



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 25 October 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:21 P.M., 25 October 2016). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

## ATTORNEY GENERAL

## ■ Crown Prosecution Service: Complaints

**Greg Mulholland:** [\[48954\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many complaints to the Crown Prosecution Service proceeded to formal Stage 2 during each of the last three years.

**Robert Buckland:**

The following table shows the number of complaints escalated to Stage 2 in the past three years:

YEAR	STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS
2013/14	245
2014/15	264
2015/16	254

**Greg Mulholland:** [\[48960\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many complaints have been referred to the Independent Assessor for the Crown Prosecution Service in each of the last three years.

**Robert Buckland:**

The following table shows the number of complaints considered by the Independent Assessor of Complaints (IAC) in the past three years:

YEAR	COMPLAINTS REFERRED TO THE IAC
2013/14*	27
2014/15	76
2015/16	65

\* Part year – IAC role was introduced in May/June 2013

**Greg Mulholland:** [\[48961\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many complaints were upheld (a) in full and (b) partially by the Independent Assessor for the Crown Prosecution Service in each of the last three years.

**Robert Buckland:**

The following table shows the number of complaints upheld or part upheld by the Independent Assessor of Complaints (IAC) in the past three years:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>IAC COMPLAINTS - UPHELD</b>	<b>IAC COMPLAINTS - PARTLY UPHELD</b>
2013/14*	10	6
2014/15	35	23
2015/16	36	23

\* Part year – IAC role was introduced in May/June 2013

**Greg Mulholland:** [\[48962\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many complaints to the Crown Prosecution Service were upheld at formal Stage 2 in each of the last three years.

**Robert Buckland:**

1) The following table shows the number of complaints upheld at Stage 2 in the past three years:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS -UPHELD</b>
2013/14	34
2014/15	50
2015/16	50

**Greg Mulholland:** [\[49015\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many complaints the Crown Prosecution Service has received in each of the last three years.

**Robert Buckland:**

The following table shows the number of complaints received by the CPS in the past three years:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>TOTAL COMPLAINTS</b>
2013/14	Not available*
2014/15	1950
2015/16	1878

\*Due to a technical issue which the CPS is currently resolving, the figure for the total complaints received in 2013/14 is not available at this time. The CPS will write to the Honourable Member to provide this figure once the issue has been corrected.

**Greg Mulholland:**

[\[49016\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many complaints have been received by each regional office of the Crown Prosecution Service regarding each of those regional offices in each of the last three years.

**Robert Buckland:**

The following table shows the number of complaints received by the 13 CPS Areas in the past three years:

AREA	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Cymru/Wales	Not available*	90	121
East Midlands	Not available*	168	163
East of England	Not available*	167	152
London	Not available*	219	245
Merseyside & Cheshire	Not available*	56	39
North East	Not available*	97	69
North West	Not available*	120	140
South East	Not available*	147	118
South West	Not available*	86	84
Thames & Chiltern	Not available*	189	166
Wessex	Not available*	80	47
West Midlands	Not available*	228	293
Yorkshire & Humberside	Not available*	149	146
CPS Direct	Not available*	118	66

\* Due to a technical issue which the CPS is currently resolving, the Area breakdown of complaints received in 2013/14 is not available at this time. The CPS will write to the Honourable Member to provide these figures once the issue has been corrected.

**Greg Mulholland:**

[\[49017\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many complaints to the Crown Prosecution Service were upheld at formal Stage 1 in each of the last three years.

**Robert Buckland:**

The following table shows the number of complaints upheld at Stage 1 in the past three years:



YEAR	STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS -UPHELD
2013/14	150
2014/15	206
2015/16	206

## ■ Rape: Convictions

**Helen Jones:** [\[49401\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what assessment he has made of the reasons for the recent change in the proportion of rape cases that result in a conviction; and if he will make a statement.

**Robert Buckland:**

In 2015-16 the CPS conviction rate in rape cases rose to 57.9% from 56.9% in 2014-15. The volumes of convictions reached 2,689. This is the highest volume ever recorded and represents a rise of 108 defendants (4.2%) since 2014-15.

The CPS continues to prioritise its response to cases involving allegations of rape and other forms of serious sexual offending and has taken a number of steps to improve the conviction rate. These include increasing the number of specialist staff within its dedicated Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) Units; providing revised and updated specialist training for prosecutors, and developing closer working arrangements with the police, including enhanced arrangements for the provision of early investigative advice to assist the police to build stronger cases.

## ■ Rolls Royce: Corruption

**Margaret Hodge:** [\[49510\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, on what date the Serious Fraud Office first received information on allegations of bribery and corruption at Rolls Royce.

**Robert Buckland:**

The Serious Fraud Office first received information concerning allegations of bribery and corruption at Rolls Royce in November 2011.

## ■ Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

**Henry Smith:** [\[49177\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many people were (a) prosecuted for and (b) convicted of offences under the Wild Animals (Protection) Act 1996 in each police force area in England in 2015.

**Robert Buckland:**

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not maintain a central record of the number of people who have been charged with, and prosecuted for, offences brought by way of

the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996. This information could only be obtained by examining CPS case files, which would incur disproportionate cost.

Although it is not possible to identify the number of people charged with particular offences, records are held showing the overall number of offences in which a prosecution commenced in the magistrates' courts. In 2015 there was one offence commenced under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

## BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

### ■ Climate Change

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[47955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to tackle global climate change.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The UK played an important role in securing the global climate Agreement reached in Paris in December 2015. The UK has started its domestic process to enable ratification of the Paris Agreement and will complete this before the end of the year.

The UK also played a key role in securing a major global climate deal to combat aviation emissions, reached at the 39th Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization on 6 October 2016.

We will provide at least £5.8bn from the UK aid budget between 2016 and 2020 as climate finance which will continue to support developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This should help promote green investment required to meet the well below 2 degree goal set in Paris.

Domestically we are delivering against the Paris climate deal through our UK Climate Change Act which commits us to reduce emissions by at least 80% by 2050. One of the first acts of this Government was to pass the fifth carbon budget into law – it is equivalent to a 57% reduction on 1990 levels by 2030.

### ■ Coal Fired Power Stations: Closures

**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [\[49432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, on what date he plans to open a consultation on the closure of coal plants by 2025.

**Jesse Norman:**

Most of the UK's existing coal fired power stations are old, relatively inefficient and require investment to reduce the level of damaging pollutants they emit. I expect to consult shortly on the closure of unabated coal stations.

## ■ Computer Software: Industry

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[48304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the future role of open source software in industrial strategy (a) for the digital economy and (b) as an enabling platform; and what steps he is taking to support that software in relation to public sector procurement.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The Government's Open Standards Principles are helping to level the playing field for open source and proprietary software, and disaggregating government IT into smaller, more manageable components.

The Government IT Strategy states 'Where appropriate, government will procure open source solutions. When used in conjunction with compulsory open standards, open source presents significant opportunities for the design and delivery of interoperable solutions.'

To support interoperability in the public sector, we have a preference for royalty-free software generated in an open and transparent manner, which is often open source.

## ■ Conditions of Employment

**Jack Dromey:**

[\[49600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to ensure that the employment rights contained in the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 will be (a) protected in the long-term and (b) retained in legislation.

**Jack Dromey:**

[\[49601\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to ensure that the rights contained in the Working Time Regulations 1998 will be (a) protected in the long-term and (b) retained in legislation.

**Margot James:**

As a Government, we have been clear that we will do nothing to undermine workers' rights. All law in this area at the time of exit will be brought under UK law as part of the Great Repeal Bill, ensuring continuity.

## ■ Development Consent Orders

**Diana Johnson:** [\[49349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many Development Consent Orders for energy projects his Department considered in each region in each year since 2009-10; and how many such Orders were (a) accepted and (b) rejected.

**Jesse Norman:**

The attached table sets out the number of applications for new Development Consent Orders ("DCO") for energy infrastructure projects which the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the former Department of Energy and Climate Change considered in each year since the Planning Act 2008 system for nationally significant infrastructure projects came into force on 1 March 2010. The year given is the year when the decision was made. The region given is the region in which the Planning Inspectorate classifies the project.

The former Infrastructure Planning Commission made one decision to grant an energy infrastructure DCO before its abolition (2011 – East of England, not included in the table).

One application was originally refused consent before being granted consent on redetermination. That is included as a grant of consent only in the table.

The Department is currently considering one application for a DCO (not included in the attached table).

**Attachments:**

1. New energy infrastructure DCOs [WPQ 49349 Table.docx]

## ■ Electricity Interconnectors

**Lady Hermon:** [\[49365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the merits of increasing the capacity of the Moyle electricity interconnector between Northern Ireland and Scotland to improve electricity interconnection within the UK; and if he will make a statement.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government supports the development of new interconnection where it delivers benefits to the consumer, and our approach is designed to deliver those benefits in the most efficient way. We have a developer-led approach to interconnection where the market identifies the best projects and applies to Ofgem to assess their merits. In the 2016 Budget the Government said that it supports the increase of interconnection capacity to at least 9GW; if a developer was to propose additional capacity between Northern Ireland and the GB market, Ofgem would assess it on its merits.

## ■ Energy Companies Obligation

**Justin Madders:**

[\[49170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what checks his Department has in place to measure the standard of work carried out by contractors under the Energy Company Obligations scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

All Energy Company Obligation (ECO) measures are installed in accordance with the appropriate industry standards including PAS 2030 (Publicly Available Specification) and building regulations.

Ofgem, the scheme administrator, carries out checks to ensure that the relevant scheme requirements have been met and that the energy bill and carbon savings reported by suppliers are accurate. These checks include technical monitoring which verifies that measures have been installed in accordance with the relevant installation standards.

Ofgem also conducts audits on measures notified to them by suppliers and have a counter-fraud team which works to detect, prevent and deter fraudulent activity. In addition, energy suppliers are required to conduct their own technical monitoring to ensure their measures are compliant.

Further to this, last year Government commissioned the Bonfield review, an independent review of consumer advice, protection, standards and enforcement for energy efficiency and renewable energy which will be published shortly.

## ■ Energy: Meters

**David T. C. Davies:**

[\[49219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of smart meters which rely on 2G technology.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government has not made an estimate of the number of smart meters that operate using 2G technology. Energy suppliers are incentivised to make sure they have procured communications to allow them to carry on operating smart meters for the whole of their life.

## ■ Energy: Training

**Barry Gardiner:**

[\[46612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Department for Education on reskilling in the energy industry.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has regular discussions with ministerial colleagues on a number of issues.

## ■ European Aviation Safety Agency

**Catherine West:** [\[48374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the likelihood of aeroplane manufacturing moving from the UK to other EU countries in the event of the UK leaving the European Aviation Safety Agency.

**Jesse Norman:**

Officials from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy are currently working closely with officials from the Department for Exiting the EU to understand the effects that withdrawal from the EU may have on businesses, consumers and other economic actors. However, in any case the UK is a member of its own right of the WTO agreement on Civil Aircraft, which eliminates tariffs on sales of civil aircraft and their parts among its members.

## ■ Industry

**Peter Kyle:** [\[46314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what role Industrial Partnerships will play in delivering the Government's Industrial Strategy.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 10 October 2016]:* A successful industrial strategy can only be developed by engaging with people, businesses and organisations across the country. As the Government's Industrial Strategy develops, the Ministerial team in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will continue to travel to all parts of the UK and engage with a wide range of stakeholders, including Industrial Partnerships.

## ■ Iron and Steel: South Wales

**Stephen Doughty:** [\[48741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the economic effect of the UK leaving the EU on the steel industry in South Wales.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

*[Holding answer 19 October 2016]:* The UK economy is fundamentally strong, highly competitive, and open for business. As we work towards negotiating Brexit, we will aim to limit uncertainty surrounding businesses and industries, including the steel industry in South Wales, whilst also seeking to forge new relationships and seize new opportunities.

## ■ Land Registry

**Bridget Phillipson:** [\[48857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has responsibilities for the Land Registry; and if he will make a statement.

**Margot James:**

I can confirm that the department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, has responsibility for Land Registry. As Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility, Land Registry forms part of my portfolio.

**■ Land Registry: Privatisation****Bridget Phillipson:**[\[49051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 28 June 2016 to Question 905556, when he plans to publish the results of the Government consultation seeking views on options to move Land Registry operations to the private sector.

**Margot James:**

Following the close of the consultation on moving operations of Land Registry to the private sector Government is carefully considering its response, taking into account consultation responses received. It is only right that new ministers take the time to look at all the options before making a decision on the best way to proceed and no decision on the future of Land Registry has yet been taken. Government will publish a response in due course.

**■ National Engineering Laboratory****Dr Lisa Cameron:**[\[49606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of granting additional funding for the National Engineering Laboratory (NEL) for investment in the national measurement infrastructure; and what assessment he has made of the extent of the contribution which the NEL makes in that area.

**Margot James:**

The Government fully appreciates the importance of measurement science to the UK's economic prosperity and quality of life and will continue to deliver a National Measurement System on behalf of Government through the infrastructure of measurement laboratories in the UK.

The UK Measurement Strategy will be published shortly, building on the previous Strategy published in 2011, to focus on key areas that underpin Government priorities over the coming five years. The balance between scientific programmes in which the Government invests will be determined by this strategy.

## ■ Nissan

Chi Onwurah: [\[49465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether a Minister of his Department was present at the meeting between the Prime Minister and the Chief Executive of Nissan, Carlos Ghosn on 14 October 2016.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

*[Holding answer 24 October 2016]:* Ministerial meetings with external organisations are published quarterly on the [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/bis-quarterly-publications-april-to-june-2012>

## ■ Nuclear Power Stations

Jim Shannon: [\[49110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that national security issues relating to Hinkley Point C and Bradfield in Essex remain a priority in decision-making over those sites.

**Jesse Norman:**

Government takes the security of existing and proposed nuclear facilities very seriously.

The UK civil nuclear sector is subject to a thorough safety and security regulatory regime, overseen by the independent Office for Nuclear Regulation.

## ■ Trident Submarines: Iron and Steel

Nic Dakin: [\[49057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what type of assessment his Department has made of whether the use of French steel for successor Trident submarines meets the Government's procurement guidelines.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

*[Holding answer 21 October 2016]:* The Government wants UK companies to be successful in public procurement, and has published guidelines for departments to apply on major projects when sourcing and buying steel. These requirements, which were introduced after the procurement for the Successor Programme had started, ensure social and economic factors can be taken into account when Government procures steel.



**CABINET OFFICE****■ Elections: Fraud**

**James Cleverly:** [\[49151\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent steps his Department has taken to detect and prevent electoral fraud involving polling cards and voter registration.

**James Cleverly:** [\[49152\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent steps his Department has taken to detect and prevent electoral fraud at polling stations.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Electoral Commission provides guidance on preventing and reporting electoral fraud sets out the role of Local Electoral Registration Officers, Returning Officers, the police and political parties in detecting and preventing fraud. This guidance can be found online.

Moreover, the security of registration has been improved by the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration. This service checks the details provided by the applicant, including their National Insurance number, against government data before passing the application to the relevant local electoral administration team.

For applications with no National Insurance number and other applications not verified through the digital service, the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) will seek further information regarding identity. For all registration applications, online or otherwise, the ERO is also responsible for ensuring that other eligibility requirements, such as the nationality of the applicant, are satisfactorily met.

Finally, the Government considers the integrity of the electoral system of the utmost importance and has recently welcomed the report published by Sir Eric Pickles into electoral fraud.

The Government will closely consider the recommendations laid out in that report and issue its response shortly.

**■ Lone Parents**

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[48883\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many single parent households there are in the UK.

**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 - Single Parent Households [PQ 48883 v0.2.pdf]

**■ Metals: Theft**

**Mr David Hanson:** [\[48871\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many incidents of metal theft have been reported in each year since 2010.

**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 - Metal Theft [PQ 48871 V.02.pdf]

**■ Mining**

**Pauline Latham:** [\[48923\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what information his Department holds on the number of employees of mining companies that are registered in the UK and listed on the London Stock Exchange.

**Pauline Latham:** [\[48924\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what information his Department holds on the number of mining companies that are registered in the UK.

**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 - Mining Company Employees [PQ 48923 & 48924 V.02.pdf]

**TREASURY****■ Agriculture: Finance**

**Mary Creagh:** [\[906804\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has for the funding of agri-environment projects in receipt of EU funding signed after the Autumn Statement.

**Mr David Gauke:**

On October 3, the Chancellor confirmed that funding for agri-environment schemes signed after Autumn Statement will be guaranteed by the Treasury. The guarantee will apply to all new agri-environment schemes signed before the point of exit from the EU as long as they provide strong value for money and are in line with domestic priorities.

These conditions will be applied in such a way that the current pipeline of committed projects are not disrupted, including agri-environment schemes due to begin this January.

## ■ Air Passenger Duty

**Grant Shapps:** [\[49579\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his policy is on moves to reduce Air Passenger Duty by 50 per cent in the near future.

**Jane Ellison:**

Like all taxes Air Passenger Duty is kept under review with any changes being announced at fiscal events.

**Grant Shapps:** [\[49580\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether any proportion of Air Passenger Duty revenue is used to fund the UK's commitment to Unitaid.

**Jane Ellison:**

The government does not hypothecate revenue collected from Air Passenger Duty.

## ■ Airports: South East

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** [\[906797\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the economy of changes in the timetable to make a decision on airport expansion in the South East.

**Mr David Gauke:**

There has been no change to the timetable for a decision.

The government has taken a decision on its preferred scheme – this will be announced shortly.

Following this a draft National Policy Statement for airports will be published for public consultation, and there will be a vote on the final NPS, which we expect in winter 2017.

The Davies Commission recommended additional south east airport capacity by 2030, and Government still plans to deliver that.

## ■ Concentrix

**Stephen Timms:** [\[49633\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the erroneous data source used by Concentrix to determine that a working tax credit claimant had an undeclared partner was provided by HM Revenue and Customs; and if he will make a statement.

**Jane Ellison:**

HM Revenue and Customs provided cases to Concentrix where there was an indication that there may be something wrong with the tax credits claimed. Concentrix then applied their own data profiling techniques as well as data matching to identify claims that involved an increased likelihood of error or fraud. The detailed process for selecting claims for Concentrix compliance interventions is set out in sections A9 and A10 of the "specifications of requirement" annex of the Concentrix contract which can be found

at: <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/85d1b730-5e4e-4be8-ae4c-3ac1f359afc7>

**Mark Durkan:** [49660]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many tax credits were stopped by HM Revenue and Customs during the week commencing (a) 8 and (b) 15 August 2016.

**Mark Durkan:** [49661]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many tax claims stoppages made directly by HM Revenue and Customs in August 2016 were related to compliance with annual renewals.

**Mark Durkan:** [49662]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many of the tax claims stopped directly by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in the last 12 months had previously been referred to Concentrix by HMRC as high risk renewals.

**Mark Durkan:** [49663]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many and what proportion of tax credits referred to Concentrix by HM Revenue and Customs as high risk renewals were streamed out by Concentrix from further investigation for fraud or error.

**Mark Durkan:** [49664]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many tax credit claims classed as high risk renewals by HM Revenue and Customs have been referred to Concentrix in each of the three risk categories.

**Jane Ellison:**

Between 1 August 2016 and 31 August 2016 HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) automatically stopped 365,483 tax credit claims as a direct result of customers failing to comply with the requirements of the annual renewal process.

Alongside the annual renewal process, HMRC records the number of awards that have been amended, which could be stopped, reduced or increased. Therefore, data showing the total number of claims stopped following a compliance intervention is unavailable.

During the course of the contract, HMRC delegated a total caseload of 2,209,500 cases for high risk renewal checks by Concentrix. Of these 1,635,676 cases were not the subject of further investigation for fraud or error by Concentrix. This amounts to 74% of the total caseload.

The volume of high risk renewals referred to Concentrix are broken down into the three risk categories as follows:

- Undeclared Partner: 1,398,908
- Work & Hours: 564,983
- Child Care: 245,609

### ■ Concentrix: Enfield

**Joan Ryan:**

[\[48880\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 15 September 2016 to Question 46636, on Concentrix, if he will provide that same information for (a) Enfield North constituency and (b) Enfield.

**Jane Ellison:**

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not hold data on the number of tax credit cases awaiting consideration by Concentrix broken down specifically by constituency areas.

HMRC is currently focused on resolving the outstanding cases but will be preparing analysis, which will be made available in due course.

### ■ Concentrix: Wales

**Jessica Morden:**

[\[49593\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many outstanding applications for mandatory reconsideration of a tax credit decision by Concentrix there are in Wales; how many people in Wales have had a tax credit claim stopped by Concentrix; and how many such claims were subsequently reinstated by HM Revenue and Customs.

**Jane Ellison:**

HM Revenue and Customs is currently focused on resolving the outstanding cases but will be preparing regional analysis, which will be available in due course.

### ■ Cycling and Walking

**Ruth Cadbury:**

[\[906801\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will allocate additional funding to the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

**Mr David Gauke:**

At the Spending Review in 2015, the Government set out its plans to invest more than £300m to support the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy. This will increase cycling and walking by improving infrastructure and encouraging active travel, particularly in children.

### ■ Double Taxation: Developing Countries

**Michelle Thomson:**

[\[906803\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his Department's objectives are in negotiating double taxation treaties with developing countries.

**Jane Ellison:**

In negotiating double taxation treaties, the UK's objective is to reach an agreement that allocates taxing rights on a basis acceptable to both countries.

## ■ European Investment Bank

**Diana Johnson:** [\[49236\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions the Government has had with the European Investment Bank on continued investment in the UK following the UK leaving the EU; and how many loans were issued by the European Investment Bank to projects in each region of the UK in the 2015-16 fiscal year.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The Chancellor of the Exchequer is the UK Governor of the European Investment Bank and continues to fulfil his governance duties. The Chancellor continues to meet his European counterparts on a regular basis to discuss a range of issues.

The EIB publish all loans made to UK borrowers as well as details on future projects yet to be financed. In 2015 the EIB lent over €7.77bn to UK projects. The link below provides full details on EIB lending to the UK.

<http://www.eib.org/projects/regions/european-union/united-kingdom/index.htm>

## ■ Financial Services

**Grant Shapps:** [\[48928\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he plans to take to ensure that Britain's financial services sector will stay competitive after the UK has left the EU.

**Simon Kirby:**

As the Chancellor has set out, it is important Britain maintains its status as a great place for financial services and that is why the government stands ready to help the sector maximise the opportunities that leaving the EU presents. Britain has natural strengths, such as a central time zone and English language, alongside a globally respected regulatory system, world-class legal and professional services and a highly skilled financial services workforce, that will ensure it remains competitive after the UK has left the EU.

In addition, the government is committed to investing in home-grown talent, and will continue to welcome the best and brightest around the world to further contribute to the UK's competitive position. Britain is already a world-leader in the global markets of the future including green and sustainable finance, FinTech, and renminbi and rupee products.

The government is maintaining an open dialogue with the financial services industry, including through the Financial Services Trade and Investment Board, as it prepares to withdraw from the EU.

**Diana Johnson:** [\[49247\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if it his policy to advocate for passporting for British financial services after the UK leaves the EU; and what steps the Government is taking to retain passporting for British financial services.

**Simon Kirby:**

The “passporting” arrangements set out in the various pieces of EU financial services legislation are open to members of the EU and the EEA.

Since the referendum, HM Treasury has been working to assess in detail the implications for the UK-based financial services sector of existing “passporting” arrangements, of alternative market access arrangements which exist for countries outside the EU (known as equivalence), and of other interactions between UK and EU markets within and beyond EU law.

We are clear that the rights to access EU markets currently provided by these “passporting” arrangements are of great importance to the many UK-based financial services firms that make use of them.

As the Chancellor has said, we will place a very high priority on getting the right solution with our European Union partners for the financial services sector. Our objective will be to ensure that the parts of the financial services sector that do business in Europe are able to continue doing so.

**Diana Johnson:**[\[49258\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to (a) transpose the EU's fourth anti-money laundering directive into law, (b) continue to participate in measures to share details on the beneficial ownership of companies and (c) participate in the European Financial Intelligence Unit system following the UK's exit from the EU; and what steps he is taking so that the UK can continue to participate in those schemes.

**Simon Kirby:**

Until the UK leaves the EU, the government intends to implement and apply EU legislation, including the Fourth Money Laundering Directive. The UK is and will continue to be at the forefront of international efforts to exchange information on the beneficial ownership of companies and trusts. The UK will continue to work with international partners, including through the Financial Intelligence Unit network, to tackle money laundering and other transnational threats. As near neighbours, EU Member States are particularly important partners and we will continue to cooperate with them closely.

**Jonathan Reynolds:**[\[49292\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions the Economic Secretary to the Treasury has had with representatives of the UK financial services sector on the UK's exit from the EU since assuming office.

**Simon Kirby:**

Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery.

Details of ministerial and permanent secretary meetings with external organisations on departmental business are published on a quarterly basis and are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>

## ■ Financial Services: Education

**Suella Fernandes:** [\[906802\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to improve financial literacy among (a) young people and (b) people in receipt of benefits.

**Simon Kirby:**

We are committed to improving financial literacy among young people and people in receipt of benefits. Financial education was put onto the national curriculum in England in 2014. Through Universal Support, the Department for Work and Pension is working with partners to help people claiming Universal Credit to manage their finances. The government is also bringing pensions and money guidance together in one place, creating a single public financial guidance body to enable consumers to access the help they need on financial matters more easily.

## ■ Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme

**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[48817\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will extend the matching requirement for the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Small Charitable Donations and Childcare Payments Bill relaxes the eligibility criteria for the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme. These changes will ensure that the Scheme operates effectively and flexibly for a greater number of charities and a greater number of donations.

The Government has no plans to extend the Gift Aid matching requirement.

## ■ Inflation: Housing

**Dr Andrew Murrison:** [\[906805\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to reflect house prices in the calculation of inflation.

**Simon Kirby:**

Inflation statistics are produced independently of government by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The current main measure of inflation is CPI. This does not include house prices as these are an asset price and in line with international practice are not included in a consumer price index. However, it does include some costs associated with housing, such as rental prices and the costs of renovating and repair and maintenance of homes. The ONS also produces CPIH, which does include housing costs but is currently undergoing development work after the UK Statistics Authority found faults in its production.



## ■ Iron and Steel: China

**Stephen Kinnock:**

[\[49078\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the illegal dumping of steel by China will form part of the discussions at the UK-China economic and financial dialogue meeting in November 2016.

**Simon Kirby:**

The Chancellor, alongside other Government Ministers, will discuss a range of issues during the UK-China Economic and Financial Dialogue in November 2016.

The steel industry is currently dealing with very challenging global economic conditions, and the Government has been working hard to address the sector's concerns. This includes successfully pressing the European Commission for higher import duties on several types of steel. The UK also worked with international partners to secure agreement at the G20 Leader's Summit in China in September 2016 to create a Global Forum on excess steel capacity. Domestically, the Government is compensating firms for energy costs, ensuring social and economic factors are taken into account when procuring steel, and has set up the Steel Council to look at the long term future of the sector.

## ■ Manufacturing Industries: Exchange Rates

**Kelvin Hopkins:**

[\[906799\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect on the manufacturing industry of the depreciation of sterling since the EU referendum; and if he will make a statement.

**Simon Kirby:**

The UK has an inflation target, not an exchange rate target, and the Government does not express a view on the level of the exchange rate. Manufacturing output has grown 6% since 2010, and has seen significant growth in key areas such as car production and aerospace.

## ■ Monetary Policy: Occupational Pensions

**Ian Blackford:**

[\[906800\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of the quantitative easing programme on defined benefit pension schemes.

**Simon Kirby:**

Monetary policy is set independently by the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Bank of England. The minutes to the MPC's August meeting, in which the Committee expanded its asset purchase programme, noted that 'lower yields posed potential risks to some aspects of the functioning of the financial system, for example by increasing the deficits of many pension funds' but concluded that 'at present, however, those effects appeared to be relatively limited'.

**■ Royal Bank of Scotland: Small Businesses**

**Phil Boswell:** [906798]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department plans to investigate reports of misconduct by Royal Bank of Scotland relating to small business finance.

**Simon Kirby:**

HM Treasury has no plans to investigate these reports. This is a matter for the Financial Conduct Authority, which is undertaking a review.

**George Kerevan:** [906806]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department plans to investigate reports of misconduct by Royal Bank of Scotland relating to small business finance.

**Simon Kirby:**

HM Treasury has no plans to investigate these reports. This is a matter for the Financial Conduct Authority, which is undertaking a review.

**■ Taxation: Developing Countries**

**Imran Hussain:** [49582]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many staff of his Department are involved in the renegotiations of the UK's tax treaties with developing countries.

**Jane Ellison:**

HM Revenue and Customs' Tax Treaty Team, which at October 2016 has 10.3 full time equivalent members of staff, is responsible for negotiating the UK's tax treaties. The make-up of the negotiating programme will vary from year to year which means it is not possible to put an exact figure on the number of staff involved with negotiations with developing countries.

**■ VAT: Self-assessment**

**Mr David Hanson:** [49013]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people who had completed their VAT return through the Government Gateway by the deadline date received an incorrect late-filing penalty of £100 in each financial year since 2010-11.

**Jane Ellison:**

VAT does not have a £100 penalty for late filing of returns. Nevertheless, the number of surcharges reviewed, varied and cancelled are published in the 'Tax Assurance Commissioner's Annual Report', which can be found on gov.uk at; <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-we-resolve-tax-disputes>.

**■ Welfare Tax Credits: Fraud**

**Gill Furniss:** [49169]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the source of the information was regarding fraudulent tax credit claims passed from HM Revenue and Customs to Concentrix.

**Jane Ellison:**

HM Revenue and Customs provided cases to Concentrix where there was an indication that there may be something wrong with the tax credits claimed. Concentrix then applied their own data profiling techniques as well as data matching to identify claims that involved an increased likelihood of error or fraud. The detailed process for selecting claims for Concentrix compliance interventions is set out in sections A9 and A10 of the "specifications of requirement" annex of the Concentrix contract which can be found at: <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/85d1b730-5e4e-4be8-ae4c-3ac1f359afc7>

■ **Wells Fargo**

**Phil Boswell:** [49167]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will conduct an investigation into the sales practices of Wells Fargo in the UK.

**Simon Kirby:**

Investigations into the conduct of financial services in the United Kingdom are a matter for the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), who are operationally independent from Government.

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

## COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ **Business: Urban Areas**

**Tom Tugendhat:** [48922]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to provide financial support to encourage a range and variety of local businesses to operate on the high street.

**Andrew Percy:**

The Government is committed to supporting diverse high streets with a broad range of retail and service businesses, and has taken a number of important steps to make it easier for people to start and expand a business. At Budget 2016 we announced the biggest ever cut in business rates – worth £6.7 billion across the next five years – with business rates reductions for half of all properties starting from April 2017. The Government is permanently doubling the level of Small Business Rate Relief and increasing the thresholds to benefit a greater number of property occupiers. Eligible properties with a rateable value of £12,000 and below will receive 100% relief. This means that 600,000 small businesses will pay no business rates at all, including local high street shops.

We have implemented sensible planning reforms that are benefiting businesses on the high street, including allowing retail and business start-ups to open without planning permission and lifting planning restrictions to increase flexibility of use on high streets. This also supports pop ups or meanwhile use that can give start ups the chance to test out an idea, raise the profile of a product or market test an item.

We have also launched digital high street pilots across Gloucestershire which are supporting Small and Medium Enterprises to upskill and make the most of the digital revolution. We look forward to sharing the learning from those pilots shortly.

The Government is also championing, through the annual Great British High Street Awards, the hard work of local businesses and communities around the country who are turning their high streets around. Winners get the chance to share a £100,000 prize pot which includes training from Google and Twitter. Examples of these high streets can be found on the Great British High Street portal at: [www.thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk](http://www.thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk). We also part-funded the "Love Your Local Market" campaign between 2012 and 2016 to promote markets and help businesses get started in a low cost and supported way.

In addition, we are currently developing a package of measures to create a fairer and more transparent parking environment that encourages consumers to use their local high streets.

#### ■ Families: Disadvantaged

**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[49361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the recent National Evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme report.

**Dan Jarvis:** [\[49557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether his Department plans to respond to the findings of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research evaluation study, No evidence Troubled Families Programme has any significant impact on key objectives, published on 17 October 2016.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

*[Holding answer 24 October 2016]:* The National Institute of Economic and Social Research Impact Study was just one of 6 reports comprising the independent evaluation of the first Troubled Families Programme. The evaluation found that the programme had many positive achievements. These include:

- Families feeling more confident and optimistic about being able to cope in the future
- Joining up local services for families by encouraging a single keyworker approach to work with the whole family on all of its problems
- Raising the quality and capacity of local data systems
- Better joint working with partners such as Jobcentre Plus

The data shows that nearly 120,000 of the families on this programme saw their lives improve – more children attending school, youth crime and anti-social behaviour significantly cut and, in more than 18,000 families, an adult holding down a job. The evaluation does not dispute this fact.

Unsurprisingly, the ambitious and innovative impact study which used national administrative datasets to track changes in families circumstances over comparatively short time periods, was unable to specifically attribute positive outcomes achieved in employment, youth crime or school attendance to the Troubled Families Programme.

This was because at that time the level of change achieved was not significantly different from that seen in a group of families not on the programme with whom comparisons were made. This is not the same, however, as saying that the evaluation shows family outcomes did not improve, as some have wrongly inferred.

Of course, we will continue to review all evidence of how the programme is working, to learn from it and see if there's more we can do to help families facing such multiple problems. In fact, we have already adapted the new programme in a number of ways, including extending the length of time over which family outcomes will be tracked – from 12 months to 5 years.

## ■ Home Ownership Incentive Schemes

**Grant Shapps:** [\[49581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much has been spent from the public purse on advertising the Government's Own Your Home scheme.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Government is committed to supporting home ownership and the Own Your Home campaign is designed to increase awareness of government home buying schemes amongst first time buyers.

In 2015/2016 spend on the campaign has been approximately £4 million. Activity consisted of radio, press and consumer advertising, out of home on-street bus stop posters, digital and Facebook advertising and a series of 'How to' online videos promoted through You Tube.

On average around 140 people are helped through government home buying schemes every day and over 335,000 households have been helped to buy a property since 2010, through schemes like Help to Buy and the reinvigorated Right to Buy.

## ■ Local Government Finance

**Justin Tomlinson:** [\[48949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make it his policy to allow local authorities to set multi-annual budgets.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The annual balanced budget requirement is a key element of the local authority financial control framework. It means that the council is content that underlying income will cover ongoing costs and future commitments in a sustainable and manageable way.

In addition to preparing annual balanced budgets local authorities should prepare multi-year Medium Term Financial Plans. In order to support effective multi-year financial planning the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government published an historic four year local government finance settlement on 8 February 2016. Councils across England applied for the four year offer on the 14 October and the government will respond as soon as practicable.

**Gareth Thomas:** [\[48977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what representations he has received on allowing local authorities to balance their budgets over a period longer than 12 months since 1 October 2015; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Government receives representations on a range of local government finance issues. The annual balanced budget requirement is a key element of the local authority financial control framework. It means that the council is content that underlying income will cover ongoing costs and future commitments in a sustainable and manageable way.

In addition to preparing annual balanced budgets local authorities should prepare multi-year Medium Term Financial Plans. In order to support effective multi-year financial planning the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government published an historic four year local government finance settlement on 8 February 2016. Councils across England applied for the four year offer on the 14 October and the government will respond as soon as practicable.

**■ Social Rented Housing****Neil Coyle:** [\[48891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of how many households affected by Pay to Stay will receive funds from Right to Buy.

**Gavin Barwell:**

The Government believes that, as a matter of fairness, tenants on higher incomes should contribute a fairer level of rent. This might lead to more tenants exercising their Right to Buy, but the two policies are not linked.

**■ Solar Power: Non-domestic Rates****Mr Ben Bradshaw:** [\[49734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the effect on the solar power industry of the proposed 2017 business rate rise for organisations investing in rooftop solar power for their own consumption.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Business rates are based on valuations from the Valuation Office Agency and we do not intervene in their independent assessments. We have proposed a £3.4 billion transitional relief scheme to ensure that no ratepayer is unfairly penalised by the 2017 revaluation.

**CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT****■ Arts****Tom Watson:**[\[49698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the creative industries.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Government wants to ensure the best possible deal for Britain on leaving the EU.

The creative industries are a great UK success story, contributing billions each year to the UK economy. Government is working with industry to assess the potential impacts and maximise the opportunities that our exit presents for the sector.

**■ Culture: North of England****Diana Johnson:**[\[49334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of permanently devolving additional cultural spending to the North of England.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Government is committed to extending cultural opportunities to as many people as possible. We believe in retaining a national strategic arts budget, administered by the Arts Council in England, to ensure arts funding can be targeted where it is most needed and that Government cultural investment should work in support of local cultural priorities.

The Great Exhibition of the North for example, is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the very best of northern art, culture and design. Not only will it showcase the innovation and imagination of the region but also give a real boost to local tourism and provide an important creative legacy. We are committing £5 million towards the exhibition itself, and a further £15 million into a legacy fund to attract further cultural investment in the Northern Powerhouse.

**■ Gaming Machines****Tom Watson:**[\[49697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the social effects of fixed odds betting terminals.

**Tom Watson:** [R] [\[49699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent representations she has received on fixed odds betting terminals.

**Tom Watson:** [\[49736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether she plans to reform the regulation of fixed odds betting terminals.

**Tracey Crouch:**

The Government announced a review of Gaming Machines on 24 October which will look at evidence in regards to stakes and prizes of gaming machines; the number and location of gaming machines; and social responsibility measures to protect players and communities from gambling-related harm, including gambling advertising.

This review will include a close look at the issue of sub-category B2 gaming machines (more commonly known as Fixed Odds Betting Terminals - FOBTs) and specific concerns about the harm they cause, be that to the players themselves or the local communities in which they are located. This is the correct mechanism in which to look again at this issue.

There is now an opportunity for anyone with an interest in this matter to submit evidence for consideration. The Call for Evidence period ends on 4 December 2016.

## ■ Tourism: Exchange Rates

**Tom Watson:** [\[49696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the effect of recent changes in the currency exchange rate on levels of tourism in the UK.

**Tracey Crouch:**

It is too early to draw significant conclusions about the impact of changes in the currency exchange rate on tourism. Many trips to the UK were booked far in advance and, thanks to our world-class attractions, incredible heritage and GREAT marketing campaign, July and August saw a new record for inbound visits and spend for these months

## DEFENCE

### ■ Armed Forces: Census

**Mr David Crausby:** [\[49253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with the Royal British Legion on the Count Them In campaign.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) continues to support the aspiration of the Royal British Legion's (RBL) 'Count Them In' campaign to include a veteran's marker in the 2021 census to provide information to better support the commitment to the Armed Forces



Covenant. In June this year I wrote to John Pullinger, the National Statistician, to request that the position set out in the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) response to the census consultation was revisited. Following discussions this has been agreed and further work is being taken forward. The ONS and the MOD have established a working group to review the decision not to record veterans in the 2021 census. To date it has met six times. The working group is developing a number of themes which have allowed us to develop a good understanding of each other's needs, including those of other Government Departments, Local Authorities and the charitable sector. The latest ONS statement on this issue can be found at the following address:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/censustransformationprogramme/consultations/the2021censusinitialviewoncontentforenglandandwales/updateonmeetinginformationneedsonearmedforcescommunityveterans> The ONS will be inviting key stakeholders from across Government, Local Authorities and the charitable sector to a meeting this autumn to seek their further input on this issue. In addition, the MOD and the ONS met with the RBL in July this year to explain the work that both Departments are taking forward.

#### ■ Armed Forces: Housing

**Mrs Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

[49597]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to publish the results of his Department's survey on its Family Accommodation Model; whether he plans to publish the results to all questions in that survey; and whether any such publication will include all data from the comments sections of that survey.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Future Accommodation Model (FAM) Survey closed on 3 October, having received almost 28,000 responses from our Service personnel. These responses will help the Ministry of Defence understand what the FAM could look like. The Survey results, including all of the comments, are now being processed and will be subject to rigorous analysis in the normal way. The large number of responses means that this process will take longer than initially anticipated, although we hope to be in a position to publish the results in full in early 2017.

Qualitative analysis of the comments section will form part of the results and will be published in a way that protects anonymity.

#### ■ Armed Forces: Human Rights

**Diana Johnson:**

[48816]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many claims under the Human Rights Act 1998 against British soldiers in (a) Iraq and (b) Afghanistan the Government subsequently found to be spurious in each year since 2009-10.

**Mike Penning:**

Legal actions citing the Human Rights Act, whether judicial reviews or personal injury claims, are normally brought against the Secretary of State for Defence rather than against individual Service personnel (on the basis that the Ministry of Defence is

vicariously liable for their acts). The Courts allow or dismiss claims in whole or in part. There have been approximately 1,400 such judicial review claims and 1,000 personal injury claims stemming from our military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The vast majority of them have not yet been heard, as they are queued behind a small number of lead cases. It is the view of the Government, based on the findings of the Al-Sweady public inquiry and other evidence, that large numbers of these claims are likely to be exaggerated or spurious.

## ■ Armed Forces: Obesity

**Grant Shapps:** [\[49578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much has been spent from the public purse on purchasing (a) wearable fitness tracking technology and (b) diet pills for soldiers deemed to be overweight in the last financial year.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

Wearable fitness tracking technology equipment is purchased by individual military units. Records of the cost of these purchases are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

In accordance with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines, the Ministry of Defence prescribes the medication Orlistat for the management of obesity. The drug is prescribed to both UK military personnel and their dependants. In financial year 2015-16 the total purchase cost of Orlistat was £6,300.

## ■ Corruption

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[49700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many times his Department has referred suspicions or allegations of corruption to law enforcement authorities since 2011.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Since 2011 Fraud Defence has referred 44 reported suspicions/allegations of corruption/bribery to law enforcement authorities.

The Ministry of Defence takes allegations of Fraud, Theft, Corruption and Bribery seriously and works hard to detect and deter it. There are robust processes in place to raise awareness of the need for vigilance and we actively encourage individuals to report Fraud, Theft, Corruption and Bribery.

## ■ Defence Sixth Form College

**Mrs Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** [\[49596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the annual cost to the public purse is of sponsoring students at Wellbeck Defence Sixth Form.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The total annual cost to the public purse of sponsoring students at Wellbeck Defence Sixth Form College is £13million.

## ■ Gulf States: Military Aid

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[\[49702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2016 to Question 47793, if he will publish a full description of defence training which the UK has provided to Gulf state armed forces; and whether human rights training was included in such training.

**Mike Penning:**

Further to my answer of 13 October 2016 to Question 47793, I will provide a full list of the training we have provided to Gulf States Armed Forces at the end of the current military training year. This list will cover the training provided in the current military training year which runs from 1 April 2016 until 31 March 2017 and will be provided on 7 April 2017.

UK defence training exposes international partners to UK policy, and promotes concepts of accountability, human rights and transparency.

## ■ Iraq: Islamic State

**Bridget Phillipson:**

[\[48856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what responses he plans to give to the request by the Iraqi Kurdish forces in Mosul for equipment to protect them from an ISIL/Daesh chemical attack; and if he will make a statement.

**Mike Penning:**

The Ministry of Defence has provided a wide range of support, equipment and ammunition to the Kurdish Regional Government, working with the Global Counter Daesh Coalition and Coalition partners. While the UK has not itself provided chemical defence equipment, the Coalition has coordinated the provision of substantial stocks of appropriate personal protection equipment from other Coalition partners to the Kurdish Regional Government that meet the needs of the Peshmerga in this important area.

## ■ Ministry of Defence: Procurement

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[\[49733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many times his Department did not select or treated as ineligible a contractor under article 23 of the Defence and Security Public Contract Regulations 2011 since 2011.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The Ministry of Defence is not aware of any instances where it has not selected, or treated as ineligible, a contractor under article 23 of the Defence and Security Public Contracts Regulations 2011.

**■ Ministry of Defence: Scotland**

**Lady Hermon:** [\[49363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 17 October 2016 to Question 48415, for what reasons the revise or confirm offer procedure was invoked by his Department's procurement function in relation to construction works at Faslane in 2016; and if he will make a statement.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The Revise Or Confirm Offer (ROCO) procedure was used because there was a technical issue with all the tenders received which had to be resolved before the Department could accept them.

The ROCO procedure was successful and a Contract may now be awarded in due course.

**■ Trident Submarines**

**Alan Brown:** [\[49730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the recent fall in the value of sterling on the cost of constructing the Successor submarines.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 17 October 2016 to Question 48369 to the hon. Member for Dunfermline and West Fife (Douglas Chapman).

**Attachments:**

1. Ministry of Defence Procurement [Hansard Extract 17 October 2016, 48369.docx]

**Alan Brown:** [\[49731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment his Department has made of the number of British jobs involved in the Trident successor programme as a result of the recent decision to use French steel in the Successor submarines.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The Successor programme represents billions of pounds of investment in thousands of British jobs, across hundreds of firms, from Scotland to the South of England.

Other stages of construction will include grades of steel manufactured by British suppliers and we encourage them to take the opportunity to bid.

85% of BAE Systems supply chain for the new submarines is based in the UK.

**■ Trident Submarines: Iron and Steel**

**Alan Brown:** [\[49732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions his Department has had with BAE Systems on its decision to use French steel in the construction of the Successor submarines.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The Ministry of Defence engaged with BAE Systems throughout the procurement process for the specialised steel, including being notified of their decision to award the contract.

Other stages of construction will include grades of steel manufactured by British suppliers and we encourage them to take the opportunity to bid.

85% of BAE Systems supply chain for the new submarines is based in the UK.

**EDUCATION****■ Children: Literacy****Mr Barry Sheerman:**[\[48882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent estimate her Department has made of the proportion of children entering secondary education who are unable to read.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests provide information about the proportion of pupils entering secondary education who have reached the national expected standard in reading. The latest Key Stage 2 results are published in table N2 of the the "National curriculum assessments at key stage 2 in England, 2016 (provisional)" statistical first release (SFR)[1].

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-2-2016-provisional> (Table N2)

**■ Children's Centres****Mr Barry Sheerman:**[\[48881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children's centres there were in (a) 2010 and (b) 2016.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

Local authorities have a duty to ensure there are sufficient centres to meet local need; and a duty to consult where changes are planned to local children's centre provision.

In 2010 there were 3,615 children's centres[1]. On 30 September 2016, local authorities listed as being in operation 3,265 main children's centres and sites open to families and children providing children's centre services as part of a network.

Children's centre records are maintained by local authorities and are made publicly available via the department's "EduBase portal" at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/edubase/home.xhtml>

[1] The total number of children's centres in 2010 was originally reported as 3,631. However, a data-cleansing exercise carried out by the department in 2013 found that 15 of the children's centres local authorities had entered onto the children's centre database did not subsequently open and that there was one duplicate record on the

database. The revised total of 3615 was announced on 18 December 2013 in replies to parliamentary questions 176910 and 177099 available at:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm131218/text/131218w0002.htm>

■ GCE A-level: Manchester Withington

Jeff Smith: [48868]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many students have studied at least one arts subject at A-level in Manchester, Withington constituency in each of the last five years.

Nick Gibb:

The number of A level examination entries (including arts[1] subjects) by local authority and state funded schools are published in the A level and equivalent results statistical first releases (SFR)[2]-[3][4][5][6].

The information requested by parliamentary constituency is not available.

[1] Arts subjects are included under the categories Art and Design, Media, Film and Television Studies and Music.

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/revised-a-level-and-equivalent-examination-results-in-england-academic-year-2011-to-2012> (Table 12a)

[3] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/a-level-and-other-level-3-results-england-2012-to-2013-revised> (Table 13a)

[4] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/a-level-and-other-level-3-results-2013-to-2014-revised> (Table 13a)

[5] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/a-level-and-other-level-3-results-2014-to-2015-revised> (Table 13a)

[6] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/a-level-and-other-level-3-results-2015-to-2016-provisional> (Table 10)

■ GCSE: Manchester Withington

Jeff Smith: [48869]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many students have studied at least two arts subjects at GCSE level in Manchester, Withington constituency in each of the last five years.

Nick Gibb:

The requested information is given in the table below:

**Number of pupils at the end of KS4 entering at least two arts [1] subjects at GCSE (incl. equivalents) in Manchester LA**

YEAR[2]	PUPILS ENTERING AT LEAST TWO ARTS SUBJECTS AT GCSE
2011/12	323
2012/13	304
2013/14	312
2014/15	532
2015/16	355

SOURCE: KS4 PERFORMANCE TABLES

The information required by parliamentary constituency is not available.

[1] Includes: Applied Art & Design, Art & Design, Drama, Performing Arts, Media/Film/TV Studies, Music and Dance. Does not include History of Art and Creative Writing.

[2] Data is provisional for 2016, all other years are final.

Jeff Smith:

[\[48870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many GCSE entries for arts subjects there have been from students in Manchester, Withington constituency in each of the last five years.

Nick Gibb:

The requested information is given in the table below:

**Number of entries in arts<sup>1</sup> subject GCSEs (incl. equivalents) from pupils at the end of KS4 in Manchester LA**

YEAR <sup>2</sup>	NUMBER OF ENTRIES IN GCSE ARTS SUBJECTS
2011/12	1,953
2012/13	1,954
2013/14	2,260
2014/15	2,968
2015/16	2,515

SOURCE: KS4 PERFORMANCE TABLES NOTES: INCLUDES: APPLIED ART & DESIGN, ART & DESIGN, DRAMA, PERFORMING ARTS, MEDIA/FILM/TV STUDIES, MUSIC AND DANCE. DOES NOT INCLUDE HISTORY OF ART AND CREATIVE WRITING. DATA IS PROVISIONAL FOR 2016, ALL OTHER YEARS ARE FINAL.

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The information required by parliamentary constituency is not available.

## ■ Pupils: Bullying

Kate Green:

[49241]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that racist bullying of gypsy, roma and traveller pupils is tackled effectively in schools.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

Bullying, for whatever reason, is absolutely unacceptable and should not be tolerated in our schools.

All schools are required by law to have a behaviour policy with measures to tackle bullying among pupils. Schools are free to develop their own anti-bullying strategies but they are held clearly to account for their effectiveness through Ofsted.

The government continues to make tackling all forms of bullying a priority. In September 2016, the Department for Education and the Government Equalities Office announced £4.4m of funding for 10 projects to tackle bullying, this includes a project led by the Anne Frank Trust which encourages young people to think about the importance of tackling prejudice, discrimination and bullying.

The department has produced good practice case studies for schools working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils, which are available at: [www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/gypsy-roma-and-traveller-pupils-supporting-access-to-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/gypsy-roma-and-traveller-pupils-supporting-access-to-education), and is currently considering the drivers for raising the educational attainment of GRT pupils, drawing on expertise from these communities.

## ■ Schools: Bullying

Stephen Timms:

[49632]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress the Government is making on the implementation of measures to tackle bullying in schools.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

Bullying, for whatever reason, is absolutely unacceptable and should not be tolerated in our schools.

All schools are required by law to have a behaviour policy with measures to tackle bullying among pupils. Schools are free to develop their own anti-bullying strategies, but they are held clearly to account for their effectiveness through Ofsted. The Government has provided advice for schools including case studies and direction to further sources of advice. More information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>, and



<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/managing-behaviour-and-bullying-in-schools-case-studies>.

To develop further these other sources of advice and support, in September 2016 the Department for Education and the Government Equalities Office announced £4.4 million of funding for 10 projects to tackle bullying, including £2.8 million for projects preventing and tackling homophobic, transphobic and biphobic bullying, with the view of building inclusive schools.

We are reviewing the existing evidence on bullying to inform future policy developments and in conjunction with this we are including questions on experience of different kinds of bullying in the next round of our regular 'omnibus' surveys of teachers, children and parents to give us an up-to-date national picture. The results of this survey should be published in spring 2017.

#### ■ Schools: Census

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

[47424]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much notice was given to parents of the school census conducted in September and October 2016.

**Nick Gibb:**

The autumn school census is undertaken on the first Thursday in October. The census guide was made available on the Department's website on 4 May 2016. Five months' notice was provided to parents by this document. The guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-census-2016-to-2017-guide-for-schools-and-las>.

The census specifications were first set out in technical terms to the public on the Department's website via the business and technical specifications, which are primarily used by suppliers of school's management information systems, on 18 December 2015. As such, some 10 months' notice was provided via this document. The specifications can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-census-2016-to-2017-technical-information>.

#### ■ Schools: Finance

**Catherine West:**

[48901]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when her Department plans to roll out the fairer funding formula in schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

We will introduce a national funding formula for schools from April 2018. We are considering the options carefully, taking into account the need to give schools and local authorities' stability, and the importance of ensuring these historic reforms are right. We will put forward our detailed proposals later in the autumn, including our proposals for

the transition to the formula. Following a full consultation, we will make final decisions and confirm arrangements in the new year.

#### ■ Schools: Travellers

**Kate Green:** [\[49242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what resources and support her Department will make available to schools to promote gypsy, roma and traveller history month in June 2017.

**Nick Gibb:**

Schools have a crucial role to play in celebrating the history and culture of all their pupils, fostering inclusion and reaching out to the communities they serve. The Government is keen to support and encourage all schools to fulfil this important role.

The Department is currently considering the drivers for raising the educational attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils, drawing on expertise from these communities, and will consider GRT History Month in that context.

#### ■ Teachers: Working Hours

**Stephen Timms:** [\[49631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to implement the recommendations of the three working parties set up to tackle the workload challenge in teaching.

**Nick Gibb:**

We have accepted, and are acting upon, all of the recommendations for the Government in the reports from the three review groups about eliminating unnecessary workload in relation to [marking](#), [planning and resources](#), and [data management](#).

In response to these recommendations, we are reviewing the impact of the [Department for Education Protocol](#), published in March 2015, which gives schools more time to prepare for significant changes to accountability, the curriculum and qualifications. The data exchange project is progressing well and is on track to deliver the intended reductions in effort and cost in moving data. Other initiatives to help teachers access data more effectively are in place including developing a replacement for RAISE Online in collaboration with school leaders. We are also disseminating the messages and principles from the reports through system leaders and others to help them become embedded throughout the system.

We know there is more to do and we are continuing to work with all parts of the education system to make sure all of the recommendations in the reports are acted upon.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****■ Angling: Licensing****Mr Charles Walker:**[\[49562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much income has been received from anglers through the rod licence in each of the last five financial years; and if she will make a statement.

**George Eustice:**

The income received from anglers through the rod licence for each of the last five years is provided in the table below:

INCOME (IN MILLION)

2015/16	£21,083
2014/15	£21,147
2013/14	£21,590
2012/13	£21,840
2011/12	£23,742

**■ Animal Welfare: Convictions****Jim Shannon:**[\[49115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many people have been convicted of animal cruelty offences in each of the last five years.

**George Eustice:**

Details of convictions for animal cruelty cases for 2010 to 2015 can be found on the Government's official website relating to Criminal Justice System Statistics in the document "Outcomes by Offence". A link to the document can be found below. The data for animal cruelty is under the category "108 Cruelty to Animal".

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2015>

**■ Beverage Containers****Mr Mark Williams:**[\[49726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the (a) the environmental benefits of the plastic bag charge and (b) potential merits of introducing such a charge for disposable coffee cups.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

A full impact assessment considering the potential environmental benefits of the plastic bag charge was developed as part of introducing it in October 2015. It is available at: [www.legislation.gov.uk/](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/)

We recently published the first 6 months' data reported to us on the charge. Based on this, we expect English consumers to use around six billion less single-use plastic carrier bags this year.

Major coffee chains already have a financial obligation to recover and recycle a proportion of the packaging they place on the market, including disposable coffee cups, as they are captured under the Packaging Waste Regulations. The industry is also taking further voluntary action aimed at significantly increasing paper cup recycling rates by 2020.

The Government is developing the 25 Year Environment Plan, part of which will consider our policies for resources, waste and recycling.

**■ Beverage Containers: Waste Disposal****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[48974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with the retail sector on alternatives to non-recyclable coffee cups; and if she will make a statement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

This Government remains committed to recycling and will be consulting widely on our plans for resources, waste and recycling in developing our 25 Year Environment Plan. I have had a number of discussions with a range of stakeholders in drawing up our plan; as part of these discussions, companies will raise ideas about new products or treatments.

**■ Birds of Prey: Prosecutions****Kerry McCarthy:**[\[49689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department has taken to ensure that people who violate the law on protected birds of prey are prosecuted.

**Kerry McCarthy:**[\[49690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent representations she has received on violations of the law protecting birds of prey.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Defra Ministers have received a number of representations, including from Members of this House on behalf of their constituents, highlighting their concerns about illegal persecution of birds of prey such as the hen harrier and wildlife crime more generally.

The Government takes wildlife crime very seriously. All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, with strong penalties for committing offences against birds of prey and other wildlife. All incidents of wildlife crime should be reported to the police.

Raptor persecution is a UK wildlife crime priority and has a taskforce led by a senior police officer to develop a plan to prevent crime, gather intelligence on offences and enforce against it. It focuses on the golden eagle, goshawk, hen harrier, peregrine, red kite and white tailed eagle.

The National Wildlife Crime Unit, which Defra funds jointly with the Home Office, monitors and gathers intelligence on illegal activities affecting birds of prey and provides assistance to police forces when required.

It is a matter for the prosecuting authorities to ensure those who commit such offences receive the appropriate penalties as set out in law.

#### ■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control

Paul Flynn:

[48569]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what information her Department holds on the number of people who have undertaken (a) training and (b) refresher training approved by her Department on humane shooting of badgers in each of the last three years.

George Eustice:

1. Natural England does not hold figures for the number of operators who have been trained to undertake licensed action but does know how many are trained and are licensed. Industry organisations are responsible for running the training courses and Natural England only holds the number of trained operators who were put forward by the control companies, and subsequently become authorised to undertake licensed action. For 2016, over the 10 licensed areas, 1446 operators are authorised to carry out badger culling (latest figures: 17/10/16).
2. Natural England does not hold figures for the number of operators who attended refresher training. All operators who have been licensed in a previous year to undertake controlled shooting of badgers and who wish to be licensed again for the current year must attend refresher training. Industry organisations are responsible for undertaking refresher training. Natural England holds confirmation that each of these operators has attended refresher training.

#### ■ Common Agricultural Policy and Common Fisheries Policy

Diana Johnson:

[49339]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether it is her policy to negotiate to participate in the (a) Common Agricultural Policy and (b) Common Fisheries Policy after the UK leaves the EU.

**George Eustice:**

Exit from the EU presents us with a unique opportunity to review the way we manage our farming and fisheries sectors and design a set of policies tailored to the needs of the UK. These sectors are immensely valuable and supporting them will form an important part of our exit from the EU. The Secretary of State, and her ministerial team and cross-Whitehall colleagues, are therefore working with industry, rural and coastal communities, and the wider public to shape our plans for farming and fisheries outside the EU.

**■ Environment Protection: EU Law****Mrs Madeleine Moon:**[\[49415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to her oral contribution of 18 October 2016, Official Report, 301WH, which directives are no longer fit for purpose; and if she will make a statement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Government is currently considering future arrangements for existing EU legislation in preparation for the repeal of the European Communities Act 1972. This 'Great Repeal Bill' will end the authority of EU law and return power to the UK. The Bill will effectively convert current EU law into our domestic law. We look forward to working with the industry, rural communities and the wider public to shape our plans for a future outside the EU when we can assess the benefits of moving to an outcomes-focussed regulatory framework.

**■ Fisheries****Scott Mann:**[\[48885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she plans to support fishing communities to take advantage of British territorial fishing waters after the UK leaves the EU.

**George Eustice:**

Our fishing industry is of vital importance to coastal communities and leaving the EU creates the opportunity to improve the management of UK industry in the future.

Defra officials will be working with the Department for Exiting the European Union to look at future policies for fisheries. We will continue to work closely with industry and other key stakeholders to develop these new arrangements.

**■ Food Supply****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[48971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of levels of food insecurity in the UK; and if she will make a statement.

**George Eustice:**

The UK currently has a high degree of food security as shown by the UK Food Security Assessment (published in 2010 and reviewed in 2012) which analysed the different global factors affecting UK food supply.

Global 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.

Following a period of higher food price inflation retail food prices have fallen by 7.0% since their peak in February 2014. The proportion of household income spent on food has remained stable at 11% for 2015/16 compared to 2008/09.

**Food: Waste****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[48973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to reduce food waste in government departments and publicly funded bodies; and if she will make a statement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Defra is one of the signatories to the Courtauld Commitment 2025. This is a commitment by stakeholders across the UK food and drink system – from producer to consumer – to work together to respond to pressures on increasingly scarce resources. All the food waste from Defra's London canteen is recycled.

Reducing waste from Government departments is a key focus of the Greening Government Commitments. In 2014-15, Government departments collectively recorded a 22% reduction in overall waste compared to a 2009-10 baseline. The Greening Government target for waste has focused on the top of the waste hierarchy – that is, reducing overall waste, allowing individual departments to take action on different waste streams as appropriate to their specific operations and material impacts.

A new framework of Greening Government targets covering the period to 2020 will be announced soon.

**Foxes: Animal Welfare****Kerry McCarthy:**[\[49692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which animal welfare groups her Department consulted on the new Code of Practice for the use of snares for fox control in England.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Government has sought to improve the welfare of snared animals through the commission of snare use research and by working with stakeholders to produce improved best practice guidance and increase its observance by users.

Evidence obtained from the research helped to identify possible improvements to the code of best practice as well as to snare design. Defra worked with animal welfare

groups such as OneKind, the League Against Cruel Sports and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, as well as snare user groups to develop an improved guidance for the use of snares in England and Wales.

This improved guidance, which was supported by both sides of the debate, was then used as the basis for Welsh Government designed and owned guidance for Wales and snare user group designed and owned guidance for England.

By taking ownership of this guidance and showing leadership in this area, the snare user groups should be more successful in promoting good practice with their members and changing their behaviour than the Government would on its own.

## ■ Gun Sports

Kerry McCarthy: [49693]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much has been paid in subsidies under the Common Agricultural Policy for land which is used for driven bird shooting in each of the last five years.

George Eustice:

We do not routinely collect this information with regard to payments. Potentially, driven bird shooting could take place on all farmland and moorland. However, some land is not suitable because there are no game birds, or because the terrain is inappropriate for shooting, or because of the risks to others. There are also circumstances where individuals decide not to implement their right to shoot on their land and other occasions when these rights are reserved by the landlord and not used.

## ■ Gun Sports: Economic Situation

Kerry McCarthy: [49691]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what methodology her Department used to assess the financial contribution of driven grouse shooting to the economy.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Information on the financial contribution of driven grouse shooting to the economy is not held by the Government.

An industry report (Public & Corporate Economic Consultants report 2014: The Value of Shooting, found at [www.shootingfacts.co.uk](http://www.shootingfacts.co.uk)) estimated that shooting is worth £2 billion annually to the rural economy and supports 74,000 jobs.

## ■ Japanese Knotweed

Jim Shannon: [48143]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to reduce levels of knotweed proliferation; and what assessment she has made of the potential merits of making house and land owners more responsible for uncontrolled weed growth.



**George Eustice:**

The Department takes the problems caused by Japanese Knotweed very seriously and has taken a number of steps to tackle this invasive plant.

Defra has provided funding of £390,000 for biocontrol work to tackle Japanese knotweed. A psyllid/insect, *Aphalara itadori* has been identified as a biocontrol agent capable of retarding the plant's growth significantly and therefore reducing its ability to spread and regenerate. A closely monitored, licensed release programme has been ongoing since 2010 to assess the impact of this psyllid/insect, but as with other biocontrol programme, it can take five to ten years from release to achieve success.

Defra has also provided funding for Local Action Groups (LAGs) to tackle and raise awareness of invasive non-native plants, including Japanese knotweed. Additionally, Defra is currently funding a LAG coordinator to help groups with funding bids and provide advice.

Japanese knotweed is listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it an offence to allow the plant to escape or cause it to grow in the wild. Whilst landowners are under no statutory obligation to remove Japanese knotweed from their property, where they are acting unreasonably and allowing Japanese knotweed to cause a nuisance to the local community, local authorities and the police can now issue a Community Protection Notice against them to ensure that appropriate action is taken.

The issue of making land owners more responsible for uncontrolled weed growth is complex. It could produce disproportionate or inequitable impacts such as the potentially high cost of removal and liability on landowners for clearance as a result of fly-tipping.

**■ Marine Conservation Zones****Mrs Madeleine Moon:****[49418]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to her oral contribution of 18 October 2016, Official Report, 301WH, which UK sites are already designated for protection because of international agreements; and if she will make a statement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The UK has designated 150 sites under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, including 25 in the UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. In addition UK Marine Protected Areas contribute to the well managed ecologically coherent network of Marine Protected Areas under the OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic. These can be found on line at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1389> and <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=4549>

Our network of protected sites, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Parks, Marine Conservation Zones, European and Ramsar sites, support the UK's contribution to achieving the Convention on Biological Diversity's Aichi Target 11

(protected areas increased and improved). These networks also contribute to the achievement of UN Sustainable Development Goals 14: conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment and its resources; and 15: sustainable use of the terrestrial environment and halting biodiversity loss.

■ **Mink: Lincolnshire**

**Victoria Atkins:** [49298]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the (a) extent of the increase in numbers of North American mink in the river systems and waterways of the marshes of East Lindsey and (b) effect of that increase on (i) the water vole and (ii) other native wildlife species.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Since 2008, the Water Vole Database and Mapping Project has managed and stored water vole survey records, as well collating data on American mink. This has enabled mapping of this data and effective use of the datasets for the benefit of water vole populations. The map on page 66 of the 2014 report, found at <http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/watervole-project>, indicates a thriving population of water vole in the Lindsey Marshes. The data for East Lindsey can be requested from the Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre.

The project does not itself involve assessing the effect of one species on another but the presence of American mink is the most significant factor in the decline of the water vole. Ongoing control of the mink at a catchment scale is therefore a priority for water vole conservation.

■ **Natura 2000**

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:** [49416]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to her oral contribution of 18 October 2016, Official Report, 301WH, which aspects of Natura 2000 will need to be incorporated into UK law; what the other elements she referred to are; and if she will make a statement.

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:** [49417]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to her oral contribution of 18 October 2016, Official Report, 301WH, whether she plans for the UK's participation in Natura 2000 to continue; and if she will make a statement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Government is currently considering the impacts of leaving the EU, including future arrangements for existing legislation. This will include future arrangements for the Natura 2000 suite of sites.

## ■ Plants: Quarantine

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[49488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the potential implications of the UK leaving the EU for quarantine measures for pests and diseases of plant material.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[49490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the potential implications of the UK leaving the EU for plant passports; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[49491\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans she has for phytosanitary certification measures for the importation of plant material after the UK leaves the EU.

**George Eustice:**

We recognise that the UK's exit from the EU may have implications for the way in which current UK plant health services operate, including phytosanitary certification on imports, quarantine measures to mitigate the highest risk pests and diseases, and plant passporting.

We are considering the implications and possible options as part of our planning for, and negotiations on, the UK's exit.

Continuing to deliver a risk-based, proportionate plant health regime that effectively protects the UK from plant pests and diseases, whilst maximising the free movement of goods, remains of the highest priority.

## ■ Waste and Resources Action Programme: Finance

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[48972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate her Department has made of the funding available to the Waste and Resources Action Programme in each of the next five years; and if she will make a statement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The current 2016/17 grant agreement for the Waste and Resources Action Programme is £14m.

Future years' allocations have yet to be finalised.

## ■ White Fish: Conservation

**Edward Argar:** [\[49153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to ensure the sustainability of the sea-bass population.

**George Eustice:**

Bass continue to be a priority for the UK Government as we prepare for negotiations at EU level in December to agree further measures that will apply in 2017. Our approach will include consideration of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea scientific advice on bass for 2017 and will clearly recognise the continuing need to maintain strong action to help this stock recover.

The European Commission's proposals, expected shortly, will help to inform our negotiating position. This will take into account the current and long term interests of the recreational and commercial fishing sectors in this important fish stock. We will be working with stakeholders, other Member States, and the European Commission in the coming weeks to inform the UK position.

At the domestic scale our review of bass measures is focusing principally on bass nursery areas. Where it is identified that action is required, this work will be further developed and, where national legislation may be required, will follow the usual legislative process. We will seek the views of key stakeholders on the way forward. Any proposed national legislation will be subject to public consultation involving stakeholders, other Government Departments and interested parties.

**EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION****■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Official Hospitality**

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [49431]

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what estimate he has made of his Department's spending on hospitality to date.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

Information about spend on hospitality for Senior officials, Ministers and Special Advisers will be published in the usual way through the transparency data on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk).

**■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Pay**

**Diana Johnson:** [49504]

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether any civil servants that transferred over to his Department received (a) severance pay and (b) other payments.

**Mr David Jones:**

All Civil Servants working in the Department for Exiting the European Union continue to be employed as Civil Servants and therefore have not received severance payments or additional payments for joining the department.

## ■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Recruitment

**Diana Johnson:** [\[49347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what estimate he has made of the cost of (a) hiring and (b) transferring staff in his Department for each fiscal year of the Spending Review period.

**Diana Johnson:** [\[49501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how much funding his Department has been allocated for each fiscal year of the current Spending Review period.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

Detailed work is underway to establish the budget required to fulfil the department's set-up and responsibilities, including staffing budget, over the period of the Spending Review. The budget will be presented to the House of Commons and approved as part of the supplementary estimates in the new year, as is standard practice.

## ■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Staff

**Diana Johnson:** [\[49344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, pursuant to the Answer of 20 September 2016 to Question 45844, how many of his Department's officials in Brussels are bound by EU codes of conduct which require them to act only with regard to the European Communities rather than a single member state.

**Mr David Jones:**

Officials in my Department are not bound by any EU codes of conduct. This is true of Home Civil Service officials, Diplomatic Service officials, and locally engaged staff.

**Diana Johnson:** [\[49560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, with reference to the Answer of 20 September 2016 to Question 45844, on Department for Exiting the EU: staff, how many of those (a) staff and (b) officials are trade negotiators.

**Mr David Jones:**

The Department for Exiting the European Union now has over 250 staff in London and 120 in Brussels, and is continuing to grow. 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. Our aim is to have a streamlined Department, while ensuring the right skills and experience to get the best outcome for the UK.

## ■ EU Law

**Diana Johnson:** [\[49248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether the Great Repeal Bill will incorporate all existing EU (a) regulations, (b) Directives and (c) Decisions into UK law.

**Mr David Jones:**

The Government will bring forward legislation in the next session that, when enacted, will repeal the European Communities Act 1972 on the day we leave the EU, ending the authority of EU law and returning power to the UK. The Bill will give consumers, workers and businesses as much certainty as possible by maintaining law wherever practicable and desirable.

The Bill will convert current EU law (including regulations and directives) into domestic law, while allowing for amendments to take account of the future negotiated UK-EU relationship. The Government will then, in slower time, consider the domestic law changes which will be needed to give effect to new policies developed post EU exit.

**■ Migrant Workers: Research****Mr Richard Bacon:**[\[49007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what recent discussions he has had with his Ministerial colleagues on the legal status of foreign scientific researchers resident in the UK following the EU referendum.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The Department for Exiting the European Union has engaged with a wide range of organisations including Universities UK, the Royal Academies and the pharmaceutical sector, as well as colleagues from the Department for Education and the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

The Prime Minister has been clear that she is determined to protect the status of EU nationals already living here, and the only circumstances in which that would not be possible is if British citizens' rights in European member states were not protected in return.

The UK remains fully open to scientists and researchers from across the EU. We highly value the contribution of EU and international staff, and there are no immediate changes to their rights to live and work in the UK.

The announcement on underwriting Horizon 2020 funding underlines our commitment to do what is necessary to maintain the UK as an attractive place to conduct research and innovation.

**■ Prime Minister: Staff****Diana Johnson:**[\[49237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many full-time equivalent officials were employed in his predecessor's renegotiation of the UK's relationship with the EU in 2015-16; and if he will estimate the total cost to the public purse of that renegotiation process.

**Mr David Jones:**

All departments were equipped with the resources they needed to manage the renegotiation of the UK's relationship with the EU in 2015-16. As a new department we

do not hold data on staffing within other departments during that process or the estimated costs.

## ■ Quarantine

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[49424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of the potential implications of the UK leaving the EU for quarantine measures for pests and disease of plant material.

**Mr David Jones:**

I refer the Hon Member to the reply previously given on 25th October 2016, PQ UIN49488 by my hon Friend, the Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, George Eustice.

We recognise that the UK's exit from the EU may have implications for the way in which current UK plant health services operate, including phytosanitary certification on imports, quarantine measures to mitigate the highest risk pests and diseases, and plant passporting.

We are considering the implications and possible options as part of our planning for, and negotiations on, the UK's exit.

Continuing to deliver a risk-based, proportionate plant health regime that effectively protects the UK from plant pests and diseases, whilst maximising the free movement of goods, remains of the highest priority.

## ■ UK Trade with EU

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[49254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether the Government intends to (a) join the EU Customs Union, (b) negotiate a customs deal with the EU and (c) negotiate no customs deal as part of the process of the UK leaving the EU.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The Government has made clear we will pursue an exit deal that works for the unique circumstances of the UK.

There is no benefit to Britain in providing a running commentary on every twist and turn of these negotiations.

## ■ UK Withdrawal from EU

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[\[49168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment he has made of whether Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty is revocable once invoked.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

We must leave in the way agreed in law by Britain and other member states, which means following the process set out in Article 50 of the Treaty on the European Union.

There is no precedent for a country triggering Article 50, let alone seeking to reverse such a decision. A clear majority of the electorate voted to leave the EU and we will respect the will of the people of the United Kingdom.

## FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

### ■ British Nationals Abroad: Repatriation

**Steve McCabe:**

[[49728](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 10 October 2016 to Question 46239, what options for loan repayment are made available to people who contact his Department on returning to the UK.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

British nationals to whom we have issued an emergency loan are able to discuss with FCO staff a repayment plan that is convenient to them. They can pay as much (minimum payment of £5) and as frequently as they wish. They can pay by telephone, using a credit or debit card - we accept most cards which are linked to a British bank; electronic bank transfer; personal cheque; Postal Order; or online.

We explain to the individual that their outstanding debt will be subject to a surcharge of 10% if it is not cleared within six months, and that they will not have their passport returned, or be able to apply for a new one, until their debt is repaid in full.

### ■ Commonwealth: Overseas Trade

**Sir Hugo Swire:**

[[49629](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what support officials of his Department are providing for the Commonwealth Trade Ministers' meeting in London in 2017.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK will co-host this meeting with Malta in London next March. Officials are working closely with colleagues in the Department for International Trade and the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council on the practical arrangements and how the meeting can be used to increase cooperation, break down trade barriers and improve trading environments.

### ■ Darfur: Armed Conflict

**Dame Caroline Spelman:**

[[49005](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to *Scorched Earth, Poisoned Air*, published by Amnesty International on 29 September 2016, if he will comment on the alleged destruction of 170 villages in the Jebel Marra region of Darfur by the Sudanese armed forces since January 2016.



**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We are very concerned by the alleged destruction of villages as well as the other allegations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law violations in Jebel Marra. We are deeply troubled about the humanitarian situation in Darfur, which was made more acute by a renewed outbreak of hostilities in January and which has displaced at least 80,000 civilians; adding to the 2.6 million people long term displaced in Darfur. We continue to believe that urgent humanitarian access and a lasting cessation of hostilities leading to a permanent ceasefire are crucial to ending the conflict in Darfur and have made this point directly to the Government of Sudan, most recently during high-level discussions on 10-11 October.

**■ Darfur: Chemical Weapons****Dame Caroline Spelman:**[\[48807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will direct the UK's representatives at the UN to call for an investigation of the alleged use of chemical weapons by the Sudanese armed forces in the Jebel Marra region of Darfur.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We are very concerned by the allegations of chemical weapons use in Sudan and have raised our concern during UN Security Council consultations and directly with the Government of Sudan. We are aware that the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is looking into the allegations and has asked the Government of Sudan to share all relevant information. The UK condemns any use of chemical weapons, by anyone anywhere.

**■ Eritrea: Human Rights****Patrick Grady:**[\[49575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government has taken to assist with the implementation of the recommendations put forward to the Human Rights Council by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea.

**Patrick Grady:**[\[49576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department plans to take to support the mandate of the Special Rapporteur in implementing the recommendations put forward by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea.

**Patrick Grady:**[\[49577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what his policy is on support for the findings of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Government shares the concerns of the UN Commission of Inquiry regarding human rights in Eritrea, in particular shortcomings in the rule of law and indefinite national service.

We have made clear to the Eritrean Government the tangible improvements we want to see, including amending its national service system and fully implementing its own constitution. We are also urging the Government of Eritrea to increase further its engagement with international human rights bodies, such as the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which recently visited Eritrea and was allowed access for the first time to a place of detention. We are supporting UN and EU programmes set up to address recommendations made by the Universal Periodic Review on human rights, and are funding a programme on strengthening the rule of law implemented by the Slynn Foundation.

The mechanism of the Special Rapporteur is an important tool for the international community to strengthen its engagement with Eritrea. The UK Statement to the Human Rights Council on 21 June called on both the Special Rapporteur and the Government of Eritrea to consider ways that they might work together constructively to enhance the progress Eritrea has begun to make in its human rights observance.

**■ Maldives: Commonwealth****Sir Hugo Swire:**[\[49594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will have discussions with the Commonwealth Secretary-General on the Maldives leaving the Commonwealth.

**Alok Sharma:**

As the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) said on 13 October, the UK is disappointed that the Maldives Government has decided to withdraw from the Commonwealth. We believe in the Commonwealth and its commitment to improving the lives of people across all its member states. It is an organisation dedicated to developing free and democratic societies, and to promoting peace and prosperity.

There are no current plans for Ministers to discuss the Maldives with the Commonwealth Secretary-General. Officials are in regular contact with the Commonwealth Secretariat.

**■ Nigeria: Abduction****Catherine West:**[\[49006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Nigerian counterpart on the return of some of the Chibok schoolgirls; and what steps his Department is taking to help secure the safe return of the remaining Chibok schoolgirls.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

I welcome the recent release of 21 of the Chibok girls. It is vital that they and their families now receive appropriate help and support.

We regularly raise the issue of abducted women and girls with the Nigerian Government at the highest levels. Most recently, I discussed the Chibok girls with the Nigerian Vice President during my visit to Nigeria in September.

Since the abduction of the Chibok girls in 2014 the UK has significantly increased its support to Nigeria in the fight against Boko Haram. This includes training and advice for Nigerian armed forces deploying against Boko Haram, a substantial package of intelligence, military and development support and £5 million to support the Multinational Joint Task Force.

We are resolute in our support for Nigeria in the fight against Boko Haram, and continue to call for the release of all who have been abducted by this barbaric group.

**■ Norfolk Island****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[49602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 18 October 2016 to Question 47624, what was discussed at the meetings held between the Administrator of Norfolk Island and officials of his Department; and who proposed that such meetings should take place.

**Alok Sharma:**

The Australian High Commissioner invited an official from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to join a meeting at his residence for the Administrator of Norfolk Island at which the Member for Romford was also present and a wide ranging discussion on Norfolk Island took place. Officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office invited the Administrator of Norfolk Island to a further meeting to discuss, in the context of both countries' relations with small island communities, our relationship with the Overseas Territories.

**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[49603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answers of 18 October 2016 to Questions 47623 and 47624, for what reasons officials of his Department met with the Administrator of Norfolk Island when the governance and administration of that island is a matter for Australia.

**Alok Sharma:**

Pursuant to the Answer to Question 49602, officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office met the Administrator of Norfolk Island to discuss, in the context of both countries' relations with small island communities, our relationship with the Overseas Territories. The United Kingdom and Australia are close partners and Ministers and officials from both countries regularly discuss a wide range of issues.

## ■ Nuclear Weapons: Arms Control

Tommy Sheppard:

[49583]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government has taken towards securing international agreement for the elimination of nuclear weapons in line with the Non-Proliferation Treaty; and what plans he has for further steps towards such agreement in the next 12 months.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

As stated in the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review, the UK is working with our international partners to tackle proliferation and to make progress on multilateral nuclear disarmament. The UK plays a leading role on disarmament verification with the US and Norway. In February 2016 the UK proposed a Programme of Work at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva with the aim of reinvigorating the Conference's work. The P5 Process, initiated by the UK, brings together nuclear weapons states to build trust and confidence to help create the conditions which would enable disarmament. Over the coming year we will continue to press for key steps towards multilateral disarmament, including the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and successful negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty in the Conference on Disarmament.

The Government continues to work to deliver the Strategic Defence and Security Review commitment to reduce our stockpile of nuclear weapons to no more than 180 warheads by the mid 2020s.

Tommy Sheppard:

[49595]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the Government's policy is on eradicating nuclear weapons through multilateral disarmament by means of the international framework provided by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review restated the Government's commitment to the long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons in line with our obligations under Article VI of the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT). We firmly believe that the best way to achieve this goal is through gradual multilateral disarmament negotiated using a step by step approach and within the framework of the NPT. The Government sees entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and successful negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty in the Conference on Disarmament as key steps towards multilateral disarmament.

## ■ Turkey: EU Accession

Grant Shapps:

[48927]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Turkish counterparts on what estimate the government of Turkey has made of when it expects Turkey to join the EU.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

As and when Turkey meets the requirements for accession in full, it will be for Turkey and EU members at the time to decide on membership. The UK will continue to support countries committed to the accession process in meeting the necessary requirements.

■ **Turkey: Overseas Aid**

**Grant Shapps:**

[48926]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department plans to continue sending aid to Turkey after the UK leaves the EU.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The UK will remain engaged internationally beyond our EU exit, building on our regional relationships to deliver stability and security. We will determine what our departure from the EU means for wider budgets at the appropriate time.

## HEALTH

■ **Accident and Emergency Departments: Staff**

**Mr David Crausby:**

[49216]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of safe staffing levels in accident and emergency departments.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

Responsibility for staffing rests (as it has always done) with trust boards. Trusts should focus on the numbers and mixture of skills needed to deliver quality care, patient safety and efficiency, taking into account local factors such as acuity and casemix.

Refreshed guidance issued by the National Quality Board in July 2016 on Safe Sustainable Staffing ( <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/part-rel/nqb/> ) set out clearly that trusts must get the balance between quality, safety and efficiency right by neither under-staffing nor over-spending.

■ **Care Homes: Fees and Charges**

**Steve McCabe:**

[49634]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of (a) the scale of the recent changes on the cost of care homes for self-funding elderly people and (b) the effect of those changes on the number of care home closures in the UK.

**Steve McCabe:**

[49729]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 11 October 2016 to Question 46555, what estimate he has made of the number of care home closures in each of the last three years; and what assessment he has made of the effect of those closures on hospital services.

**David Mowat:**

The Department continues to monitor the market of care providers.

There has been no significant change in capacity in care homes in the last three years. The total number of beds for older people and those with dementia in England has remained stable at around 410,000.

Figures from Christie & Co show a differential between fee rises for self-funders & those paid by local authorities, but we are not aware of this driving changes in provision.

The Department continues to monitor the whole of the market of care providers and engage with the sector to better understand the challenges they face and support local authorities who purchase services.

The Department recognises that social care has a key role to play in reducing delayed transfers of care from hospital.

The National Health Service takes Delayed Transfer of Care seriously. As well as funding the NHS' own plan for the future with £10 billion, we are giving local authorities access to up to £3.5 billion extra a year for adult social care.

The Department works closely with the NHS, local government and the independent care sector to help improve transfers out of hospital, share good practice and minimise delays.

**■ Diseases: Medical Treatments****Jim Shannon:**[\[49035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the Government is taking to reduce the time taken for people with (a) rare and ultra-rare conditions, (b) Morquio A Syndrome and (c) Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy to access treatment.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has advised that, with NHS England, it is currently running a consultation which sets out proposals to enable faster access to therapies for patients with ultra-rare conditions. The proposals outline what conditions need to be met in order to receive a positive recommendation through the NICE highly specialised technologies programme and what mechanisms should be in place to introduce new technologies and manage the affordability challenge for NHS England.

NICE has also advised that a proportion of patients with Morquio syndrome who have met the criteria under the managed access agreement are already receiving elosulfase alfa (Vimizim) and are being monitored by their specialist centre. The remainder are being assessed to ensure that they fulfil the eligibility criteria and patients who do will start treatment within the first year of the managed access agreement coming into force. A very small proportion of the population has decided for personal reasons not to participate.

NHS England and PTC Therapeutics, with the brokering of NICE, agreed a managed access agreement that will enable access to translarna (Ataluren) for the treatment of

Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Specialist centres are in the process of reviewing potentially eligible patients to assess their suitability to receive the drug under the terms agreed in the managed access agreement.

## ■ Drugs: Wholesale Trade

**Tom Brake:** [49182]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what measures his Department has in place to (a) monitor and (b) limit the amount of profit which pharmaceutical wholesalers are able to make from the NHS each year.

**Tom Brake:** [49183]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of making savings in the pharmaceutical supply chain instead of reducing funding to community pharmacies.

**David Mowat:**

The Department introduced the Health Service Supplies (Costs) Bill on 15 September. This Bill is intended to enable my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State to make regulations to obtain information from across the supply chain to assure itself that all parts of the supply chain provides value for money to the National Health Service and the taxpayer. We expect everyone in the NHS and the supply chain should play its part in achieving efficiency savings.

## ■ Enterovirus D68

**David Simpson:** [48806]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment his Department has made of the effect of Enterovirus D-68; and what steps it is taking to prevent the spread of that virus.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Public Health England (PHE) is aware that Enterovirus D-68 (EV-D68) is circulating in the United Kingdom and numbers of infections are in line with what we would expect to see at this time of year. EV-D68 can cause mild to severe respiratory illness requiring ventilatory support and has in some rare instances been associated with cases and clusters of neurological symptoms including paralysis.

The risk assessment notes that EV-D68 is likely to be circulating in the community in the UK undetected. The risks, however, of unexplained neurological symptoms due to EV-D68 in the UK are considered to be very low. PHE's risk assessment of EV-D68 can be found at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/560433/risk\\_assessment\\_enterovirus\\_d\\_68.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/560433/risk_assessment_enterovirus_d_68.pdf)

Though there is no specific vaccine or treatment for EV-D68, clinical and public health management is similar to that of other acute respiratory infections, or unexplained neurological illness. Practising good hand hygiene is important to stop the spread of the

virus. This reflects advice being given to the public at this time of year to protect from a number of different infections, for example seasonal flu.

### ■ Foetal Alcohol Syndrome

**Luciana Berger:** [\[49672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of methods used for collecting data on (a) foetal alcohol syndrome and (b) foetal alcohol syndrome disorder.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department has not made any such assessment. Data on foetal alcohol syndrome and foetal alcohol spectrum disorder is not collected centrally.

### ■ Food Poisoning: Poultry

**Jim Shannon:** [\[49114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the incidence of food poisoning in chickens.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is working with industry to tackle *Campylobacter*, the most common source of foodborne illness, through the *Acting on Campylobacter Together* campaign. The FSA has agreed a joint industry target of achieving no more than 10% of birds contaminated at over 1,000 *Campylobacter* colony forming units per gram (viable cells) at the end of the slaughterhouse line. Using this target, together with the ongoing publication of surveillance results of *Campylobacter* contamination in fresh whole chickens at retail, the FSA is encouraging industry to implement interventions to reduce contamination levels. This has resulted in a downwards trend of the *Campylobacter* levels on chickens sold at retail. Additionally, the FSA continues to provide guidance for consumers on the measures that they can take to reduce their risk of spreading and contracting *Campylobacter* poisoning from raw poultry in the home.

### ■ Food: Hygiene

**Mr David Crausby:** [\[49217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when the Food Standards Agency will report on the effects of the mandatory display of food hygiene ratings at food outlets in Wales.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 requires the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to review the implementation and operation of the scheme and produce a report for Welsh Ministers after the first year of the scheme, and then at three yearly intervals thereafter. The first report, which included an assessment of the positive impact of the scheme on compliance, was published on the National Assembly for Wales' website in February 2015 and is available at:



<http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/gen-ld10113%20-a%20report%20for%20the%20national%20assembly%20for%20wales%20review%20of%20the%20implementation%20and%20operation%20of%20the%20statutory%20food/gen-ld10113-e.pdf>

A further update report was published in May 2015 and is available at:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Update%20Report%20for%20the%20National%20Assembly%20for%20Wales%20-%20Implementation%20and%20Operation%20of%20the%20Food%20Hygiene%20Rating%20Scheme%20in%20Wales.pdf>

The FSA is using the evidence from Wales to build a strong case for the mandatory display of ratings at food outlets in England, and is now exploring how a similar statutory scheme could be delivered in England, aligned with our wider regulatory reform approach. The Government will consider this evidence carefully once it is available.

#### ■ HIV Infection: Preventive Medicine

**Catherine West:**

[48975]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions officials of his Department have had with NHS England on its August 2016 update on the commissioning and provision of pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV prevention

**Nicola Blackwood:**

As an independent body NHS England produced and agreed the content of the August 2016 update on pre-exposure prophylaxis.

#### ■ Hypertension: Screening

**Jim Shannon:**

[49131]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to encourage more regular blood pressure checks as a means of reducing costs to the NHS of conditions that otherwise remain undetected.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Public Health England (PHE) established the Blood Pressure System Leadership Board (BPSLB) to help drive improvements in the prevention, detection and management of high blood pressure. In 2014 the group published 'Tackling high blood pressure: From evidence into action', which sets out priority interventions required and key partner commitments. In the same year, PHE commissioned an assessment of the cost effectiveness of selected blood pressure interventions to help inform the work of the BPSLB.

Between April 2013 and June 2016, 4.58 million people have benefitted from a blood pressure check as part of their NHS Health Check. Recent evaluation of the programme demonstrated that one case of hypertension was diagnosed in every 27 people receiving a check.

PHE and partners have developed a Heart Age Tool, designed to help people understand their heart health and cardiovascular risk factors, including blood pressure. Over one million people have used the tool to date.

#### ■ Medical Treatments: Finance

**Jim Shannon:** [\[49034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of slow medicine reimbursement decisions on the level of commercial investment in UK clinical research by companies specialising in rare and ultra-rare conditions.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Independent evidence suggests that the most important attraction for companies to invest in research in the United Kingdom is the availability of world-class scientific expertise, which is the focus of the Government's effort to ensure the UK remains at the forefront of global Research and Development. It also suggests that there is no obvious reason why National Health Service reimbursement policy for pharmaceuticals, or the time taken to make decisions on reimbursement, should significantly affect decisions to invest in Research and Development in the UK.

The independently chaired Accelerated Access Review makes recommendations to the Government on reforms to accelerate access for NHS patients to innovative medicines, medical technologies, diagnostics and digital products.

#### ■ Mental Health Services: Birmingham

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[49020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much has been spent on (a) mental health services and (b) children's mental health services in Birmingham in each of the last 10 years.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The information requested is not collected centrally.

#### ■ Mental Health Services: Children

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[49021\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what waiting time targets are in place for access to (a) mental health treatment and (b) talking therapies for children experiencing mental health problems; and how many times any such targets have been missed in each of the last 12 months.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Access and waiting times standards for people aged from 14 to 65 years old experiencing a first episode of psychosis came into effect in April 2016. The target is that more than 50% of all people experiencing a first episode of psychosis should receive National Institute for Health and Care Excellence-concordant treatment within two weeks of referral.

There is also a waiting time standards for improving access to psychological therapies for all ages (six weeks for 75% of people referred to the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme, with 95% of people being treated within 18 weeks).

There is no waiting time target for access to mental health treatment or talking therapies specifically for children experiencing mental health problems.

Experimental data to monitor the waiting time target for people experiencing a first episode of psychosis has been collected by NHS England since December 2015 and is available at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/eip-waiting-times/>

Some experimental data from the Mental Health Services Data Set relevant to waiting times standards is also published by NHS Digital.

The most recent figures are at:

<http://content.digital.nhs.uk/searchcatalogue?productid=23263&returnid=1741>

Information about Improving Access to Psychological Therapies is available at:

<http://content.digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB21575>

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[49022]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average waiting times are from referral to first appointment for (a) children and (b) young people experiencing acute mental health problems in (i) Birmingham and (ii) the UK.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The information requested is not held centrally.

**Luciana Berger:**

[49703]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much of the £1.25 billion allocated to children and adolescent mental health services in the March 2015 Budget for the next five years has already been spent; on what that funding has been spent on; how much of the remainder of that sum is due to be allocated in each of the next four years; and on what he plans to spend that remaining budget in (a) Liverpool, Wavertree constituency, (b) Liverpool, (c) England and (d) each region.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

To date, £393 million has been invested to drive an ambitious five year transformation programme to improve children and young people's mental health. This has been invested as follows:

2015-16

- £75 million for clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to transform local services through development and implementation of Local Sustainability and Transformation Plans; and

- £68 million to fund further roll out and expansion of the Children and Young People's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies Programme (CYP IAPT), improvements to

perinatal mental health care, investment in inpatient services for children and young people, build workforce capability, and support innovation and development of online support.

2016-17:

- £119 million has been allocated to CCGs to transform local services through delivery of their Local Transformation Plans; and

- £131 million is for workforce and system development to support local transformation plans, a proportion of this will be allocated to commissioners for CYP IAPT and perinatal mental healthcare.

£4 million was retained by the Department to fund central projects.

A breakdown of funding at local levels is not available centrally and has not been published.

## ■ Mental Health Services: Finance

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[\[49023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of introducing a mechanism to ring-fence mental health funding.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Funding decisions legitimately rest with clinical commissioning groups as the appropriate accountable organisations to their local populations.

Nevertheless, 2016-17 NHS England planning guidance states that funding allocations may be retracted, if there is evidence that additional mental health allocations are not being used for the purpose for which they were intended.

The Mandate to NHS England in 2016-17 sets a clear objective that, in order “to close the health gap for people of all ages, we want to see a system-wide transformation in children and young people’s mental health”.

Clinical commissioning groups are required to increase their spending on mental health each year at least in line with the growth in their overall funding allocations.

## ■ NHS: Drugs

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[49032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of high drug prices on the budget of the NHS.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Total spending on drugs in 2010-11 was 12.5% of the health budget.

In 2015-16 total spend on drugs was 13.0% or 12.4% of the total budget if you include repayments to the Department from pharmaceutical companies as part of the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme (PPRS).

Spending on drugs as a percentage of the overall departmental budget has remained fairly constant due to increased use of generic drugs and the PPRS.

## ■ Nutrition

**Luciana Berger:** [\[49669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what monitoring his Department undertakes of clinical commissioning groups' safeguarding of access to medical nutrition for patients for whom it is recommended in NICE guidelines.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) clinical guidelines represent best practice and we expect National Health Service organisations to take them fully into account as they design services for their local populations.

NICE clinical guidelines are not mandatory but the expectation is that NHS organisations will implement them over time drawing upon clinical judgement, and commissioners will take them into account when making commissioning decisions.

**Luciana Berger:** [\[49670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to introduce national prescribing guidelines on medical nutrition.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Prescribing guidance is already available to clinicians on individual medical foods, known as foods for special medical purpose (FSMP). Guidance on prescribing is published within Part XV of the Drug Tariff by clinical indication and product name.

## ■ Orphan Drugs

**Jim Shannon:** [\[49033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has made an estimate of the average time taken by NICE to evaluate new orphan and ultra-orphan therapies in the last three years; and what the average time taken from approval is to access those therapies for patients living with rare and ultra-rare conditions.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has advised that the average time it has taken to evaluate new orphan and ultra-orphan therapies under the highly specialised technologies (HST) programme to date has been 12-14 months. NICE published draft guidance (on average) 6-8 months into the process. NHS England has ensured access to treatments recommended by NICE through the HST programme is available to patients within three months of final guidance. NICE has also advised that its intention is to publish guidance within 4-6 months from marketing authorisation in the future.

**■ Prescriptions**

**Luciana Berger:** [\[49671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department takes to ensure that clinical commissioning groups monitor for unintended consequences to patients after implementing a restrictive prescribing policy.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

NHS England is responsible for ensuring that clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are fulfilling their statutory role and making decisions in line with published guidance.

However, it is the responsibility of individual CCGs to monitor the impact of commissioning decisions in its area.

**■ Social Services: Finance**

**Steve McCabe:** [\[49727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 11 October 2016 to Question 46555, if he will provide local authorities with an increased level of ring-fenced funding for social care in excess of that provided by the Better Care Fund.

**David Mowat:**

Social care continues to be a key priority for the Government. This is why against the context of tough public sector finances the Government has taken steps to protect social care services. However, it is for local authorities to decide how to prioritise their spending based on local priorities and need.

The Autumn 2015 Spending Review settlement announced that local authorities who are responsible for social care would have the ability to raise additional funding to spend exclusively on adult social care through an annual council tax raise of up to 2% above the existing threshold. This new funding for adult social care will be pooled with additional funding from the Better Care Fund. The Government will be making further funding available to councils for adult social care through an improved Better Care Fund, rising to £1.5 billion by 2019-20.

**■ St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Staff**

**Justin Madders:** [\[48958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect on patient safety of the 10 per cent headcount reduction initiative introduced by St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

Responsibility for determining appropriate staffing levels rests with hospital trusts. In making their assessment, trusts should focus on the numbers and skill mix needed to deliver quality care, patient safety and efficiency.

We are advised by NHS Improvement that St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is implementing a financial recovery plan, part of which involves reducing pay costs by 10% by 31 March 2017.

We are further advised that the Trust plans to achieve financial sustainability by not recruiting to certain posts as and when they become vacant. We understand that the Trust is also reviewing its expenditure on discretionary pay and on employing temporary bank and agency staff.

We are assured that the Trust will take all necessary steps to ensure staff can continue to deliver services safely and effectively and that any posts judged essential to delivering services safely and effectively will continue to be filled.

## ■ Strokes

**Catherine McKinnell:** [\[49604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answers of 11 and 18 October 2016 to Questions 46460 and 47904, whether the Government plans to put measures in place to replace the National Stroke Strategy after December 2017.

**Catherine McKinnell:** [\[49605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department plans to evaluate formally the National Stroke Strategy before the end of 2017.

**David Mowat:**

The National Stroke Strategy remains valid and implementation of it continues. There are, therefore, no current plans to renew it. Action is being taken to ensure the progress made on stroke continues. This includes:

- ongoing work in virtually all parts of the country to organise acute stroke care to ensure that all stroke patients, regardless of where they live or what time of the day or week they have their stroke, have access to high quality specialist care;
- publication of the Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Outcomes Strategy in 2013, which includes many stroke specific strategic ambitions;
- a CVD expert forum, hosted by NHS England, to coordinate delivery of the work which was initiated in the CVD Outcomes Strategy; and
- NHS England's National Clinical Director for Stroke works with the Strategic Clinical Networks, clinical commissioning groups, voluntary agencies and individual providers to support better commissioning and provision of stroke care.

More generally, the NHS Five Year Forward View recognises that quality of care, including stroke care, can be variable and that patients' needs are changing and new treatment options are emerging. The Five Year Forward View sets out high level objectives to address these issues.

There are no current plans for a formal evaluation of the National Stroke Strategy. However there is a continuous evaluation of the quality of stroke care via the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme (SSNAP). This measures most of the key indicators defined as important in the strategy and findings are freely available on the SSNAP website at:

<https://www.strokeaudit.org/>

**HOME OFFICE**■ **Children: Refugees**

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[49028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps she has taken to safeguard children living in the Calais refugee camp.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

As the Home Secretary made clear to Parliament on 10 October, the Government's priority is to work with the French Government to ensure the safety and security of all children in the camp in Calais. The UK is also committed to ensuring that unaccompanied children in Calais eligible to come to the UK are transferred as quickly as possible.

■ **Criminal Records: EU Nationals**

**Diana Johnson:** [\[49259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government plans to (a) continue to take part in the European Arrest Warrant system, (b) remain signed up to the Europol Information System, (c) retain voting rights in Europol and (d) remain a member of the European Criminal Records Information System; and what measures are being taken to ensure that the UK can remain a member of each of those schemes once it has left the EU.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Prime Minister has made clear that law enforcement cooperation with our European partners will continue after the UK leaves the EU – we will do what is necessary to keep our people safe.

We are exploring options for cooperation arrangements once the UK has left the EU but it is too early to speculate at this stage what future arrangements may look like.

■ **Deportation**

**Dawn Butler:** [\[48551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will provide information on the (a) number and (b) nationalities of people on the flight from London on 7 September 2016 that was part of Operation Nexus; from which London airport that flight departed; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

5 Jamaicans were removed under Operation Nexus on the charter flight that left the UK on Wednesday 7 September from London Stansted.

■ **Hate Crime**

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[48916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government has taken to reduce hate crime since the EU referendum.



**Sarah Newton:**

We have been working closely with the police at national and regional levels to monitor hate crime since the EU Referendum and to ensure that local forces have the necessary assistance and guidance to respond.

Police forces are responding robustly to recent incidents, and victims can be reassured that their concerns about hate crime will be taken seriously by the police and courts.

On 26 July we published a comprehensive new cross-Government Hate Crime Action plan to drive forward action against hate crime. This includes education programmes to prevent hate incidents and measures to improve the police response and recording of hate crime. It also includes £2.4million for security at places of worship which are vulnerable to hate crime and £300,000 funding for community groups to tackle hate crime at local level.

Ministers and officials have also met Ambassadors and High Commissioners from all EU states and offered reassurance and a single point of contact for them to raise concerns over hate crime on behalf of their citizens.

**Local Authorities: Licensing****Paul Blomfield:**[\[906731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of licensing powers available to local authorities.

**Brandon Lewis:**

*[Holding answer 24 October 2016]:* In June 2016 the Government published a memorandum to the House of Lords Select Committee on the post-legislative scrutiny of the Licensing Act 2003.

The memorandum provides an assessment of how the Licensing Act 2003 has operated since its commencement in 2005 and was prepared by the Home Office with contribution from the Department for Culture Media and Sport, Department of Health and Public Health England.

The memorandum is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-legislative-scrutiny-of-the-licensing-act-2003>

**Pathology****Shabana Mahmood:**[\[47371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government has taken to improve forensic pathology services in England and Wales other than those based on the Hutton review of forensic pathology since the General Election in 2015.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Home Office Forensic Pathology Unit has worked alongside the forensic pathology profession, National Police Chief's Council, Chief Coroner, the Royal College of Pathologists and other senior stakeholders towards continuous improvement of the service. Improvements include the delivery of a robust system of annual appraisal and

revalidation, an annual audit of pathology reports and ongoing oversight of standards through monitoring individual pathologist's workload and quality.

Together this package of improvements ensures that forensic pathologists' work is now quality assured in order to protect the Criminal Justice System. The Home Office continues to support and fund trainee forensic pathologists to maintain long-term capability.

Furthermore, the Home Office Pathology Unit identified a shortage of sub-speciality pathologists who support forensic pathologists in complex cases. To resolve the capability gap a recruitment and training programme has been established that has resulted in greater resilience in paediatric, bone, eye and neuro-pathology support to the service.

#### ■ Refugees: Calais

**Sir Hugo Swire:** [\[49676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what criteria she is adopting to select refugees from the camp in Calais for resettlement.

**Sir Hugo Swire:** [\[49677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which local authorities have agreed to relocate refugees from the camp in Calais.

**Sir Hugo Swire:** [\[49694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the age of young refugees from the camp in Calais received into the UK.

**Sir Hugo Swire:** [\[49695\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to pre-screen young refugees from the camp in Calais before they enter the UK.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The EU's Dublin Regulation clearly sets out the criteria for transferring asylum claims between Member States. The Government wishes to reaffirm that migrants in Calais have not yet been determined as refugees, and furthermore, the Dublin Regulation is the EU's mechanism for transferring asylum claims, rather than a resettlement route. Section 67 of the Immigration Act sets out that 'unaccompanied refugee children' will be relocated to the UK. In respect of Calais, the Government has been clear that unaccompanied children will be prioritised if they meet the Dublin criteria.

We work closely with the French authorities and their partner agencies to ensure all those who come to the UK from the camps in Calais are eligible under the Dublin Regulation. All individuals are referred to the UK authorities by the NGO France Terre D'asile (FTDA) and are then interviewed by French and UK officials. Basic security checks are conducted on all individuals prior to arrival, with further verification carried out once in the UK.

Where credible and clear documentary evidence of age is not available, criteria including physical appearance and demeanour are used as part of the interview process to assess age. Where we believe someone is significantly over 18, they will be refused. The Home Office does not use dental x-rays to confirm the ages of those seeking asylum as they have been described by the British Dental Association as inaccurate, inappropriate and unethical.

Since June the Home Office has been working closely with local authorities and Strategic Migration Partnerships across the UK to ensure that we have the structures in place to support the transfer of unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children, both within the UK and from Europe.

#### ■ Road Traffic Offences: Mobile phones

**Mr Ben Bradshaw:**

[49735]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many fixed penalty notices were issued by the police to motorists who use mobile telephones while driving in the last five years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The number of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) issued to motorists for the use of handheld mobile phones while driving in each of the years from 2010 to 2014 is published in the annual "Police Powers and Procedures" statistical bulletin, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-powers-and-procedures-england-and-wales>

#### ■ Slavery

**Diana Johnson:**

[48813]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government plans to put the National Referral Mechanism on a statutory footing after it is reformed; and whether such plans would require primary or secondary legislation.

**Diana Johnson:**

[48906]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Review of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking, published in November 2014, whether her Department plans ultimately to remove the reasonable grounds stage in the NRM.

**Diana Johnson:**

[48907]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Review of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking, published in November 2014, whether her Department plans to increase the exit times from support for people going through the NRM for victims of slavery and human trafficking to (a) 14 days for reasonable grounds decision and (b) 28 days for a conclusive grounds decision.

**Diana Johnson:** [48908]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to implement the recommendations of the Review of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking, published in November 2014, on (a) requiring providers of housing of people going through the NRM to an audit process, (b) ensuring closer working between her Department, housing providers and local councils and (c) gathering data on the outcomes of people going through the NRM for two years after a conclusive grounds decision.

**Diana Johnson:** [48909]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Review of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking, published in November 2014, whether her Department plans to encourage the collection of biometric identification for those going through the NRM for victims of slavery and human trafficking.

**Sarah Newton:**

We are committed to doing all we can to identify and support UK-based victims of modern slavery. Following a review of the NRM, and in consultation with law enforcement and NGOs, we are piloting ways of improving the efficacy and efficiency of existing arrangements in two regions. The pilot will be evaluated and the findings will inform any reforms that we decide to roll out. Putting the NRM on a statutory footing would require secondary legislation and we will consider whether there is a need do so at the end of the pilot.

**Diana Johnson:** [48814]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many cases for (a) adults and (b) children going through the National Referral Mechanism for the victims of human trafficking and slavery were suspended before a (i) Reasonable Grounds decision and (ii) Conclusive Grounds decision could be made; and what steps the Government is taking to ensure that child victims of trafficking and slavery do not go missing from care.

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

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-10-17/48814>

**Diana Johnson:** [48910]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to implement the recommendation of the Review of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking, published in November 2014, on contacting all relevant people going through the NRM to remind them when their immigration leave expires.

**Sarah Newton:**

We are committed to doing all we can to identify and support UK-based victims of modern slavery. Following the NRM, and in consultation with law enforcement and NGOs, we are piloting ways of improving the efficacy and efficiency of existing arrangements in two regions. The pilot will be evaluated and the findings will inform any reforms that we decide to roll out. Putting the NRM on a statutory footing would require secondary legislation and we will consider whether there is a need do so at the end of the pilot.

However, following the commencement of the Immigration (Variation of Leave) Order 2016, individuals on an Overseas Domestic Workers (ODW) visa only, who are also potential victims of modern slavery, are informed of the date that their visa will expire and whether they can continue to work. They will be updated up until 28 days after a conclusive grounds decision is made.

**Diana Johnson:**[\[48911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government plans to implement the recommendations in paragraph 6.3.15 in the Review of the National Referral Mechanism for victims of human trafficking, published in November 2014, on using European and other funding to afford victims of human trafficking and slavery the option to return safely to their country of origin.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Home Office's Voluntary Returns Service supports those who are confirmed victims of modern slavery to return home if they voluntarily choose to do so. The programme for non-EU nationals is part-funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. The Home Office also support the return of confirmed victims from EU countries and this work is centrally funded at this time.

**■ Slavery: Convictions****Diana Johnson:**[\[48815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many convictions for slavery and human trafficking there have been under (a) each of the old offences before the passage of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and (b) each of the new offences following the passage of that Act in each year since 2009-10; and how many of those convicted were imprisoned for the maximum possible period for each of these offences.

**Sarah Newton:**

The table shows the numbers of defendants prosecuted, convicted and sentenced for slavery and trafficking offences, on a principal offence basis, between 2009 and 2015. The figures do not cover instances where perpetrators of modern slavery have been prosecuted and convicted using non-slavery offences, or where their illegal activities were disrupted by other means.

The criminal justice provisions in the Modern Slavery Act were commenced on 31 July 2015, so prosecutions under the Act only apply to criminal conduct alleged to have taken place since that date. Offences occurring before the commencement of the

Modern Slavery Act will still be prosecuted under the previous legislation. Despite the very recent introduction of the new offences and the time it takes for law enforcement to bring complex cases involving modern slavery to trial, 12 defendants had already been prosecuted under the Act in 2015.

OFFENCE CATEGORY	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Total</b>							
Proceeded against	47	31	43	33	60	98	117
Found guilty	25	16	9	13	28	39	31
Sentenced	25	16	9	13	28	39	30
<i>of which were given a maximum custodial sentence</i> <sup>(3)(4)</sup>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
<b>Slavery, servitude and forced labour</b>							
Proceeded against	-	1	22	4	10	25	30
Found guilty	-	-	1	1	9	8	9
Sentenced	-	-	1	1	9	8	9
<i>of which were given a maximum custodial sentence (14 years)</i> <sup>(3)(4)</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Trafficking for sexual exploitation</b>							
Proceeded against	33	24	10	16	33	49	38

OFFENCE CATEGORY	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Found guilty	23	10	8	10	12	4	14
Sentenced	23	10	8	10	12	4	14
<i>of which were given a maximum custodial sentence (14 years) <sup>(3)(4)</sup></i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Trafficking for non- sexual exploitation</b>							
Proceeded against	14	6	11	13	17	24	37
Found guilty	2	6	-	2	7	27	8
Sentenced	2	6	-	2	7	27	7
<i>of which were given a maximum custodial sentence (14 years) <sup>(3)(4)</sup></i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

## ■ Vetting

Jeff Smith:

[\[49451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of applications to the Disclosure and Barring Service were not resolved within 60 days in (a) the UK, (b) Manchester and (c) Manchester Withington constituency in the most recent year for which figures are available.

Jeff Smith:

[\[49452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average waiting time was for the completion of pre-employment checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service in each of the last three years in (a) the UK and (b) Manchester Withington constituency.

Jeff Smith:

[\[49453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average processing time was for applications to the Disclosure and Barring Service for each police force area in England for the most recent year for which figures are available.

**Sarah Newton:**

*[Holding answer 24 October 2016]:* In the last 12 months (1 October 2015 – 30 September 2016), the proportion of disclosure applications which took longer than 60 days was as follows: (a) the UK - 5.4%, (b) Manchester - 3.9%, (c) Manchester Withington - 2.8%. The Disclosure and Barring Service is reliant on police forces completing their checks in a timely manner and is working closely with those forces whose performance does not meet turnaround time targets. The average time taken in days to process disclosures checks in the last three years is as follows:

TIME PERIOD	AVERAGE WAITING TIME - UNITED KINGDOM	AVERAGE WAITING TIME - MANCHESTER WITHINGTON
Oct-13 to Sep-14	13.4	12.0
Oct-14 to Sep-15	14.4	12.1
Oct-15 to Sep-16	15.5	12.6

The average processing time for applications to the DBS for each police force area in England from 1 October 2015 to 30 September 2016 is set out in the table below. This shows the average number of days each application took from the point at which the application form was received to the date the certificate was issued, broken down by the applicant's geographical police force area. This information reflects all applications sent to the DBS, of which a proportion are sent to police forces for consideration for disclosure.

POLICE FORCE AREA IN WHICH APPLICANT LIVES	AVERAGE TIME TAKEN IN CALENDAR DAYS
Metropolitan	28.1
Cumbria	11.5
Lancashire	11.6
Merseyside	12.1
Greater Manchester	14.1
Cheshire	11.1
Northumbria	13.9
Durham	11.9



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POLICE FORCE AREA IN WHICH APPLICANT LIVES	AVERAGE TIME TAKEN IN CALENDAR DAYS
North Yorkshire	14.1
West Yorkshire	12.7
South Yorkshire	19.8
Humberside	12.2
Cleveland	13.5
West Midlands	10.3
Staffordshire	9.6
West Mercia	11.9
Warwickshire	9.4
Derbyshire	14.1
Nottinghamshire	11.7
Lincolnshire	10.5
Leicestershire	9.4
Northamptonshire	17.9
Cambridgeshire	10.1
Norfolk	9.1
Suffolk	9.9
Bedfordshire	11.6
Hertfordshire	14.8
Essex	14.2
Thames Valley	16.1
Hampshire	14.2
Surrey	14.1
Kent	15.8
Sussex	11.9
City of London	11.9

POLICE FORCE AREA IN WHICH APPLICANT LIVES	AVERAGE TIME TAKEN IN CALENDAR DAYS
Devon & Cornwall	11.3
Avon And Somerset	10.7
Gloucester	10.7
Wiltshire	10.2
Dorset	26.8

For a breakdown of how long police forces take to process applications they receive; this information is regularly published on the DBS website and can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/dbs-performance>

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### ■ Developing Countries: Poverty

**Kate Osamor:** [\[49507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what contribution her Department has made to UN Sustainable Development Goal 1 on poverty eradication in the last six months; and if she will make a statement.

**Priti Patel:**

Eradicating extreme poverty by 2030 is the primary purpose of UK aid under the International Development Act and one of the UK Aid Strategy's objectives. DFID's 2015/16 Annual Report sets out progress against our Single Departmental Plan, and hence to delivery of the 2030 Agenda. Progress in 2016/17 will be set out in our next Annual Report.

### ■ Nigeria: Life Expectancy

**Kate Osamor:** [\[49505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what representations she has received on trends in life expectancy in Northern Nigeria; and if she will make a statement.

**Priti Patel:**

Survey data on infant and child mortality rates shows that mortality rates are much higher in the north of Nigeria compared to the south.

In 2015/16, of a total DFID bilateral spend in Nigeria of £214m, approximately 60% of programming focused in six northern states. Additionally, over the last two years, DFID has scaled up its response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the northeast, bringing life-saving support to those affected by the Boko Haram insurgency.

## ■ Yemen: Humanitarian Aid

**Kate Osamor:**

[\[49506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what support her Department is giving to aid organisations based in Yemen to deliver humanitarian assistance in that country.

**Priti Patel:**

The UK is the fourth largest donor to Yemen with an additional £37 million in UK funding for Yemen announced at the UN General Assembly. This brings the UK's total to £100 million in humanitarian assistance for 2016/17 which is provided to aid organisations in Yemen. Last year, we helped more than 1.3 million Yemenis with food, medical supplies, water, and emergency shelter.

We also continue to urge parties to the conflict to take all reasonable steps to facilitate rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access to ensure our partners are able to deliver aid to its intended beneficiaries.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

## ■ Department for International Trade: European Free Trade Association

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

[\[48214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent meetings he has had with representatives from (a) Iceland, (b) Liechtenstein, (c) Norway and (d) Switzerland on trade with EFTA countries.

**Greg Hands:**

Ministers and officials in the Department for International Trade are working closely with counterparts across a wide range of countries and markets, in order to promote the UK as a great place to do business and with which to trade. We are taking advantage of all the opportunities available to us to ensure that Britain becomes the global leader in free trade once we leave the EU.

Most recently, the Minister for Trade Policy met his counterpart trade minister during a visit to Switzerland. My Rt. Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade has also had a productive discussion with the Norwegian Minister for Trade, Industry and Fisheries.

## ■ Developing Countries: Import Duties

**Grant Shapps:**

[\[48830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will eliminate import tariffs on agricultural produce from developing nations when the UK has left the EU.

**Grant Shapps:**

[\[48831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will eliminate the import tariffs on all unprocessed fruit and vegetables from developing nations when the UK has left the EU.

**Grant Shapps:** [\[48832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will eliminate the import tariffs on canned goods from developing nations when the UK has left the EU.

**Greg Hands:**

The Government is currently reviewing its trade policy as the UK prepares to leave the EU. This offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world: to negotiate and design, in time, our own trade arrangements. The UK remains committed to ensuring developing countries can reduce poverty through trading opportunities.

## ■ European Free Trade Association

**Diana Johnson:** [\[49301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether it is the Government's intention to sign up to (a) any or (b) all of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) level trade treaties with countries outside the EFTA in the event that the UK joined the EFTA.

**Greg Hands:**

The Prime Minister has been clear, we are not going to provide a running commentary on every twist and turn of these negotiations. We recognise the need for a smooth transition as the UK leaves the EU which minimises disruption to our trading relationships. Ministers and officials in the Department for International Trade are working closely with counterparts across a wide range of markets in order to promote the UK as a great place to do business and with which to trade. We are taking advantage of all the opportunities available to us to ensure that Britain becomes the global leader in free trade once we leave the EU.

## ■ Overseas Trade: China

**Stephen Kinnock:** [\[49079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will be part of the UK-China economic and financial dialogue meeting in November 2016; and whether the illegal dumping of steel by China will form part of the discussions at that meeting.

**Greg Hands:**

My Rt Hon Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, alongside other Government Ministers, is attending the UK-China economic and financial dialogue meeting in November 2016, at which a range of issues will be discussed.

## ■ Trade Agreements

**Diana Johnson:** [\[48884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with which countries the UK has initiated negotiations on possible bilateral trade agreements.

**Greg Hands:**

We recognise the need for a smooth transition as the UK leaves the EU which minimises disruption to our trading relationships. Ministers and officials in the Department for

International Trade are working closely with counterparts across a wide range of markets in order to promote the UK as a great place to do business and with which to trade. We are taking advantage of all the opportunities available to us to ensure that Britain becomes the global leader in free trade once we leave the EU.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[49666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment he has made of the capacity of his Department to negotiate future trade deals with multiple countries and trading blocks at the same time; and if he will make a statement.

**Greg Hands:**

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

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[49667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will make it his policy only to begin the formal negotiation process on trade deals with non-EU countries once the UK has left the EU; and if he will make a statement.

**Greg Hands:**

We are taking advantage of all the opportunities available to us to ensure that Britain becomes the global leader in free trade once we leave the EU, including discussing our future trade relationships with third countries. While we remain a member of the EU, the UK will continue to support the EU's free trade negotiations.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[49668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether his Department plans to begin the formal negotiation process for trade deals with (a) EU and (b) non-EU countries after the (i) initiation and (ii) conclusion of the Article 50 process; and if he will make a statement.

**Greg Hands:**

The Prime Minister has been clear, we are not going to provide a running commentary on the negotiations. We recognise the need for a smooth transition as the UK leaves the EU, which minimises disruption to our trading relationships. Ministers and officials in the Department for International Trade are working closely with counterparts across a wide range of markets, in order to promote the UK as a great place to do business and with which to trade. We are taking advantage of all the opportunities available to us to ensure that Britain becomes the global leader in free trade once we leave the EU.

**JUSTICE**■ **Civil Proceedings: Legal Aid Scheme**

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [\[48967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will review the effect on access to justice and protection of human rights of civil legal aid reforms introduced by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [\[48968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Amnesty International's report, Cuts that hurt, published on 10 October 2016, if she will review the effect of reforms introduced by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [\[49049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will review the effect on access to justice and protection of human rights of civil legal aid reforms introduced under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [\[49060\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will ensure that in any review of civil legal aid children and young people's entitlement to legal aid will be considered.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

We are committed to reviewing Parts 1 and 2 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 within three to five years of its implementation.

■ **Law: Education**

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [\[48969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will ensure better provision of public legal education to ensure people understand and can effectively claim their rights, and to provide parallel education to practitioners.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

As one of their regulatory objectives the legal services regulators have a duty to promote public understanding of citizens' legal rights and duties. The regulators have established the Legal Choices website, which provides information to help with decisions on whether and how to seek legal advice and the available services the public might choose. There is also easy to understand information to help the public to be aware of their rights and the law on the 'crime, justice and the law' section of the GOV.UK website. Finally, independent advice is also provided at the Advicenow website, established by Law for Life, which provides information on rights and the law.

**PRIME MINISTER**■ **Departmental Responsibilities**

**Paul Flynn:** [\[48903\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, when she plans to make available a comprehensive list of ministerial responsibilities.

**Mrs Theresa May:**

A list of ministerial responsibilities has been published and can be found on the gov.uk website.

■ **House of Lords: Reform**

**Justin Madders:** [\[48956\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what her policy is on reform of the House of Lords.

**Mrs Theresa May:**

I refer the hon. Member to the position on House of Lords Reform set out by the Deputy Leader of the House, my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton North (Michael Ellis) during the debate on 19 October 2016, Official Report, column 886.

■ **Prime Minister: Visits Abroad**

**Catherine West:** [\[48917\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what overseas visits she has made since her appointment.

**Mrs Theresa May:**

Details of Ministerial overseas travel is published quarterly and is available on the gov.uk website.

**TRANSPORT**■ **A595**

**Mr Jamie Reed:** [\[49704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 20 October 2016 to Question 48986, if he will visit the A595 in Copeland before Christmas 2016.

**Mr John Hayes:**

Due to existing diary commitments, it is unlikely that I, as the Roads Minister, will be able to visit the A595 in Copeland before Christmas 2016. Nevertheless, it is my intention to visit roads across the country over the coming months.

■ **Aviation: EU Law**

**Jim Fitzpatrick:** [\[48912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the Government's policy is on whether the provisions of EU Directive 261/2004, on compensation for denied boarding, cancellation or

long delays for air passengers, should continue to apply in the UK (a) until and (b) after the UK leaves the EU.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Government is considering the impacts of the decision to leave the European Union, including future arrangements for existing legislation. Until the UK leaves, EU law continues to apply, so we continue to comply with the existing directives and regulations, such as the common rules on compensation and assistance under Regulation (EC) 261/2004.

## ■ Cross Country Trains

**Mr Stewart Jackson:**

[\[49637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to improve (a) rail connectivity and (b) service delivery on Cross Country Trains which run between Birmingham and Stansted and through Peterborough in the next Control Period; and if he will make a statement.

**Paul Maynard:**

I recently announced a new contract for the Cross Country rail franchise that will run until October 2019. This franchise offers a number of passenger experience improvements such as free wi-fi on trains. The franchise retains the same level of service between Birmingham and Stansted Airport. I am aware that there are aspirations for improvements in the Cross Country service through Peterborough. Currently, there are no suitable diesel trains available to allow this to happen. However, should this position change, we would work with Cross Country to consider what services enhancements may be possible to deliver. There may be further enhancements across the Cross Country network, once it's competitively let in 2019.

## ■ Department for Transport: Disability

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[\[48861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has made an assessment of the implications for its policies of the Extra Costs Commission, initiated by the disability charity Scope in July 2014.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Government is committed to improving the rights of disabled people when accessing and using transport. Though Government cannot currently comment on the Law Commission's proposals as it continues to scrutinise the report, we are implementing measures to improve the transport rights of disabled people. These include sections 165 and 167 of the Equality Act 2010, and a strengthening of Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Best Practice Guidance for local authorities, both of which are expected in 2017.



## ■ Driverless Vehicles: Insurance

**Jim Shannon:** [\[49124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with insurance companies on dealing with accidents caused by driverless cars.

**Mr John Hayes:**

My officials in the Department for Transport, and the cross-Whitehall Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles, are meeting regularly with leading insurance companies and industry organisations, such as the Motor Insurers' Bureau and the Association of British Insurers. These discussions include considering how the ongoing introduction of connectivity and automated technologies in vehicles will change the way that motor insurance works in the short, medium and long term, and how the industry will need to adapt when dealing with accidents. We have subsequently consulted on insurance proposals for automated vehicles, as announced in the Queen's Speech earlier this year and will publish our summary of responses shortly.

## ■ Driverless Vehicles: Railways

**Grant Shapps:** [\[48825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether any assessment has been made of the effect of driverless vehicles on future demand for extra rail capacity.

**Mr John Hayes:**

There is currently no evidence linking driverless vehicles and future demand for rail.

## ■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[48820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether any of the contractors undertaking construction or management of the building works on High Speed 2 will be subject to public Freedom of Information requests.

**Andrew Jones:**

Under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) if a contractor or another party holds information on behalf of the public authority then it is considered to be held by the public authority and therefore subject to the FOIA.

HS2 Ltd have a clause in all of their contracts which states that information that contractors hold as part of the HS2 contract is subject to the FOIA.

**Grant Shapps:** [\[48822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the Government plans to substitute any funding for High Speed 2 that was part of an EU grant.

**Andrew Jones:**

The funding envelope of £55.7 billion for delivering HS2 does not rely on EU grant funding. HS2 was awarded a grant of €39 million from the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for ground investigation works. My Department will work with HM Treasury to see

if this should be covered by the government's commitment to provide continuity of funding for participants in EU programmes (announced by my Right Honourable Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 13th August). I refer my Right Honourable Friend to my response of the 15th September, UIN 46680, (<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-questions-answers/?page=1&max=20&questiontype=AllQuestions&house=commons%2clouds&uin=46680>).

**Grant Shapps:** [48823]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much private funding has been secured for the High Speed 2 project from major corporate beneficiaries to date.

**Andrew Jones:**

No private funding contributions have been secured for HS2 to date.

**Grant Shapps:** [48824]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether High Speed 2 will be a fully electrified railway line.

**Andrew Jones:**

High Speed 2 will be a fully electrified railway.

**Grant Shapps:** [48826]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will estimate the cost of a single ticket to any destination served by High Speed 2.

**Andrew Jones:**

The business case for HS2 assumes the same fares structure as today. It is too early to set individual fares for HS2 services, which will begin operation in 2026.

**Grant Shapps:** [48827]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will allow the completed High Speed 2 railway line to be open access as opposed to restricted by franchise.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Government is considering how best HS2 services should be provided both when operating on the new High Speed and conventional rail networks. This includes consideration of franchising options but does not rule out alternative routes for service delivery, to ensure that services deliver the Government objectives for HS2, and optimum use is made of total capacity across the entire network to maximise the benefits for passengers and secure a return for taxpayers on the significant investment Government is making in HS2. No final decision has been taken.

**Grant Shapps:** [48829]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate has been made of changes in property prices in and around (a) all major High Speed 2 terminals and (b) Birmingham High Speed 2 terminal.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Department for Transport has not produced estimates of the expected impact on property prices in the areas surrounding HS2 terminals.

**Grant Shapps:**

[\[48878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made on the technical and economic analysis required for a full route decision on Phase 2b of High Speed 2; and when the deadline is for details of that route to be announced.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Department and High Speed 2 Limited continue to develop technical and economic analysis on HS2. The Government intends to announce a decision on the route of Phase 2b by the end of the year. This will be supported by a Strategic Outline Business Case.

**Grant Shapps:**

[\[48879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the £55.7 billion agreed funding for the High Speed 2 project includes the costs of the recently proposed £70 million road safety and support fund for communities affected by the line.

**Andrew Jones:**

Yes, the £70 million allocated to the Road Safety, Community and Environment, and Business and Local Economy Funds is included within the overall £55.7 billion funding envelope for HS2.

**Grant Shapps:**

[\[48953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether any detailed breakdown is available for (a) the redevelopment of Birmingham Curzon Station and (b) other costs of High Speed 2.

**Andrew Jones:**

Spending Review 2015 restated the funding envelope for delivery of HS2 at £55.7bn, in 2015 prices. This breaks down as £27.2bn for Phase 1 (including rolling stock), £3.7bn for Phase 2a, and £24.8bn for Phase 2b (including rolling stock). We do not provide funding breakdowns for specific items such as stations due to commercial sensitivities.

**Mrs Cheryl Gillan:**

[\[49564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of (a) the effectiveness of the Need to Sell scheme for residents who are reapplying, (b) the level of flexibility offered by that scheme for those who are reapplying under different criteria, (c) how that scheme streamlines its procedures for those constituents who have terminal illnesses, financial burdens arising from High Speed 2 or any other pressing requirement to sell.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Need to Sell scheme is operating as it was intended, and operating fairly. We have already updated guidance to reflect learning from the scheme since its inception in January 2015. This demonstrates that we keep the scheme under review and act if necessary to improve the way it operates.

Those reapplying for the Need to Sell scheme within six months of their initial application are only judged on the criteria on which they previously failed to meet. Furthermore the assessment panel provides detailed feedback directly to applicants on the criteria they failed to meet. This means that when reapplying applicants can provide targeted evidence that may increase the chance of a re-application being accepted.

HS2 Ltd endeavours to make decisions on all applications as quickly as possible. As all applicants are applying with a compelling reason to sell it would not be fair to introduce a fast-track system for some applicants. We aim to deal with all applications within three months, however currently the average time to deal with an application is seven weeks.

**Mrs Cheryl Gillan:** [\[49565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much he expects Buckinghamshire to be eligible to apply for from the High Speed 2 (a) Community and Environment Fund and (b) Business and Local Economy Fund.

**Andrew Jones:**

We have announced an indicative allocation of £15 million from both the Community and Environment and Business and Local Economy funds for the central area of the HS2 Phase One route, which includes relevant areas in Buckinghamshire. Awards from both funds will be based on receiving high quality bids from eligible community or business groups.

**Mrs Cheryl Gillan:** [\[49566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much he expects Buckinghamshire to be eligible to apply for from the High Speed 2 Road Safety Fund.

**Andrew Jones:**

How this fund will be distributed is currently being considered and further details will be announced in due course.

**Mrs Cheryl Gillan:** [\[49567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, who will be eligible to apply for the High Speed 2 (a) Community and Environment Fund and (b) Business and Local Economy Fund.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Community and Environment Fund is open to constituted community groups along the Phase One route, including registered charities, community interest companies and Local Authorities. The Business and Local Economy Fund is open to organisations that represent the collective business community of areas along the Phase One route, such as Chambers of Commerce, Business Improvement Districts, Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships.

## ■ High Speed 2 Railway Line: Birmingham

**Grant Shapps:** [\[48828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether an estimate has been made of the number of jobs likely to be created due to the completion of the station for High Speed 2 in Birmingham.

**Andrew Jones:**

Birmingham and the West Midlands will be key beneficiaries of HS2, which will provide a springboard for regeneration and growth and support job creation.

The Department for Transport alongside the Department for Communities and Local Government are supporting Birmingham and have provided £2.5 million funding to support the development of the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Growth Strategy. The strategy demonstrates the potential for HS2 to support the creation of 36,000 jobs around Curzon Street Station and 16,500 jobs around Birmingham Interchange Station.

In addition, HS2 Ltd expects the construction of HS2 to create 24,600 jobs, which will include many further opportunities for Birmingham and the West Midlands.

## ■ High Speed 2 Railway Line: Manchester Airport

**Grant Shapps:** [\[48821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made on securing a suitable funding package for the Manchester Airport interchange on the High Speed 2 line.

**Andrew Jones:**

Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Manchester Airports Group have made a commitment in principle to a local contribution to funding for the airport station and we continue to work with them on the details.

## ■ High Speed Two

**Grant Shapps:** [\[48833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what method and criteria were used to select the Board of HS2 Ltd.

**Andrew Jones:**

All Non-Executive members including the Non-Executive Chair of the HS2 Ltd Board are appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport. All Executive Members of the HS2 Ltd Board are appointed by HS2 Ltd on the delegated authority from the Secretary of State. The Chief Executive Officer of the HS2 Ltd Board is appointed by the Chair of HS2 Ltd.

All Ministerial appointments, extensions and exemptions to the HS2 Ltd Board, come under the remit of the Office for Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA). They are made using the process from the Commissioner's Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies. The Commissioner may, in exceptional circumstances, agree that Departments may depart from this Code where he believes that this is justified in the public interest.

**■ High Speed Two: Public Relations**

**Mrs Cheryl Gillan:** [\[49563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the annual budget for communication and engagement has been for HS2 Ltd in each year since 2010.

**Andrew Jones:**

As is necessary for a project of the nature and scale of HS2, communication and engagement activities are undertaken by teams throughout the HS2 Ltd organisation, supported by a central corporate affairs team. This wide range of engagement includes, for example, local information events for impacted residents to meet with engineers to discuss the proposals; awareness campaigns along the line of route to inform residents about the property compensation schemes and how they can access these; and mobile sound labs for communities near the route of Phase One to come and hear the likely noise levels from the operational railway.

As a result, it is not possible to provide annual budget figures as the amount of time spent on communication and engagement activity is not centrally tracked.

**■ High Speed Two: Staff**

**Mr Khalid Mahmood:** [\[49235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many permanent HS2 Ltd employees are based in Birmingham; and what proportion of the total number of HS2 Ltd employees those employees represent.

**Andrew Jones:**

As at the 1 October 2016 there were 338 permanent HS2 Ltd employees based in Birmingham, representing 37% of the overall HS2 Ltd employee base.

**■ Joint Air Quality Unit**

**Richard Burden:** [\[49572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the (a) structure and (b) membership of the cross-departmental air quality unit is.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Joint Air Quality Unit has been established to lead delivery of the national air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide, published in December last year.

The unit is headed by a senior civil servant. The team consists of civil servants from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Department for Transport (DfT), and is primarily based within Defra.

It reports to two Senior Responsible Officers: the Director for the Energy, Technology, and Innovation directorate in DfT, and the Director of the Environmental Quality directorate in Defra. The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is the Cabinet representative for air quality policy. Decisions relating to delivery of the

national air plan for nitrogen dioxide are agreed jointly by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment and Rural Life Opportunities at Defra, and the Minister of State at the Department for Transport.

#### ■ M4

**David T. C. Davies:**

[\[48812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has used the Temprow 7 system to make revised calculations of traffic flows on the proposed M4 relief road.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The assessment of the M4 relief road around Newport is being considered by the Welsh Government.

#### ■ Railways: Expenditure

**Mr Khalid Mahmood:**

[\[49232\]](#)

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

**Paul Maynard:**

The series for government expenditure on rail per head of population from 2009/10 to 2014/15 for English regions is shown in the table below, as per part (c) of the request.

#### GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON RAILWAYS <sup>1</sup> PER HEAD OF POPULATION

Region	2009/10					2014/15
		2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	
North East	£59	£57	£54	£55	£53	£52
North West	£97	£98	£89	£92	£91	£93
Yorkshire & Humber	£95	£93	£103	£107	£110	£98
East Midlands	£45	£39	£36	£42	£40	£34
West Midlands	£61	£52	£49	£53	£54	£68
East of England	£58	£52	£59	£56	£52	£71
London	£386	£371	£331	£281	£268	£353
South East	£85	£84	£70	£68	£66	£69
South West	£49	£44	£39	£40	£37	£35
<b>England</b>	<b>£120</b>	<b>£115</b>	<b>£106</b>	<b>£100</b>	<b>£97</b>	<b>£113</b>

**GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON RAILWAYS <sup>1</sup> PER HEAD OF POPULATION**

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1 Includes expenditure on all types of railway

Source: HMT, ONS

The step change seen in London spending last year is due to increased spending on London Underground and HS2 plus some increase in the Network Grant. This investment is needed to meet the ever increasing demand for passenger journeys into London, of which there are currently about 4 billion every year.

More widely, care needs to be taken in interpreting regional spend figures. Expenditure is usually allocated between regions on the basis of which regions benefit from the expenditure rather than on the basis of where the expenditure is made. However, it is not always possible to put the value of spending down to certain parts of the country and this is particularly a problem for spending on the rail network. Though the Department does try to distribute rail funding across the regions, allocations are inevitably fairly imprecise.

It is also important to note that expenditure comparisons on a 'per-head' basis (using resident populations) can present a skewed picture of the distribution of benefits for transport generally, and for transport in London particularly. This is because the transport networks in London are routinely used by a very large number of other regions' residents.

Even allowing for these points, one would also expect London's 'per head' transport expenditure to be higher than the national average. London provides key international travel gateways for the whole of the country. London is also densely populated with different public transport and infrastructure demands – for example London residents comprise around 15% of the population of England, but London accounts for almost two-thirds of rail journeys in Great Britain.

The equivalent information is unavailable at a sub-region level, therefore cannot be provided as per parts (a) and (b) of the request.

■ **Roads: Expenditure**

**Mr Khalid Mahmood:**

[\[49234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the total amount of capital spending per capita by Highways England was in (a) Birmingham, (b) the West Midlands Metropolitan County and (c) each region of England from 2009-10 to the most recent financial year for which information is available.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The majority of the capital investment made by Highways England (and the Highways Agency prior to April 2015) is in large schemes that cross city, county and regional boundaries. Data cannot be meaningfully collected on this basis.



However, for the purpose of national transport statistics, spend is apportioned between regions using an established estimation process and is published up to the financial year 2013/14 at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/transport-statistics-great-britain> in the series of tables TSGB0717 / RDE0101.

## ■ Stockport-Stalybridge Railway Line

**Jonathan Reynolds:**

[49228]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment Network Rail has made of the (a) available capacity on the Stalybridge to Stockport railway line and (b) feasibility of providing additional passenger services on that railway line.

**Paul Maynard:**

1) Available capacity on the Stalybridge to Stockport railway line

The single line sections limit the track capacity on this route, which is currently used for frequent freight services and empty stock moves for Northern Rail.

Platform and track capacity at Stockport is also a constraint on service expansion in this area.

2) Feasibility of providing additional passenger services on that railway line.

Additional services on this route are not committed by Northern during the current franchise. To support expansion of services in the future, DfT and Rail North contracted a Service Option Fund through Northern's Franchise Agreement that will be used from 2019 onwards to assist with the operating cost impact of running extra services.

The assessment of which service options are the most beneficial will be done in consultation with stakeholders (through Rail North) and will include analysis of the business case for each route to ensure that all relevant factors are considered.

**Jonathan Reynolds:**

[49229]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made on the electrification works on the Manchester to Stalybridge railway line.

**Paul Maynard:**

The electrification works on the railway line between Manchester and Stalybridge (Phase 5 of the North West Electrification Programme), due by December 2017 will see the installation of infrastructure and improvements to facilitate overhead electrification of the railway line, delivering journey time benefits for passengers in the north of England.

Good progress has been made on the design and planning aspects of the project.

Canopy works at Stalybridge station have been completed to achieve high level clearance required for electrification, and track interventions have taken place on Phase 5 infrastructure, including track lowering and renewals to enable electrification. Detailed Design is progressing well and is at an advanced stage of development.

This is an extremely complex engineering project ensuring electrification is delivered alongside capacity and journey time improvements. Network Rail continue to work with their contractors to develop a delivery programme to maximise passenger benefits and minimise disruption to a busy passenger and freight rail corridor.

**Jonathan Reynolds:**

[\[49230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects new rolling stock to be deployed on the Manchester to Stalybridge railway line.

**Paul Maynard:**

TransPennine Express plan to see new rolling stock deployed on the Manchester to Stalybridge line progressively from mid-2018.

Northern plan to deploy refurbished rolling stock on the Manchester to Stalybridge line and will introduce their fleet refurbishment programme progressively across the network from 2018 up until the end of 2019 which includes recovering seats, new floor coverings, Wi-Fi, LED lighting, and passenger information system.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Habitual Residence Test

**Mr David Burrowes:**

[\[49598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claims were stockpiled (a) before and (b) after the Upper Tribunal ruling of 17 March 2016 on the unlawful and discriminatory use of the past presence test.

**Mr David Burrowes:**

[\[49599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reasons refugees with disabilities who have been deemed entitled to disability living allowance have different backdating entitlements depending on whether their claim happened to be stockpiled before or after the Upper Tribunal ruling of 17 March 2016 on the past presence test.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

No claims were stockpiled before the Upper Tribunal ruling of 17 March 2016, 40 Disability Living Allowance claims were stockpiled after the ruling.

Section 27 of the Social Security Act 1998 provides that, where the Upper Tribunal decides on a social security appeal that the Secretary of State has made an error of law in his original decision and other claims subsequently fall to be decided by the Secretary of State, the judgment generally is not to be applied in relation to any period that predates the Upper Tribunal's decision (s.27(3)). This statutory rule does not apply to the person who brought the original appeal, to people who have already lodged an appeal against a decision or who are still in time to do so, or to people whose case the Secretary of State has stockpiled (or whose appeal he has stayed) pending the judgment under section 25 of the Act.

■ **Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit**

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

[\[48931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will bring forward proposals for secondary legislation to revise the list of medical conditions covered by the industrial injuries disablement benefit.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

Any suggestion to add diseases to the prescribed list is first considered by the Industrial Injuries Advisory Council. The Secretary of State then considers this advice, taking into account potential impacts and any other relevant considerations.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### TREASURY

#### ■ UK Guarantee for Hinkley Point C

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

[\[HCWS216\]](#)

The UK Guarantees scheme was announced in July 2012 with spending cover provided through the Infrastructure (Financial Assistance) Act 2012, receiving Royal Assent on 31 October 2012. The scheme provides a sovereign-backed guarantee to help infrastructure projects raise debt finance. Guarantees for up to £40 billion in aggregate can be offered under the initiative.

As part of the Hinkley Point C negotiations, EDF sought a government guarantee to assist in bringing forward investment. The government is confirming that it has approved the provision of a guarantee for up to £2 billion to the project for the construction of its new EPR nuclear plant in Somerset, backed by commitments from the shareholders. The guarantee will be available from 2018 to 2020 if necessary conditions are met and is at government's discretion. Even if made available, and EDF have indicated to the Secretary of State for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy that it is not their current intention to take up the guarantee, I judge the likelihood of any call under the guarantee to be very low.

The government will report to Parliament on the financial assistance given in line with the requirements set out in the Infrastructure (Financial Assistance) Act 2012.

### EDUCATION

#### ■ Supporting Apprenticeships

The Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities (Justine Greening):

[\[HCWS214\]](#)

Apprenticeships transform lives and are vital in making this a country that works for everyone. As well as giving young people the chance to build a better future by taking their first step on the employment ladder, they give those already in work the opportunity to progress further. And for those just about managing, they can unlock a brighter future. That is why we are committed to 3 million new apprenticeships by 2020, spending £2.5bn to transform this country's investment in skills, in our people.

For employers, apprenticeships bring great benefits too, by boosting the skills of the workforce and helping to increase economic productivity. Yet for too long far too many employers have under-invested in the skills of their employees compared to in other countries. It is time to change that and ensure all employers play their part in improving productivity and social mobility. So we are working in partnership with employers to implement major reforms.

The new apprenticeship levy, which we are introducing in April 2017, will put the funding of apprenticeships on a sustainable long-term footing so we can support opportunities for all. The levy will be set at 0.5% of pay bill and only employers with a pay bill of more than £3 million will have to pay the levy. Employers that are not eligible to pay the levy will continue to receive government support towards the costs of apprenticeship training and assessment.

The levy applies to all UK employers but apprenticeship funding policy is devolved. It is for the Devolved Administrations to decide how they use their levy income. This statement sets out how we will fund apprenticeships in England to help build an economy that works for everyone.

To do that we are not only introducing the levy but also reforming the way we fund apprenticeships, introducing a dedicated register of approved apprenticeship training providers and launching the employer-led Institute for Apprenticeships. These changes will ensure apprenticeships are high quality, meet the needs of employers and provide opportunities for millions more people.

After extensive discussions with employers and training providers we are today publishing the final funding policy for May 2017 onwards and details of the new register of apprenticeship training providers. The adjustments we have made to the funding policy since our proposals in August will help ensure that the reforms benefit more employers, providers and apprentices.

Today we are confirming the final funding policy. Key features are:

- Higher funding for STEM apprenticeship frameworks and higher pricing of apprenticeship standards to support improved quality, and greater flexibility to train those with prior qualifications;
- Longer period of time for employers to spend funds in their digital account, now with 24 months before they expire, an increase from our original proposal of just 18 months;
- A commitment to introducing the ability for employers to transfer digital funds to other employers in their supply chains, sector or to Apprenticeship Training Agencies in 2018, with a new employer group including the Confederation of British Industry, Federation of Small Businesses, British Chambers of Commerce, Charity Finance Group and EEF – the Manufacturers' Organisation – to help government develop this system so that it works for employers.
- 90% contribution from government to the cost of training for employers that will not pay the levy;
- 100% contribution from government to the cost of training for small employers that will not pay the levy and who take on apprentices who are 16 to 18 years old, 19 to 24 year old care leavers or 19 to 24 year olds with an Education and Health Care Plan;
- £1,000 each from government to employers and training providers when they take on 16 to 18 year olds, 19 to 24 year olds who were in care or who have an Education and Health Care Plan;

- Help for training providers to adapt to the new, simpler funding model through an additional cash payment equal to 20% of the funding band maximum where they train 16 to 18 year olds on frameworks; and
- A simplified version of the current system of support for people from disadvantaged areas to ensure the opportunity to undertake an apprenticeship is open to everyone, no matter where in England they live, their background or family circumstances.

We will continue to work in close partnership with employers and providers in the implementation of these reforms. We know they are major changes and we want to work together to ensure we transform our country's skills for the benefit of all.

## FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

### ■ Foreign Affairs Council – 17 October 2016

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan):  
[[HCWS217](#)]

My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs attended the Foreign Affairs Council on 17 October. The Foreign Affairs Council was chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini. The meeting was held in Luxembourg.

#### **Foreign Affairs Council**

A provisional report of the meeting and Conclusions adopted can be found at:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2016/10/17/>

#### **European Union Global Strategy**

The Council discussed the follow up the EU Global Strategy on foreign and security policy and adopted Council Conclusions. The Foreign Secretary made clear that the UK would continue to support European security after Brexit. He encouraged other European countries to spend more on defence and exploit the EU's soft power.

#### **Tunisia**

The Council discussed Tunisia and adopted Conclusions on the joint communication "Strengthening EU support for Tunisia", which was presented by Ms. Mogherini and Commissioner Hahn. Member States welcomed the EU stepping up its support but underlined that Tunisia needed to deliver reform for real progress to be made.

#### **Syria**

Foreign Ministers discussed the situation in Syria, in light of recent developments on the ground and the escalation of violence, including in Aleppo. The Foreign Secretary briefed Ministers on the 16 October London meeting that he had hosted. Ms. Mogherini concluded that the EU should work closely with the UN both on the humanitarian track and on preparing for the post conflict phase.

#### **Migration**

Foreign Ministers took stock of recent developments related to the external aspects of migration. Ms. Mogherini briefly updated the Council on migration partnership frameworks, underlining to Ministers her view that they had created a positive change in attitude within partner countries.

Ministers agreed without discussion a number of measures:

- Council Conclusions on the Democratic Republic of Congo
- The Council adopted decisions on partnerships priorities and compacts with Jordan for the period 2016 – 2018 and with Lebanon for the period 2016 – 2020.
- The Council renewed the EU restrictive measures in view of the situation in the Republic of Guinea until 27 October 2017.
- The Council approved the state of preparations of the first inter-summit meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and of the European Union, which will take place on 25 and 26 October 2016 in Santo Domingo.
- The Council adopted the provisional agenda of the second EU-Iraq Cooperation Council, which will take place on 18 October 2016 in Brussels.
- The Council adopted the Common Foreign and Security Policy report "Our priorities in 2016".
- The Council authorised the signature of an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement between the EU and the United States of America.
- The Council approved the High Representative's Report on the twenty-fourth Operation Althea six-monthly review.

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### ■ Contingent Liability arising from the Loan Guarantee Agreement with the World Bank Group Covering an IBRD Loan to the Government of Iraq

The Secretary of State for International Development (Priti Patel): [\[HCWS218\]](#)

I have today laid a departmental Minute outlining details of a contingent liability of the US Dollar equivalent of £360 million which DFID has undertaken, in respect of the World Bank Group.

The twin shocks of the Daesh insurgency and the 40% decline in government revenue following the fall in oil prices since 2014 have threatened Iraq's stability. At the G7 in May, the IMF, World Bank and G7 partners pledged to provide a \$12 billion package of assistance to the Government of Iraq. The World Bank's share of the package comprises three \$1 billion Development Policy Loans from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) arm of the World Bank, with the first to be disbursed this year. Provision of the IBRD loans will be conditional on Iraq committing to, and implementing, reforms in the areas of public expenditure, energy efficiency, and transparency of state-owned enterprises. These reforms complement the package of reforms already agreed between the

Government of Iraq and the IMF in July of this year, and will support Iraq's economic development.

The IBRD's internal rules on loan exposure to any one country constrain the extent to which it can increase its lending to Iraq. This proposed UK guarantee will allow the IBRD to increase the size of its 2016 loan by the US Dollar equivalent of £300 million. This will support fiscal stability in Iraq, and will underline the UK's commitment to supporting a key ally in the fight against Daesh.

DFID's contingent liability under this agreement is expected to be the US Dollar equivalent of £360 million, covering the equivalent of £300 million of loan principal, plus the equivalent of around £60 million of interest payments. The agreement would be in place for the expected 15 year life of the IBRD loan. France and Canada are also currently considering using the same guarantee instrument to guarantee further additional IBRD lending to Iraq.

For the guarantee to be triggered, the Government of Iraq would have to be in arrears with the IBRD for over 180 days. The risk of Iraq defaulting, and the UK guarantee being called upon, is the same as the risk of Iraq defaulting on other IBRD lending. There is a strong incentive for Iraq avoiding a default, as this would prevent the IBRD from providing any further funding to Iraq. But in the event that the Government of Iraq does default on a loan repayment to the IBRD, and the liability is called, the UK will provide a payment to the World Bank, in proportion to the UK's guaranteed share of the overall IBRD loan. The payment will prevent the loss on the loan from impacting on the World Bank's other lending activities. If the liability is called, provision for any payment will be sought through the normal Supply procedure.

If the Government of Iraq subsequently provides a payment to reduce its arrears, the World Bank will transfer the UK's share of the payment into a UK-controlled Trust Fund held at the Bank, to be used towards other World Bank activity as the UK sees fit.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Amendments to the founding Regulation establishing the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

Minister of State for Transport (Mr John Hayes):

[\[HCWS215\]](#)

The Government welcomes the efforts of the Commission to address the ongoing migration crisis, but has decided not to opt in to the JHA content in the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No. 1406/2002 establishing a European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA).

The proposal – which has now been adopted – forms part of a wider package of measures by the Commission to ensure the protection of the EU's external borders.

The Commission has taken the view that the challenges which have arisen from the recent migratory crisis cannot be adequately dealt with by Member States acting in an uncoordinated manner and that integrated border management should be a shared responsibility of a new European Border and Coast Guard into which national authorities



with coastguard and border control responsibilities, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) can provide additional resources and contribute to better, more effective co-ordination and co-operation.

The core tasks of EMSA currently deliver a high, uniform and effective level of maritime safety and prevention of pollution within the EU, achieved by ensuring a consistent application of EU maritime law.

The amendments to the EMSA founding Regulation will have the effect of immediately expanding EMSA's role and responsibilities beyond its current core tasks of managing maritime pollution and safety. It will formally establish co-operation for the prevention, detection and investigation of criminal offences by enabling EMSA to make available information with other national authorities with coastguard and border control responsibilities, the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, which is currently accessible through ship reporting and other information exchange systems.

Such co-operation is indirect (EMSA itself will have no role to play in the exchange or analysis of such information between the agencies), and there is little practical or operational benefit for the UK from this measure. The Government maintains that the effect of the measure amounts to an obligation that falls within the scope of the JHA section of the Treaties and is, therefore, subject to the UK's JHA opt-in. It is on that basis that the Government has decided not to opt in.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Correction to Description of the Calculation of Winter Fuel Payments in Parliamentary Question; UIN 167864, Official Report, 9 Sep 2013: Column 612W

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Pensions (Richard Harrington):  
[\[HCWS213\]](#)

An error has been identified in a reply to a written question given to the hon. Member for North Thanet, Official Report, 9 Sep 2013: Column 612W.

The reply given was:

**Sir Roger Gale:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which French tropical overseas territories were included in his Department's average temperature calculations in respect of winter fuel payments to expatriate UK citizens living in the EU member states.  
[167864]

**Steve Webb:** From 2015-16 winter fuel payments will no longer be payable to individuals in countries where the average winter temperature is warmer than the warmest region of the UK (South-West England). The Government has worked with the Met Office to analyse comparable winter temperature data across all EEA countries. The Met Office used recognised administrative regions for each country. For France this was the 27 regions, including French Guyana, Guadeloupe, La Réunion, Martinique and Mayotte. It does not include the French overseas territories, which are not part of the EEA.

It should have said:

From 2015-16 winter fuel payments will no longer be payable to individuals in countries where the average winter temperature is warmer than the warmest region of the UK (South-West England). The Government has worked with the Met Office to analyse comparable winter temperature data across all EEA countries. The Met Office used recognised administrative regions for each country. For France this was the 27 regions, including French Guiana, Guadeloupe, La Réunion and Martinique. It does not include the French overseas territories, which are not part of the EEA.

■ **Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council 13 October 2016**

**Minister of State for Employment (Damian Hinds):** [\[HCWS212\]](#)

The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council met on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016 in Luxembourg. Damian Hinds MP, Minister of State for Employment at the Department for Work and Pensions, represented the UK.

The Council reached a General Approach on the proposal to amend the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive, which protects workers from the risk of exposure to carcinogens and mutagens in the work place. The UK, along with all Member States and the Commission, supported the proposal.

The Council also reached Political Agreement on the Directive to implement the Social Partner Agreement on the ILO Work in Fishing Convention. The UK supported the proposal but also submitted a minute statement which outlined reservations on its application to the self employed and competence.

There was a policy debate on the Commission's New Skills Agenda proposal and an endorsement of the Employment Committee (EMCO) opinion on it. The UK intervention set out the UK's Skills Plan and apprenticeship reforms, emphasising the importance of putting employers at the heart of the system. The UK welcomed the EMCO opinion, including recognition that many of these issues were Member State competence.

The Council endorsed the Social Protection Committee (SPC) and the EMCO reports on the European Semester. The Commission noted and endorsed the streamlining of the European Semester process.

There was an exchange of views, followed by a lunch time discussion, on youth employment. The Commission highlighted the tools and funding the Commission has made available to fight youth unemployment. There was then an exchange of views on long term unemployment.

The Presidency outlined the agenda for the Tripartite Social Summit on 19 October.

The Council adopted Council Conclusions on the Court of Auditors Report on Roma Integration. Introducing the item, the Presidency noted that six million Roma living in the EU still faced discrimination and disadvantage. It would bring a second, broader, set of conclusions to Council in December.

The Council generally endorsed the joint EMCO/SPC opinion on the Social Pillar. The Presidency and the Commission confirmed this would not pre-empt member state government responses to the on-going Commission consultation.

Under any other business, the Presidency provided information on the revision of the Blue Card Directive, the Action Plan on Integration of third country nationals, and the collaborative economy. The Greek Delegation provided an update on labour market reforms in Greece.