mordaunt:

The statistics on the outcomes of Disability Living Allowance claimants who have been invited to and claimed Personal Independence Payment (PIP), including those who have seen a reduced award value, are in the table below:

Table 1 – Award outcomes following reassessment for PIP in Glasgow Central

	AWARD AMOUNT INCREASED	AWARD AMOUNT THE SAME	AWARD AMOUNT DECREASED
Jan-Dec 2014	0	-	-
Jan-Dec 2015	200	-	200
Jan-Oct 2016	300	100	400

Notes:

‘-’ indicates fewer than 50 cases in the category

Data has been rounded to the nearest 100.

Data taken from the PIP computer system’s management information.

■ Universal Credit

Stephen Timms:

[\[60979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in what circumstances work-related activities will be required from a claimant of universal credit who has been signed off work by a GP but has not yet undertaken a work capability assessment; and if he will make a statement.

Damian Hinds:

Claimants have to meet certain requirements in order to receive their Universal Credit payment. This will be based on individual and household information, characteristics and earnings. Work-related requirements are set in discussion with the claimant, tailored to their capability and circumstances, taking into account any health condition

or disability they may have. The requirements a claimant is asked to meet will be clearly set out in their Claimant Commitment.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

CABINET OFFICE

■ **Conduct Guidance for Northern Ireland Election on 2 March**

Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General (Ben Gummer):

[\[HCWS435\]](#)

As is normal ahead of an election, guidance has today been issued for civil servants in UK Government departments and those working in arms length bodies, on the principles that they should observe in relation to the conduct of Government business in the run up to the forthcoming elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly on 2 March 2017.

The guidance sets out the need to maintain the political impartiality of the Civil Service and the need to ensure that public resources are not used for party political purposes during this period. The period of sensitivity begins with immediate effect.

Copies of the guidance have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and on the Cabinet Office website at Gov.uk.