



Daily Report

Monday, 1 December 2014

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 1 December 2014 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:30 P.M., 01 December 2014). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-questions-answers/>

CONTENTS

ANSWERS	5	■ Planning Permission: Appeals	13
ATTORNEY GENERAL	5	■ Private Rented Housing: Lancaster	14
■ Electronic Government	5	CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	14
■ Harry Street	5	■ Arts: Finance	14
BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS	6	■ BBC	16
■ Business: Gillingham	6	■ Electronic Government	17
■ Business: Northern Ireland	6	■ Nominet	17
■ Floods	7	■ Woodland Trust	18
■ Members: Correspondence	7	DEFENCE	18
■ Window Blinds: Accidents	8	■ DA Notices	18
CABINET OFFICE	8	■ Electronic Government	19
■ Big Society Network	8	■ EU Common Foreign and Security Policy	19
■ Diseases: Older People	8	■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft	20
■ Electronic Government	9	■ Libya	20
■ Older Workers	9	■ Ministry of Defence Police	21
■ Public Appointments	9	■ Nuclear Submarines	21
COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	10	■ Reserve Forces	22
■ Change of Use	10	■ Type 26 Frigates	22
■ Flexible Working	10	■ Ukraine	22
■ Floods	11	■ Warships	23
■ Housing: Lancaster	12	EDUCATION	23
■ Local Government Finance	12	■ Academies	23
■ Planning Inspectorate	13	■ Blackpool	24

■ Children's Centres	24	■ Plastic Bags	37
■ Free School Meals	25	■ Rivers: Hertfordshire	37
■ Free Schools	25	■ Rivers: Pollution Control	38
■ Mathematics: Curriculum	26	■ Sustainable Development	39
■ Members	26	FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH	
■ Schools: Radicalism	27	OFFICE	40
■ Sixth Form Colleges: VAT	27	■ Africa: Females	40
■ Sixth Form Education	27	■ Bahrain	40
■ Supply Teachers	27	■ British Overseas Territories	41
■ Teachers: Brighton	28	■ Burma	42
■ Water	28	■ Central African Republic	43
ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE	29	■ Christianity	44
■ Coke: Barnsley	29	■ Electronic Government	44
■ Electronic Government	29	■ North Korea	45
■ Energy	30	■ South Sudan	45
■ Energy Companies Obligation	30	■ Thalidomide	45
■ Energy: Conservation	30	HEALTH	46
■ Energy: Prices	31	■ Bladder Cancer	46
■ Fuel Poverty: North West	31	■ Cancer	46
■ Green Deal Scheme	32	■ Cancer: Drugs	47
■ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	32	■ Clinical Commissioning Groups	49
■ Petrol: Prices	32	■ Dementia	49
■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme	33	■ Drugs: Licensing	51
■ Wind Power	33	■ General Practitioners	51
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL		■ General Practitioners:	
AFFAIRS	34	Buntingford	52
■ Air Pollution	34	■ In Vitro Fertilisation	52
■ Blackpool	34	■ Influenza: Vaccination	53
■ Electronic Government	35	■ Members: Correspondence	53
■ Floods: Insurance	35	■ Mental Health Services	54
■ Floods: Lancashire	36	■ Mental Health Services: Ethnic Groups	55
■ Fuels: Pollution Control	36	■ Mental Health Services:	
■ Odour Pollution	37	Warrington	56

■ NHS: Pay	56	■ Pay	76
■ NHS: Research	56	■ Syria	77
■ Patients: Safety	57	■ Ukraine	78
■ Prescription Drugs	61	■ West Africa: Ebola	78
■ Royston Hospital	61	JUSTICE	78
■ Thalidomide	61	■ Business: Human Rights	78
■ Tuberculosis: Vaccination	62	■ Civil Proceedings: Welsh Language	79
■ Video Games: Young People	62	■ Claims Management Services	79
■ Waste Disposal: Health Hazards	62	■ Counter-terrorism	79
HOME OFFICE	63	■ Electronic Government	80
■ Antisemitism	63	■ Employment Tribunals Service: North West	80
■ Asylum	64	■ Written Questions: Government Responses	81
■ Asylum: Afghanistan	64	■ Youth Offending Teams	82
■ Counter-terrorism	64	LEADER OF THE HOUSE	82
■ Departmental Responsibilities	65	■ Sinn Féin	82
■ Entry Clearances: Australasia	65	NORTHERN IRELAND	83
■ Entry Clearances: Iraq	66	■ Disclosure of Information	83
■ Foreign Workers	66	■ Smuggling	83
■ Homophobia	67	PRIME MINISTER	84
■ Immigrants: Detainees	68	■ Radicalism	84
■ Knives: Greater London	68	■ Religious Freedom	84
■ Offences against Children	69	SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION	84
■ Proceeds of Crime	71	■ Electoral Register	84
■ Radicalism	71	TRANSPORT	85
■ Religiously Aggravated Offences	72	■ Blackpool	85
■ Social Networking	73	■ Cycling	86
■ Take-away Food	74	■ Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency	86
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	74	■ Driving: Diabetes	86
■ Afghanistan	74	■ Electronic Government	87
■ British Overseas Territories	75		
■ Developing Countries: Health Services	75		
■ Electronic Government	76		
■ Palestinians	76		

■ Maritime and Coastguard Agency	88	■ Employment: Mental Illness	99
■ Railways: Hereford	90	■ Housing Benefit: Lancaster	100
■ Rescue Services	91	■ Jobseeker's Allowance: Disqualification	100
■ River Tyne: Bridges	91	■ Pensioners: Social Security Benefits	100
■ Transport: Yorkshire and the Humber	92	■ Personal Independence Payment: Wirral	101
■ Vehicle Certification Agency	93	■ Post Office Card Account: Scotland	101
TREASURY	93	■ Remploy	101
■ Economic Growth: West Midlands	93	■ Sick Leave: Medway	102
■ Hinkley Point C Power Station	93	■ Social Security Benefits: Disqualification	102
■ Infrastructure	93	■ Social Security Benefits: Fraud	103
■ National Insurance Contributions: New Businesses	94	■ Social Security Benefits: Kilrnarnock	103
■ Pensions	94	■ Social Security Benefits: Scotland	104
■ Stamp Duty Land Tax: Suffolk	95	■ Take-away Food	104
■ Tobacco: Smuggling	96	■ Universal Credit	104
■ Welfare Tax Credits: Denbighshire	97	■ Work Programme	105
WOMEN AND EQUALITIES	97	■ Work Programme: Kilrnarnock	106
■ Employment: Discrimination	97	MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS	107
WORK AND PENSIONS	98	ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	107
■ Children: Poverty	98	■ Rivers: Pollution Control	107
■ Construction: Industrial Health and Safety	98		
■ Electronic Government	99		

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

■ Electronic Government

Simon Kirby: [\[215656\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what steps the Law Officers' Departments are taking to ensure their services are available online; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robert Buckland:

Information on the work of the Law Officers' Departments websites can be found on the Gov.uk website or on their own websites. However, as their work is primarily aimed at providing legal support to the Government or conducting prosecutions on behalf of the Crown, they do not currently provide any specific online services directly to the public.

■ Harry Street

Philip Davies: [\[215700\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, for what reasons the Crown Prosecution Service decided not to proceed with some of the charges against Harry Street during hearings in his case at Birmingham Crown Court in October 2014.

Mr Robert Buckland:

On 6 October 2014 the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) accepted guilty pleas to one count of making an explosive substance, three counts of possessing a prohibited firearm and one count of putting a person in fear of violence by harassment. The pleas were accepted on the basis that if Harry Street's mental health ever deteriorated to the same extent it had in 1978 he was undoubtedly capable of deploying the weapons.

The decision not to proceed with the four remaining counts was taken in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors which provides: "Prosecutors should only accept the defendant's plea if they think the court is able to pass a sentence that matches the seriousness of the offending". In view of the evidence before the court, it was clear to the CPS that the sentence imposed by the court would be a restricted hospital order under section 37 and section 41 of the Mental Health Act 1983 whether he was convicted of all counts, or those which were accepted as pleas.

In making a restricted hospital order, the Learned Judge fully supported the approach taken by the CPS. The court ordered the remaining counts to lie on the file not to proceed without the leave of the court.

The decision to accept the guilty pleas on 6 October 2014 was taken following full consultation with the victims/ victims' families for both the recent offences and the 1978 offences.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS**■ Business: Gillingham****Rehman Chishti:**[\[216025\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps his Department has taken to increase the level of access to credit to businesses in Gillingham and Rainham constituency in the last 12 months.

Rehman Chishti:[\[216026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps his Department is taking to support small and medium-sized businesses in Gillingham and Rainham constituency.

Matthew Hancock:

Small businesses are vital to our economy and our small business owners have driven this economic recovery. The Gillingham and Rainham constituency has benefitted from a number of support schemes. The Business Bank's Start-Up Loan programme has already provided 15 loans, with a value of £88,800 to people starting a business in Gillingham and Rainham. And since May 2010, the Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme has supported 10 loans in the area with a total value of £1.06m.

We are committed to making Britain the best place in the world to start and grow a business, and are doing this in a number of ways, including:

- £10 billion of financing will be unlocked for smaller business over the next 5 years by our British Business Bank;
- Government grants of up to £3,000 for better internet connectivity are available to small businesses;
 - The Business Support Helpline is available to provide bespoke information and advice;
 - £2,000 cut from the National Insurance bills of small firms from the new Employment Allowance; and
 - The Growth Accelerator scheme has supported over 19,800 firms and is on track to create 55,000 jobs and deliver £2.2 billion of economic growth by March 2015.

■ Business: Northern Ireland**Sammy Wilson:**[\[215629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many loans have been made by the British Business Bank to companies based in Northern Ireland.

Sammy Wilson:[\[215630\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the value is of loans made to businesses in Northern Ireland by the British Business Bank.

Matthew Hancock:

The British Business Bank became an operationally independent organisation on 1st November 2014. It does not make loans directly to businesses. Instead, it works with private sector delivery partners to deliver all of its programmes, allowing it to pull in significant amounts of private sector funding.

The Bank's programmes are already supporting businesses in Northern Ireland. Through the Start Up Loans programme 205 loans have already been offered to start-up businesses in Northern Ireland with a total value of nearly £1m. The Enterprise Finance Guarantee programme has facilitated lending of £39.3m to 271 businesses.

Additionally, the Bank's investment programmes, which provide lending through alternative finance providers, have so far facilitated 112 loans to businesses in Northern Ireland with a total value of £5.9m.

Floods**Maria Eagle:**[\[215502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how much of the £10 million support for small and medium-sized enterprises for clean-up in flooded areas has been (a) allocated and (b) received by small and medium-sized enterprises.

Matthew Hancock:

The full £10 million of funding was paid to eligible local authorities in two payments, on the 20 February and 14 March 2014. Details of total payments to local authorities are at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/update-on-funding-for-flood-affected-businesses>

Since then local authorities have allocated nearly £7 million of this funding to support business recovery.

Members: Correspondence**Alistair Burt:**[\[215859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, when he plans to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for North East Bedfordshire of 2 September 2014 regarding the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

Matthew Hancock:

My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills responded to the letter from my Rt hon Friend of 2 September 2014, received in his Department 22 October, on 18 November 2014.

■ Window Blinds: Accidents

Gordon Banks: [216237]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many children under the age of three died from entanglement in looped blind cords in the UK in (a) 2012 and (b) 2013.

Jo Swinson:

The latest figures available from The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents are that there were three reported deaths in 2012, and two reported deaths in 2013 of children under the age of three from entanglement in looped blind cords.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Big Society Network

Lisa Nandy: [216076]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the minutes, redacted if necessary, of any discussions between his Department, the Big Society Network and NESTA on the funding of the Big Society Network.

Lisa Nandy: [216081]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will place in the Library (a) a copy of the minutes and (b) a list of attendees of the meeting between the Prime Minister and Big Society Network that was held in July 2013.

Lisa Nandy: [216084]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Report by Geoff Mulgan published on 21 August 2014 on NESTA support for the Big Society Network, when he was first made aware of NESTA's concerns about the capacity of the Big Society Network team, the gap between ambition and capability and the Big Society Network's relative newness as an organisation.

Mr Rob Wilson:

I was appointed as the Minister for Civil Society on 27 September 2014, after the publication of the NESTA document.

No meeting to discuss the funding of Big Society Network took place between Cabinet Office, the Big Society Network and NESTA.

Details of meetings between the Prime Minister and external organisations are available on the gov.uk website.

■ Diseases: Older People

Sheila Gilmore: [216082]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the mortality rates are of patients aged over 75 years suffering from (a) cardiovascular disease, (b) respiratory disease, (c) liver disease and

(d) cancer; and what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the upper-age limit on the survival rates of those diseases.

Mr Rob Wilson:

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

Attachments:

1. ONS Letter to Member - Various Diseases [PQ 216082 ONS 429.pdf]

■ Electronic Government

Simon Kirby:

[215657]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps his Department is taking to ensure its services are available online; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Francis Maude:

Progress against the delivery of my department's Digital Strategy, which sets out plans to become 'digital by default' in line with the Government Digital Strategy, is due to be published in December.

One of the 25 'exemplar' major government service that are being redesigned and rebuilt to be simpler, clearer and faster to use was the Cabinet Office's Register to Vote service. This went live in June this year in England and Wales followed by Scotland in September. More than 2.2m people have registered to vote using this digital service, with an overall satisfaction rate of over 90%. Further details are published on gov.uk/transformation.

■ Older Workers

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[216118]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people worked after their 65th birthday in each of the last three years.

Mr Rob Wilson:

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

Attachments:

1. ONS Letter to Member - Working after 65 [PQ 216118 ONS 430.pdf]

■ Public Appointments

Jonathan Ashworth:

[215701]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what his role is in public appointments.

Mr Francis Maude:

Individual public appointments are made by the relevant Minister in the sponsor department of the public body. It is the responsibility of appointing departments to

conduct recruitment processes in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice.

I have responsibility for overall policy on Government public appointments and am working to improve their diversity, including by providing appropriate guidance to departments.

Over the last 8 years, the number of women appointed to the boards of public bodies remained static around 36%. Statistics for 2013/14 show that 39% of new appointments were made to women, with recent figures even stronger. There remains more to do to improve the diversity of our public appointments and the Centre for Public Appointments in the Cabinet Office plays a coordinating and supportive role in this.

I make appointments to the boards of a number of Cabinet Office bodies.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Change of Use

Mr Nick Raynsford:

[R] [\[215249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 October 2014 to Question 209429, and the Housing Standards Review Technical Consultation issued in September 2014, if he will make it his policy that a national standard to replace the existing space standards used by local authorities apply to new dwellings created by conversion from other uses under permitted development rights.

Brandon Lewis:

The published proposals from our Housing Standards Review relate to new build housing. The conversion of an existing building is technically more complex than a new build – as the existing configuration of internal walls and structures will influence the spatial dimensions of the new dwelling.

Notwithstanding, any new dwellings created by change of use would be subject to Housing Health and Safety Rating System regulations on space and crowding, as well as aspects of the building regulations including fire safety, sound insulation and energy efficiency.

■ Flexible Working

Gloria De Piero:

[\[215179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many and what proportion of (a) women and (b) men have made a statutory application to request flexible working in his Department; and how many of those applications have been granted to date.

Kris Hopkins:

The Department for Communities and Local Government offers a range of flexible working patterns and other combinations of working patterns that allow employees to maintain a good work/life balance.

At the 31 October 2014 the working pattern breakdown of DCLG staff is shown in the table below:

*	TOTAL STAFF	%	FEMALE		MALE	
No of Staff	1677	100%	850	50.7%	827	49.3%
No of Staff on Flexible Working Patterns (including Part Time)	262	15.6%	222	84.7%	40	15.3%
No of Staff on Part Time Hours	205	12.2%	179	87.3%	26	12.7%
No of Full Time Staff on Flexible Working Hours	57	3.4%	43	75.4%	14	24.6%

* Data as at 31/10/2014

An application would only be rejected where there is a clear business case that shows granting the application would be impracticable and inefficient. The specific grounds of the rejection would be stated with an explanation of how it applies to the applicant's circumstances.

■ Floods

Jake Berry:

[\[204999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what progress has been made on making the full amount of flood funds available to local communities.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the hon. Member to the flood recovery progress report published on 27 November, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

Maria Eagle:

[\[215490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much of the Severe Weather Recovery Scheme awarded to local authorities for costs incurred during the winter floods has been (a) allocated to and (b) received by local authorities.

Maria Eagle: [215491]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department has taken to assist communities affected by the winter floods as a result of the decisions of the Ministerial Recovery Working Group.

Maria Eagle: [215503]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many households have received a repair and renew grant intended for homeowners and businesses which were flooded in winter 2013-14.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the hon. Member to the flood recovery progress report published on 27 November, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

■ Housing: Lancaster

David Morris: [216128]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many new houses are (a) being built and (b) projected to be built in the next 12 months in Lancaster district.

Brandon Lewis:

Quarterly statistics on house building starts and completions up to September 2014 in each local authority district, including Lancaster, are published in the Department's live table 253a at:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-house-building>

Figures are not available centrally on the projected numbers to be built in Lancaster.

■ Local Government Finance

Andy Sawford: [216169]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will publish a real-terms time series of change in individual local authority income since 2010-11.

Andy Sawford: [216198]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to paragraph 9 of the summary of the National Audit Office report, Financial sustainability of local authorities, published on 19 November 2014, what assessment he has made of the effect on the ability of local authorities to meet their statutory duties of the reduction in government funding to local authorities between 2010-11 and 2015-16.

Andy Sawford: [216230]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the findings of the National Audit Office report, Financial sustainability of local authorities, published on 19 November 2014.

Andy Sawford:

[\[216238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he plans to take in response to the National Audit Office report, Financial sustainability of local authorities, published on 19 November 2014.

Kris Hopkins:

The Government will publish a formal response to the Public Account Committee's consideration of the National Audit Office report; this will be presented to Parliament in due course.

■ Planning Inspectorate

Ian Austin:

[\[214471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many people have been employed by the Planning Inspectorate to determine planning applications in each of the last five years.

Brandon Lewis:

This information is not centrally held in the form requested, and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Councils are responsible for determining planning applications, not the Planning Inspectorate.

Planning inspectors work flexibly – across examinations of local plans, nationally significant infrastructure, rights of way, planning appeals, enforcement cases and cases under the Transport and Works Act. In that context, we do not hold staffing figures specifically in relation to work on planning application appeals.

■ Planning Permission: Appeals

Ian Austin:

[\[214470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many appeals to the Planning Inspectorate have taken (a) up to 30 days, (b) up to 60 days, (c) up to 90 days and (d) more than 90 days to reach a decision in each of the last five years.

Brandon Lewis:

The Government has been undertaking a series of technical steps to help speed up the handling of planning appeals. The table below gives figures for planning appeals decided between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2014.

NUMBER OF DECISIONS	UP TO 30 DAYS	OVER 30 DAYS AND UP TO 60 DAYS	OVER 60 DAYS AND UP TO 90 DAYS	MORE THAN 90 DAYS
2009-10	297	1,858	1,669	14,306
2010-11	375	4,285	1,278	10,657
2011-12	412	4,253	1,617	8,999

NUMBER OF DECISIONS	UP TO 30 DAYS	OVER 30 DAYS AND UP TO 60 DAYS	OVER 60 DAYS AND UP TO 90 DAYS	MORE THAN 90 DAYS
2012-13	347	3,603	938	9,239
2013-14	449	3,345	943	9,837

Note: Figures refer to planning appeal decisions. Timing is measured from the start date for the appeal to the date the decision letter is published.

To place this information in the context of the Planning Inspectorate's performance targets, in 2013-14, 88 per cent of (qualifying) planning appeals were determined within the goal of 26 weeks. 84 per cent of householder appeals were determined within 8 weeks of the start date, compared to a target of 80 per cent.

The most common reasons for planning appeals taking longer than 26 weeks are (a) the appellants or local authorities are unavailable for the hearing or site visit forcing it to be postponed, and (b) a hearing is adjourned due to new evidence emerging that requires further examination.

■ Private Rented Housing: Lancaster

David Morris: [216129]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many people in Lancaster district live in private rented accommodation.

Brandon Lewis:

The Department does not hold data on the number of people in privately rented properties by local authority district, including Lancaster. Information is available from the Population Census 2011 and shows the number of households and dwellings in the private rented sector at March 2011. This is available at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/dc4402ew>

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/search/index.html?newquery=ct0259>

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Arts: Finance

Andrew Rosindell: [215160]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how much Arts Council England funding was awarded to organisations in (a) the London Borough of Havering, (b) Essex, (c) London and (d) the East of England in each of the last three years.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Arts Council England has invested the following in the last three years:

YEAR	GIA	LOT	TOTAL
2011/12	275,436	27,530	302,966
2012/13	490,741	35,685	526,426
2013/14	553,573	32,420	585,993
Total	1,319,750	95,635	1,415,385

Arts Council England funding supports a number of arts organisations in Romford such as the Young Droots Theatre, a deaf led theatre company, that was established in April 2007 to work with Deaf and mainstream groups throughout the UK (which received £38,647 between 2011/12-2014/15), London Borough of Havering (Havering Music School MEH), a specialist music service for the London Borough of Havering which provides instrumental lessons at Saturday and Weekday Music Centres for children of any age or standard (which received £777,977 between 2011/12-2014/15) and BiggaFish, a not-for-profit events organisation which provides a performance platform for young creatives and training in events and marketing management for 14 to 21 year olds (which received £716,796 between 2011/12-2014/15).

ESSEX

Year	GIA	LOT	Total
2011/12	1,655,359	655,676	2,311,035
2012/13	3,434,354	787,703	4,222,057
2013/14	3,767,607	1,389,390	5,156,997
Total	8,857,320	2,832,769	11,690,089

East of England

Year	GIA	LOT	Total
2011/12	11,439,189	7,411,153	18,850,342
2012/13	23,425,677	29,953,504	53,379,181
2013/14	23,579,046	8,085,615	31,664,661
Total	58,443,912	45,450,272	103,894,184

London

ESSEX

Year	GIA	LOT	Total
2011/12	180,900,363	54,134,617	235,034,980
2012/13	187,938,136	140,028,956	327,967,092
2013/14	184,716,242	46,608,764	231,325,006
Total	553,554,741	240,772,337	794,327,078

The data is based on the resident postcode of the grant recipient. We will place data in the house library showing the total investment from Arts Council England in these areas (rather than just to organisations).

■ BBC

Mr Douglas Carswell: [\[215628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what plans his Department has made of the next BBC licence fee settlement.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Government has no plans currently. The Government has said that the right time to consider these questions is as part of the Charter Review; this will not be starting in advance of the Election in 2015.

Adam Afriyie: [\[215689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the current BBC funding model; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

No such assessment has been made. The Government has said that the right time to consider these questions is as part of the Charter Review which will not be starting in advance of the Election in 2015.

■ Electronic Government

Simon Kirby:

[215659]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure its services are available online; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

DCMS is responsible for transforming the digital infrastructure in the UK. DCMS is on track to deliver superfast broadband to 95% of the UK by 2017 and is launching 1,000 free public wi-fi hotspots in public buildings across the UK.

As part of the Government's UK wide superfast broadband rollout, DCMS funds the superfast broadband connection vouchers scheme that's aimed at providing local businesses and SMEs with faster broadband. DCMS has created a dedicated website for businesses to access suppliers offering the most competitive voucher packages in their areas at www.connectionvouchers.co.uk

DCMS also ensures it adheres to GOV.UK and Government Digital Services best practice, outlined in its Digital Strategy which is available on GOV.UK at www.gov.uk/government/publications/dcms-digital-strategy.

The DCMS reported against actions in its Digital Strategy in December 2013 www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-culture-media-and-sport-government-digital-strategy-actions/dcmss-actions-in-response-to-the-government-digital-strategy

■ Nominet

Toby Perkins:

[215677]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when and on what grounds Nominet was granted the exclusive authority to administer the .uk namespace.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Nominet was created as an initiative of the UK internet services community in 1996, in order to manage the rapidly increasing demand for domain names and ensure a single inter-operable network of addresses would continue to evolve. Prior to this, all requests for .uk domain names were approved by a Naming Committee established by the UK Education and Research Networking Association (UKERNA). The Government recognises Nominet's continuing role in managing the .uk registry on a not-for-profit basis consistent with the multi-stakeholder model for internet governance that the Government supports.

Toby Perkins:

[\[215678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the effect of Nominet's licence to grant .uk domain names on the competitiveness of the domain registration market.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

I have made no assessment of the effect of the launch of .uk domain names on the competitiveness of the domain registration market. However, the UK has one of the most competitive domain name markets in the world, with over 10m domain names on the .uk registry, making it the 6th largest registry. The wholesale price for domain names in the UK is less than those for .com or .net domain names and some 2700 domain name registries compete in the retail market for .uk domains, bringing significant benefits for consumers. Since the launch of .uk Second Level Domain Names, over 50,000 .uk second level domains were registered on the first day and over 100,000 after the first month.

■ Woodland Trust

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[216119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what support the Government has offered to the Woodland Trust for its tree-planting campaign to commemorate the centenary of the First World War.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Government has given advice to the Woodland Trust to help them develop the First World War Centenary Woods Project. The Government welcomes this exciting project which will see millions of trees planted across the UK and woods created in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure a legacy of remembrance all over the country. This project is part of the Imperial War Museum's Centenary Partnership which brings together 3000 organisations from 50 countries to present a vibrant global programme of cultural events and activities.

DEFENCE

■ DA Notices

Mr Angus Brendan MacNeil:

[\[215699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what D-notices have been issued by the Defence, Press and Broadcasting Advisory Committee since April 2012; and if he will place copies of such notices in the Library.

Michael Fallon:

Defence Advisory (DA) Notices are issued and managed by the Defence Press and Broadcasting Advisory Committee (DPBAC), which is an advisory body and is not part of the Department.

■ Electronic Government**Simon Kirby:**[\[215660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to ensure its services are available online; and if he will make a statement.

Anna Soubry:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) already makes services available online such as Armed Forces career applications and civilian recruitment. The MOD is taking steps to ensure more of its services are available online, including:

Working to improve access to information and services for Armed Forces personnel, Reserves and families by upgrading and improving services available via the internet;

Identifying new transactional services to be redesigned to the Digital by Default service standard;

Building its digital capability through the appointment of a central digital transformation team;

and developing digital skills and professionalism across the Department.

■ EU Common Foreign and Security Policy**Ian Lucas:**[\[214602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what UK (a) military and (b) other personnel (i) have been and (ii) are deployed under Common Foreign and Security Policy or Common Security and Defence Policy operations since May 2010; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Mark Francois:

[Holding answer 20 November 2014]: Currently the Ministry of Defence (MOD) provides 323 Military personnel in support of Common Security and Defence Policy military operations. The figures below are representative of the number of posts that the UK has filled since 2010. Where the UK fills a post in an EU mission on an enduring basis, individual personnel or units will rotate through the post, usually on a six month rotation. The number of individuals who have supported operations will therefore be higher.

EUTM Somalia This mission started in 2010. Since then the number of UK personnel allocated to it has varied between two and three. It will increase to four in early 2015 and reduce again to three in summer 2015. The UK has also provided 1 civilian advisor since 2013.

EUNAVFOR ATALANTA The MOD fills 65 posts, including the Commander, at the Mission Head Quarters in Northwood on an enduring basis and fills four posts in Djibouti. The UK also provided a ship to the mission in 2011 and again in 2013.

EUTM Mali Following the launch of the mission in early 2013 the UK military contribution peaked at 37 posts in late 2013 and has since decreased to 30 posts on an enduring basis. The UK also contributes a two person civilian training team.

EUFOR ALTHEA Since 2010 the UK has filled on an enduring basis between five and six staff officer posts, has provided an intermediate reserve of 120 personnel since 2012 and since July 2014 has provided a temporary uplift of 95 reconnaissance personnel (returning to the UK in December).

EUFOR CAR The UK provides one staff officer to the mission headquarters in Larissa, Greece.

■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

Angus Robertson: [\[215778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when each of the initial production batch of four F-35B aircraft will be delivered to the UK.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The four aircraft are provisionally scheduled to be delivered in May 2016, July 2016, September 2016 and October 2016 respectively. This is an initial planning date only and is subject to change.

■ Libya

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[215597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 21 November 2014 to Question 213404, for what reason £14.7 million of the additional costs of the recent training programme for Libyan Armed Forces personnel remain to be negotiated between his Department and the Libyan government.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[215598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 21 November 2014 to Question 213404, when his Department expects to conclude negotiations with the Libyan government about repayment of the remaining £14.7 million of the additional costs of the recent training programme for Libyan Armed Forces personnel.

Mr Mark Francois:

[Holding answer 28 November 2014]: The Libyan Government has agreed to pay for General Purpose Force training. However, the deteriorating political and security situation in Libya has meant that it has not yet been possible to conclude discussions on payment with the relevant Libyan authorities. We will continue to press for payment of the balance, in parallel with our work to support the UN-led mediation process.

■ Ministry of Defence Police

David Simpson:

[\[215736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to recruit more women into the Ministry of Defence Police.

Anna Soubry:

The Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) is fully committed to having a workforce that reflects the community they police. The ongoing MDP recruitment programme is seeking to increase the number of female officers serving in the Force through targeted advertising in online publications, websites and hard copy publications. Female MDP officers also attend recruitment fairs to provide their experience of working within the Force to potential female recruits.

■ Nuclear Submarines

Angus Robertson:

[\[215779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when HMS Talent and HMS Triumph will be based at HMNB Clyde; and when and where those vessels will be decommissioned.

Mr Philip Dunne:

HMS TALENT and HMS TRIUMPH will move to Her Majesty's Naval Base (HMNB) Clyde in 2019 and 2020 respectively.

On current plans the end of service date for TALENT is 2021; for TRIUMPH it is 2022. The intention is that the decommissioning ceremonies for both submarines will take place in HMNB Clyde.

Angus Robertson:

[\[215788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department has spent on each long lead item for the Successor submarine; and how much his Department has spent on the Successor submarine programme to date.

Mr Philip Dunne:

[Holding answer 27 November 2014]: As of 31 March 2014, the Ministry of Defence had committed £230 million for long lead items. From within this, the following individual items have been ordered:

Weapon Handling and Launch System, at a cost of £11.8 million;

Gearbox and associated equipment, at a cost of £6.6 million;

Pressurised Water Reactor 3 reactor plant and associated main propulsion systems, at a cost of £58.8 million;

Since 31 March 2014, additional orders have been placed with the US Department of Defense as follows:

Material to support the manufacture of missile tube components, at a cost of \$27.4 million;

Missile Tube Long Lead Materials, at a cost of \$52.8 million; and

Material to support the manufacture of integrated tube and hull fixtures, at a cost of \$7.6 million.

This level of commitment is in line with the Initial Gate approval.

The total programme spend at the end of financial year 2013-14 was £2,068 million.

■ Reserve Forces

Crispin Blunt: [\[215731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the cost of the advertising budget to support reserve recruitment campaigns has been to date; and what the overall budget is for such expenditure in the future.

Mr Julian Brazier:

[Holding answer 27 November 2014]: During financial year (FY) 2013-14, the total cost of the Maritime Reserves' recruitment advertising was £2.16 million. The Maritime Reserves' budget for Reserves recruitment advertising in FY 2014-15 is £2.96 million.

The Army's 'More Than Meets The Eye' recruiting campaign is designed to attract applications to both the Regular and Reserve components of the Army. The cost of the Reserve element of the campaign is, therefore, an estimate based on a 50% share of the overall campaign cost. During FY 2013-14, the Army estimates that the cost of advertising for Army Reserve recruitment was £1.882 million. The projected share of the budget to be spent on Army Reserve recruitment advertising in FY 2014-15 is £3.8 million.

During FY 2013-14, the total cost of the RAF's Reserve recruitment advertising was £2.52 million. In 2014-15, the RAF's budget for Reserves specific recruitment advertising is £2.14 million.

■ Type 26 Frigates

Vernon Coaker: [\[215858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent progress he has made on the awarding of contracts for the Type 26 Global Combat Ship.

Mr Philip Dunne:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 20 October 2014 (Official Report, column 671) to the member for Gloucester (Mr Graham).

Attachments:

1. Hansard extract on Type 26 Frigates [20141021 - Hansard Extract Type 26 Frigates.doc]

■ Ukraine

Vernon Coaker: [\[215850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment he has made of the progress made by NATO in training and developing Rapid Reaction Forces in response to the situation in Ukraine.

Mr Mark Francois:

The Readiness Action Plan, as agreed by Heads of State and UK Government at the Wales Summit, is a response to the changed security environment in Eastern Europe arising from Russia's actions in and around Ukraine. Its implementation will significantly enhance NATO's readiness and responsiveness. Work is progressing rapidly on enhancing the NATO Response Force's capabilities, including development of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force.

■ Warships**Stephen Gilbert:**[\[216042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many instances of fouling from abandoned or lost fishing gear affecting Royal Navy ships there have been in (a) UK or (b) non-UK waters in the last two years; how many operational days have been lost from (i) ship and (ii) personnel activities as a result of those instances; and what estimate he has made of the cost of the (A) loss of operational activity and (B) repairs as a result of those instances.

Mr Mark Francois:

The Royal Navy has no such record of any fouling by abandoned fishing gear; therefore the Royal Navy has no record of a ship being unable to complete its tasking due to fouling by fishing gear in the last two years.

EDUCATION**■ Academies****Kelvin Hopkins:**[\[216126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much (a) start-up, (b) revenue and (c) capital funding has been allocated to 16 to 19 academies and free schools that have opened since January 2014.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The Department for Education has provided £6.7 million in revenue funding to 16-19 academies that opened since January 2014. This figure includes £1.6 million in start-up funding. All of the 16-19 academies that opened since January 2014 are free schools.

The Department publishes details of capital funding allocated to free schools once contracts for site acquisition and renovation are finalised and once the cost of the project is no longer commercially sensitive. None of the schools opened since January 2014 is at this stage, so the data is not yet published. Once available, details of capital funding for free schools is published at the following link:

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

■ Blackpool

Paul Maynard: [\[215794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which of her Department's capital investment programmes have involved expenditure in Blackpool North and Cleveleys constituency since 2010.

Mr David Laws:

Since April 2010 schools in Blackpool North and Cleveleys constituency have been directly allocated funding to support capital investment through the following programmes:

- Priority Schools Building Programme
- Free Schools
- Building Schools for the Future
- Academies Capital Maintenance Fund
- Demographic Growth Capital Fund
- Building Condition Improvement Fund
- Locally Co-ordinated Voluntary Aided Programme
- Devolved Formula Capital

In addition to the above, the Department for Education also allocates much of its available capital funding at a local authority level so that capital investment decisions can be made according to local priorities. These funds could be used by Blackpool and Lancashire local authorities to support capital investment in the Blackpool North and Cleveleys constituency. These capital programmes include: Basic Need, Local Authority Capital Maintenance, and Universal Infant Free School Meals.

■ Children's Centres

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[906346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress her Department has made on ensuring that children's centres have access to live birth data for their catchment areas.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Health services and local authorities should share live birth data with children's centres on a regular basis.

Birth registration data is already publicly available, and local areas should use partnership agreements or protocols to make data sharing as effective as possible.

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health is working with 4Children to produce an e-learning package on information-sharing for early years and health professionals.

■ Free School Meals

Duncan Hames:

[[906348](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what additional capital funding she plans to make available to help schools provide free hot meals to all infant pupils.

Mr David Laws:

We have provided substantial support to help schools deliver this policy. We initially allocated £150 million capital funding in 2014-15, and are now providing an additional £24.5 million for individual school projects.

Eric Ollerenshaw:

[[906349](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support her Department has made available to small primary schools for providing free school meals.

Mr David Laws:

We recognise some smaller schools will face particular challenges in implementing universal infant free school meals. We have therefore allocated an extra £22.5 million transitional funding in 2014-15 to help schools with 150 pupils or fewer to implement the policy. Each qualifying small school received a minimum of £3,000. This is on top of the £2.30 per meal taken which all schools have been given for their newly eligible infants.

■ Free Schools

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[[215695](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 3 November 2014 to Question 211963, if she will provide a list of the specified derogations from the Admissions Code that have been made by 54 free schools.

Mr Edward Timpson:

All academies and free schools must comply with the School Admissions Code. This ensures their admission arrangements are fair, clear and objective.

However, in limited circumstances, the Secretary of State has agreed different arrangements for academies and free schools, where she is content that to do so will benefit local children. Such schools must comply with the Code other than in the very limited circumstances specified by the Secretary of State.

Whilst, at the time of replying to Question [211963](#), we explained that the Secretary of State had agreed specific freedoms for 54 free schools (including UTCs), that list now stands at 56, and is set out as attached.

Attachments:

1. Free schools - admissions freedoms - December 2014
[Free_Schools_Admissions_Freedoms_December_2014.doc]

■ Mathematics: Curriculum

Simon Kirby:

[\[215797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions she had with her international counterparts on best practice for mathematics teaching; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Nick Gibb:

My Rt hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, is committed to raising standards in maths education by learning from the leading systems in the world. However, she is yet to meet with her international counterparts specifically to discuss best practice for mathematics teaching.

The Department for Education has adopted an evidence-based approach to our reform programme by studying what works in the highest performing and most improved education systems, such as Singapore and Shanghai. We have sought to implement the essence of those policies here.

At primary, our new national curriculum for maths has been inspired by these leading East Asian nations and focuses on building firm foundations and developing fluency so that pupils are able to recall and apply their knowledge as their understanding develops.

We have launched a national network of 34 Maths Hubs, through which we are running the Mathematics Teacher Exchange Programme – England/China. This programme will develop a deep understanding of the Shanghai-style ‘mastery’ approach to maths teaching and trial its implementation within schools.

There is also clear evidence that points to the use of textbooks as a crucial element of the mastery approach. The 2011 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study – an international comparison of maths and science teaching – found that in high-performing nations like Singapore, 70% of maths teachers use a textbook as a basis for instruction, whereas in England, only 10% do. That is why, from January 2015, all Maths Hubs will be participating in a project to assess whether a mastery approach to teaching supported by a high-quality textbook can be used to drive up the quality of primary maths teaching.

■ Members

Rosie Cooper:

[\[216224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for what reason there is a 15-day turnaround period for her private office to respond to urgent requests from hon. Members for a meeting with her.

Mr Nick Gibb:

There is no fifteen day turnaround period when handling requests for meetings. Under normal circumstances, urgent requests from hon. Members for a meeting with the Secretary of State are dealt with in a timely manner.

In this instance, the hon. Member’s office contacted the Department’s National Helpline but was not put through to the Secretary of State’s Private Office.

Officials have apologised to the hon. Member's office for this, and for the delay that resulted, and officials have assured me that it will not happen again.

■ **Schools: Radicalism**

Stephen Doughty: [\[216024\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions she has had with the Welsh Government Minister for Education on tackling extremism and radicalisation in schools; and whether she plans to meet her counterparts in the devolved administrations to discuss tackling extremism and radicalisation.

Mr Edward Timpson:

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, has not discussed extremism and radicalisation with the Minister for Education in the Welsh Government. Officials from the Department for Education have, however, met their counterparts in the Welsh Government to discuss matters of common interest relating to extremism and will continue to do so as necessary.

■ **Sixth Form Colleges: VAT**

Dr Julian Huppert: [\[216159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much extra funding, over and above that provided to school sixth forms, her Department provides to sixth form colleges to cover their VAT costs.

Mr David Laws:

The Department for Education does not cover the VAT costs of sixth form colleges. To do this in full would cost around £30 million each year.

■ **Sixth Form Education**

Kelvin Hopkins: [\[216125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) schools and (b) academies have established sixth forms since January 2014; and how much (i) revenue and (ii) capital funding has been allocated to those sixth forms.

Mr Edward Timpson:

In the academic year 2014/15, there were two maintained schools and 29 academies that established a new sixth form. The total revenue funding allocated to these sixth forms in 2014/15 was £11.4 million and the total capital funding identified for these sixth forms was £16.6 million.

■ **Supply Teachers**

Ms Diane Abbott: [\[215945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if her Department will provide guidance to supply teachers on the tax and unemployment implications of working for an umbrella company.

Mr David Laws:

Schools and local authorities are responsible for the recruitment of their supply teachers and deciding whether they use private agencies to recruit and employ them. If a supply teacher is employed by a private agency or their umbrella company, this is a private commercial arrangement between the school and agency.

The Department for Education does not provide guidance on tax and unemployment matters. These are matters for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and the Department for Work and Pensions, respectively.

■ **Teachers: Brighton**

Simon Kirby: [\[215798\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the number of teachers in Brighton and Hove who were trained as part of the Teach First programme; and if she will make a statement.

Mr David Laws:

The Department for Education does not hold data on the schools in which Teach First participants are training or teaching. Teach First currently does not have partner schools in the Brighton and Hove area and has advised the Department that none of its former trainees are currently employed in a school in Brighton and Hove.

■ **Water**

Simon Kirby: [\[215959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to reduce water (a) usage and (b) bills in her Department; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education has made significant reductions to both its water usage and associated bills.

Total water use has been reduced by 43% since 2009-10, and the number of its offices falling within good and best practice office water benchmarks has been increased from 39% to 58% during the same period.

These improvements have primarily been achieved by: installing efficiency devices such as tap aerators; flow control valves; and leak reduction work.

In taking this action, the Department has reduced its annual water bill by £107,000 since 2009-10, and continues to work towards identifying even greater efficiencies.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE■ **Coke: Barnsley****Dan Jarvis:**[\[216227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2014 to Question 214810, what steps he plans to take to encourage his Department's contractors to purchase Monckton Coke through the British Coal Concessionary Fuel Scheme; and if he will take steps to enable future purchases of that fuel to be brought forward.

Matthew Hancock:

Under the terms of the National Concessionary Fuel Scheme agreed between British Coal and the mining unions, and inherited by the Government following privatisation in 1994, the choice of solid fuel a concessionaire wishes to receive is at the individual beneficiary's discretion. At present of a total of 11,000 solid fuel concessionaires under 600 receive product sourced from Monckton under the Scheme, with a current total tonnage purchased of just under 2,700 tonnes per annum.

Due to fuel quality degradation our distribution contractors are limited in the levels of stocks they can retain without the burn quality being affected. In general our contractors hold 2-3 weeks of stocks for each fuel required and they have confirmed at present they hold stocks of 450 tonnes of Monckton sourced product.

We have been informed that Monckton product is expected to be available until 2016 and our contractors have confirmed they will continue to purchase Monckton sourced product so long as supplies of an acceptable quality are available. In addition we have instructed the concessionary fuel office not to promote alternative fuels to Monckton sourced product during this difficult period.

■ **Electronic Government****Simon Kirby:**[\[215662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what steps his Department is taking to ensure its services are available online; and if he will make a statement.

Amber Rudd:

DECC's digital strategy was published in December 2012 and this sets out the proposals for DECC to move towards the digital by default agenda. A Digital Leader has been appointed with responsibility to promote the take up of digital services across the department. As a relatively new Department many of the services managed by the Department already include a digital element.

A series of activities have been undertaken which:

- Develop and implement the DECC Digital Strategy;
- Assess new and redesigned services against the Digital Service Design Manual published by the Government Digital Service;

- Digital services are embedded into other initiatives such as Consumer First and Open Policy Making; and
- Build the skills and capabilities in the department needed to support the digital agenda.

■ Energy

Caroline Flint: [215907]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2014 to Question 214693, when the next Domestic Supplies Obligations annual report will be published.

Amber Rudd:

Ofgem will publish its next annual Social Obligations Report, providing information on suppliers' performance in 2013, before the end of this year's parliamentary session.

■ Energy Companies Obligation

Caroline Flint: [215909]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2014 to Question 214562, on the Energy Companies Obligation, when the next quarterly official statistics will be published.

Amber Rudd:

A timetable for future statistical releases for the Department can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-releases-timetable-for-twelve-months-ahead>.

■ Energy: Conservation

Paul Flynn: [215902]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the findings on the UK in the report of the Building Performance Institute Europe on Renovation strategies of selected EU countries, published in November 2014.

Amber Rudd:

The Buildings Performance Institute Europe's report – 'Renovation Strategies of Selected EU Countries' – assesses the Building Renovation Strategies submitted by ten EU Member States to the European Commission in accordance with Article 4 of the EU Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU).

Of the ten Member States assessed, the UK's Building Renovation Strategy is considered, along with the reports of three other Member States, to be the most comprehensive and compliant with the provisions of Article 4.

The Department will reflect on the report's suggestions and give consideration to how these can be addressed in future iterations of the UK Building Renovation Strategy; the

Energy Efficiency Directive requires Member States to update their strategies by no later than 30 April 2017.

■ **Energy: Prices**

Gordon Banks: [\[216039\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that energy companies offering tariffs with an inbuilt charitable commitment pay both the additional payment and any interest accumulated to the charity concerned.

Matthew Hancock:

Arrangements between a supplier and a charity for tariffs with an inbuilt charitable commitment are a commercial matter between the supplier and the charity involved.

Gordon Banks: [\[216040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what the value was of charitable donations made through energy bill tariffs in 2013.

Matthew Hancock:

The value of charitable donations made available through each energy tariff with such an arrangement is commercially sensitive information between the supplier and the charity. Neither DECC nor Ofgem collect or hold this information.

■ **Fuel Poverty: North West**

Andrew Stephenson: [\[215375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what estimate he has made of the number of households in fuel poverty in (a) Pendle constituency, (b) Lancashire and (c) the North West.

Amber Rudd:

The estimated number and proportion of households which are fuel poor in 2012 under the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) Indicator in (a) Pendle constituency, (b) Lancashire and (c) the north west are shown in the table below.

	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF FUEL POOR HOUSEHOLDS	PROPORTION OF FUEL POOR HOUSEHOLDS (%)
Pendle constituency	5,552	15.0
Lancashire	52,840	10.8
North west	335,344	11.3

■ Green Deal Scheme

Caroline Flint: [\[215906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2014 to Question 214561, on the green deal scheme, what confidentiality reasons prevent that data being broken down to a lower geographical area.

Amber Rudd:

The Department reports the number of 'live' Green Deal Plans (with measures installed) by Region, up to 30th June 2014 in Table 1.7 of the quarterly official statistics publication.

As at the end of June 2014 there were 1,587 'live' Green Deal Plans in Great Britain. These are not evenly distributed across all local authorities, and it remains possible that a household may be identifiable if they were the only household to have a Green Deal finance Plan in their Local Authority area. This would not be consistent with the fair processing notice that they were given when they entered the plan.

■ Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Paul Flynn: [\[215929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what assessment he has made of the implications for the Government's climate change strategy of the United Nations Environment Programme report, The Emissions Gap Report 2014, published in November 2014.

Amber Rudd:

The 2014 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Emissions Gap report makes clear that while existing levels of global mitigation ambition are not enough to put us on a cost-effective 2°C trajectory, there is still more than enough global emissions reduction potential to achieve 2030 emissions levels that would be consistent with 2°C. However, realising this potential will require political will across all countries, and a significant increase in global mitigation action before 2030.

The Report effectively supports the Government's climate change strategy, of taking strong action at home within the legal framework of the Climate Change Act 2008, pressing for ambition from the EU, which recently agreed to a 2030 domestic GHG emissions reduction target of at least 40%, and pushing for credible action from other countries in the context of agreeing a global legally binding agreement at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Paris in December 2015.

■ Petrol: Prices

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[215876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if he will hold discussions with representatives of the fuel industry to establish the reasons why the retail price differential between petrol and diesel (a) in the UK favours petrol vehicles and (b) in the Irish Republic favours diesel drivers.

Matthew Hancock:

Wholesale fuel prices are fundamentally driven by crude prices. At the margin supply and demand factors for individual refined products will influence their prices.

Such factors are not necessarily the same for both petrol and diesel, which can lead to disparities in prices. For example, the UK produces more petrol than is demanded domestically, and this surplus puts downward pressure on the petrol price. In contrast, the UK is a net importer of diesel and so extra costs of importing such as transportation costs must be factored into diesel prices.

While petrol and diesel are taxed at differing rates in Ireland, they are currently treated equally for tax purposes in the UK.

Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme**Caroline Flint:**[\[215889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many households in each council tax band are in receipt of payments under the renewable heat incentive.

Amber Rudd:

The Department does not hold a breakdown of domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) participants by council tax band.

The Department does provide detailed information on domestic RHI accreditations as part of our monthly release of RHI statistics. These data are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/renewable-heat-incentive-renewable-heat-premium-payment-statistics>.

Caroline Flint:[\[215890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many households in each (a) parliamentary constituency and (b) local authority are in receipt of payments under the renewable heat incentive.

Amber Rudd:

The Department does not hold a breakdown of Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) accreditations by Parliamentary constituency.

The Department does report the number of domestic RHI accreditations (i.e. installations which have been accepted onto the scheme and are eligible to receive RHI payments) by local authority as part of our monthly release of Renewable Heat Incentive statistics.

These data are available in Table 2.10 at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rhi-and-rhpp-deployment-data-october-2014>.

Wind Power**Jonathan Reynolds:**[\[215973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what assessment he has made of the effect on small-scale wind turbine development of the removal of 15kw Fee-in-Tariff bracket in December 2012.

Matthew Hancock:

A comprehensive review of the feed-in tariff scheme (FITs) in 2012 introduced degression mechanisms for all technologies to prevent overcompensation and deliver value-for-money for energy bill payers. Following consultation, degression bands at the sub-100kW capacities were combined in an effort to support the deployment of small-scale turbines. A re-assessment of the FITs degression bands and tariff rates, as well as their effect on deployment, will form part of the next review of FITs in 2015.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Air Pollution**

Mr Andrew Smith: [\[215674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will publish a timetable for the preparation of an action plan to improve air quality.

Dan Rogerson:

As set out in Defra's business plan, we will be publishing revised Air Quality Action Plans by December 2015. These will set out actions at all levels, including national and local, to improve air quality.

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[216120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what change there has been in air quality in each UK city with a population in excess of 300,000 from 1994 to 2014.

Dan Rogerson:

Data is not readily available by city in the format requested. Defra publishes an annual report series, "Air Pollution in the UK", that details assessments made of pollutants against EU directives and UK legislation. The UK is split into 43 areas comprising 15 non-agglomeration zones (regions) and 28 agglomeration zones (urban areas).

Agglomeration zones correspond to urban centres above a population of 250,000.

The latest "Air Pollution in the UK report: 2013" is available to view at: http://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/annualreport/viewonline?year=2013_issue_1

Long term trends of emissions and measured values are presented. Tables are also presented showing the compliance status of each zone for each pollutant as well as the total number of zones in and out of compliance for each pollutant.

■ Blackpool

Paul Maynard: [\[215795\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which of her Department's capital investment programmes have involved expenditure in Blackpool North and Cleveleys constituency since 2010.

Dan Rogerson:

Since 2010, approximately £96.2 million of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant in aid funding has been spent in the Blackpool North and Cleveleys constituency, with a further £23.6 million currently committed to be spent by October 2015.

■ Electronic Government**Simon Kirby:**[\[215663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to ensure its services are available online; and if she will make a statement.

Dan Rogerson:

Defra is developing two of the twenty five Digital Exemplar programmes across Government. These are:

- The Common Agricultural Policy Delivery programme - a new digital service to implement the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in England.
- The Waste Carrier Registrations programme to replace the previous paper based system, making it quicker and easier for waste carrier businesses to register online. This is being delivered in two phases, with the first phase available to customers now. The proportion of registrations made using the digital service since December 2013 presently stands at 97.3%.

Many Defra services are already online, including Rod Licence Applications, the Cattle Tracing System, Animal Disease Alert Notifications and Farm Surveys. Defra is building up its Digital capability to ensure we can deliver more services on-line.

■ Floods: Insurance**Dr William McCrea:**[\[216138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to ensure that home insurance is offered to people living in flood risk areas.

Dan Rogerson:

Flood Re will protect those at risk of flooding by effectively limiting the amount that high risk households would need to pay on the flood insurance element of their household premiums. The limit on the premium will differ according to Council Tax band, rising for properties in higher bands.

Only 1-2% of households at highest risk of flooding will need to be considered for Flood Re. Others can continue to access cheaper flood insurance on the open market.

Insurers have agreed to continue to abide by their commitments in the Statement of Principles ensuring access to flood insurance until Flood Re is fully operational. Flood Re is on schedule to be established by July 2015.

Mr Dominic Raab:

[\[216158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when her Department plans to publish its response to the consultation it launched on 22 July 2014 regarding the secondary legislation for the flood reinsurance (Flood Re) scheme.

Dan Rogerson:

We are currently considering responses to the consultation, which closed on 16 September. We will publish our response shortly.

■ Floods: Lancashire

Rosie Cooper:

[\[216236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what funding her Department has allocated for implementing the Lancashire and Blackpool local flood risk management strategy; and whether any of that funding is ring-fenced for dredging in West Lancashire constituency.

Dan Rogerson:

For 2014-15 Blackpool Unitary Authority has received £23,000 and Lancashire County Council has received £316,000 from Defra to meet their responsibilities under the Flood and Water Management Act. Additional revenue funding is also provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government for the same purpose, through the local government finance settlement. The funding is not ring-fenced.

■ Fuels: Pollution Control

Toby Perkins:

[\[215680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, under what criteria products are granted exemption from the prohibition on smoky fuels in a controlled area.

Dan Rogerson:

Under Section 21 of the Clean Air Act 1993, the Secretary of State has the power to exempt fireplaces, such as stoves or solid fuel boilers, by order, for use in smoke control areas if they meet certain defined criteria. To obtain exemption, products must have passed a series of tests that demonstrate that they are capable of operating without producing smoke, or a substantial quantity of smoke. These tests assess whether products can comply with emission limits which are based on thresholds in British Standard BS PD 6434:1969 or in the Clean Air Act (Emission of Grit and Dust from Furnaces) Regulations (SI 1971/162), depending on the appliance size.

Toby Perkins:

[\[215681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent representations she has received about the burning of smoky fuels in residential properties.

Dan Rogerson:

During the last six months, the Secretary of State has received a number of representations about the burning of smoky fuels in residential properties.

These include questions about emissions of smoke from chimneys of residential properties within smoke control areas, statutory nuisance complaints about smoke odours and questions about the health impacts of smoke emissions.

■ Odour Pollution

Toby Perkins:

[[215679](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will bring forward proposals to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to enable local authorities to take action on nuisance odours in residential properties alongside industrial, trade or business premises.

Dan Rogerson:

Section 79(1)(c) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) already makes provision for local authorities to take action on fumes and gases emitted from residential premises that are prejudicial to health or a nuisance. This would include fumes and gases that are also odorous. Putrefying accumulations or deposits that are prejudicial to health or a nuisance can also be dealt with under section 79(1)(e) of the EPA. Odours from residential properties that result from reasonable, everyday activity, such as cooking, would not be considered a statutory nuisance.

■ Plastic Bags

Paul Flynn:

[[215978](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what guidance her Department plans to publish on the purpose to which proceeds of the single-use plastic bag charge can be put; and when that guidance will be published.

Dan Rogerson:

Regulatory guidance will be published once the legislation has been made. There is an expectation that the proceeds of the charge will be donated to good causes and retailers will be required to report centrally on proceeds. As the Climate Change Act 2008 does not include powers for the Government to provide directions concerning the use of the proceeds, neither the legislation nor the regulatory guidance will mandate a particular use of the proceeds.

■ Rivers: Hertfordshire

Sir Oliver Heald:

[[216087](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to improve the quality of the rivers Beane and Mimram; and if she will make a statement.

Dan Rogerson:

The Rivers Beane and Mimram suffer from low flows and poor water quality due to urban drainage and rural run-off.

The Environment Agency has been working with Affinity Water with the result that by 2018, abstraction from the River Mimram at Fulling Mill Pumping Station will stop, and abstraction from the River Beane at Whitehall Pumping Station will be cut by 90%.

The Environment Agency is also working with Thames Water to rectify misconnected drains that affect the River Beane and to improve maintenance on its tributary, the Stevenage Brook. The Environment Agency is also working with landowners on the River Mimram to resolve bank erosion and reduce field run-off.

Actions being taken should substantially improve the quality and habitats of these valuable chalk streams.

■ Rivers: Pollution Control

Sir Oliver Heald:

[\[216160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the findings of the WWF-UK report, The state of England's chalk streams, published in November 2014; and if she will make a statement.

Dan Rogerson:

The Government recognises the environmental and cultural importance of this rare river habitat. We will study the WWF's report and consider carefully any recommendations it contains.

Chalk rivers are well represented in both the national and European designated site network, which aims to protect sites of high conservation value. Action is underway on the majority of these sites to address pressures such as physical modification, effluent, diffuse pollution and abstraction.

A strategic programme of physical habitat restoration is underway on these rivers (including the 11 chalk river Sites of Special Scientific Interest that need restoration). Led jointly by Natural England and the Environment Agency, it involves a range of statutory and voluntary sector partners. Some 70 kilometres of chalk stream have been improved since 2011.

Defra has provided funding to support these activities. A new catchment based approach to support river basin management planning is strengthening local engagement and helping the Environment Agency to better understand and respond to pressures on the water environment.

Water companies are investing £3.4 billion between 2010 and 2015 to support the achievement of Water Framework Directive environmental objectives. This has contributed to substantial reductions in phosphate pollution, to which chalk streams are particularly sensitive, and additional investment is proposed to secure further improvements. Water companies are also engaged in research to overcome technical limitations on phosphorus reduction.

Changes have been made to 44 abstraction licences affecting chalk streams. The Water Act 2014 will enable the Environment Agency to make further progress in preventing

unsustainable abstraction. The Government is also putting in place a balanced package of measures to further tackle agricultural pollution

■ **Sustainable Development**

Maria Eagle:

[\[215631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which government departments were given advice by her Department in its role overseeing sustainable development across central government in (a) 2010-11, (b) 2011-12, (c) 2012-13 and (d) 2013-14.

Dan Rogerson:

Since 2010, Defra has advised the main Government departments listed below each year on embedding sustainable development into policy-making in relation to reporting on performance against the Greening Government Commitments, and on sustainable public procurement.

Since the Government's Vision for Sustainable Development was published in February 2011, Defra has continued to work with other Government departments to help mainstream sustainable development across Government. However, each department is responsible for making sure that its policies and other activities contribute to sustainable development:

Cabinet Office

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Department for Communities and Local Government

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Department for Education

Department for International Development

Department for Transport

Department for Work and Pensions

Department of Energy and Climate Change

Department of Health

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

Her Majesty's Treasury

Home Office

Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Justice

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Africa: Females

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[215394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help end the practice of breast-ironing in Western, Eastern and Central African countries.

James Duddridge:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 27 November 2014 by my right honourable Friend the member for New Forest West (Desmond Swayne MP), the Minister of State for International Development (PQ215395).

■ Bahrain

Mr David Amess: [\[215740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received on the arrest of Zainab Al-Khawaja in Bahrain; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I understand that Zainab Al-Khawaja was released on bail on 19 November. Her next court hearing will be on 9 December for charges under Bahrain's "lese majeste" law. The British Ambassador to Bahrain has raised the case at a senior level with the Government of Bahrain and emphasised the importance of ensuring that due legal process is respected and international norms of justice adhered to. I will continue to monitor the case closely.

Mr David Amess: [\[215741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received on the arrest and torture of 13 women in Bahrain for organising a public referendum; and what assessment he has made on the prevalence of the use of torture in Bahrain.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I am aware of the arrest of 15 women on 16 November on suspicion of disrupting the electoral process, belonging to an illegal group and calling for the overthrow of the government. I understand that all of them have now been released, but investigations into 12 individuals continue. The British Embassy in Bahrain will continue to monitor these cases.

The UK Government stands firmly against torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment. We remain concerned by continuing allegations of torture and mistreatment in Bahrain, and continue to urge the Government of Bahrain to investigate any such allegations promptly, thoroughly and impartially.

Mr David Amess:

[\[215742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he plans to take following the recent death of Hasan Al-Shaikh in Bahrain as a result of alleged police torture; and how the use of torture in Bahrain will change his policy towards that country.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The British Ambassador to Bahrain has publicly raised the UK's concern about the death of Hasan al-Shaikh at Bahrain's Reformation and Rehabilitation Centre. A Special Investigation Unit report led to six members of staff, including three high ranking officers, appearing before the High Criminal Court on 25 November to answer charges of assaulting and torturing four men, including Al Shaikh. All six defendants pleaded not guilty and the case was adjourned until 22 December. The UK Government stands firmly against torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment, and we continue to work closely with the Government of Bahrain to share best practice on torture prevention measures.

Mr David Amess:

[\[215783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the recent finding of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention that Tagi Al Maidan is being arbitrarily detained in Bahrain, if he will make representations to the government of that country seeking the release of Mr Al Maidan.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Last September, US citizen Taqi Al Maidan was sentenced to 10 years in prison after being convicted of unlawful assembly, intent to kill police officers, destruction of police vehicles, and possession of petrol bombs. The Embassy of the United States in Manama continues to offer consular services to Mr. Al-Maidan. The British Embassy in Bahrain will remain in contact with the Embassy of the United States on this case.

■ British Overseas Territories

John Hemming:

[\[215722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports or assessments have been commissioned on child protection proceedings in the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies since 1994; when each such report or assessment was commissioned; which jurisdiction was the subject of each such report or assessment; and what external agency was used in each case.

James Duddridge:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has supported the Overseas Territories (OTs) in developing capacity to manage and improve child safeguarding since 2005, through the joint commissioning of a number of reports and assessments:

- On 21 July 2014 the former FCO Minister for Overseas Territories, the Hon Member for Boston and Skegness (Mark Simmonds) announced to Parliament that the FCO would be establishing an independent Inquiry into child abuse allegations on St Helena.

On 20 November 2014, the Foreign Secretary announced to Parliament that Sasha Wass QC will be leading the inquiry.

- In March 2014: Northumbria Police investigation into observations of child safeguarding provisions and the effectiveness and efficiency of the St Helena Police force.
- A review of Policing in St Helena was undertaken by Simon Martin, Southern Ocean Law Enforcement Adviser 4-6 March 2013.
- In September 2013 the Lucy Faithfull foundation carried out a St Helena Child Safeguarding Review 2013. An executive summary was published at the time.
- In November 2012 Sussex Constabulary investigated complaints about police officers in an Ascension Island investigation.
- A primary investigation into the allegations raised in an anonymous letter received by the FCO on 7 November 2012 led by Lewis Evans, Immigration Executive Officer on Ascension and St Helena.
- There were three Pitcairn Child Safeguarding Reviews in 2009, 2011 and 2013, conducted by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation and independent Social Work experts from New Zealand.
- A Child Safety Review in the Falkland Islands by the Lucy Faithful Foundation in June 2013 with a report published in August 2013.
- The Lucy Faithful Foundation produced a preliminary report in 2014 on Montserrat.
- There have been the following DFID initiatives since 2005: The Safeguarding Children in the Overseas Territories (SCOT) programme (2009-2013), followed on from a Child Protection Programme (CPP, 2005-2008).
- In September 2014 a dedicated Child Safeguarding and Domestic Violence Policy Officer position was created within the Overseas Territories Directorate of the FCO to encourage compliance with best practice and support the Territories in establishing and improving existing measures that promote welfare and protect children from harm.

As self governing jurisdictions the Crown Dependencies have their own systems in place and responsibility for child safeguarding, as such there has been no reason for HMG to commission any reports.

You have asked for details of reports or assessments commissioned into child protection since 1994. The information requested is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Burma

Valerie Vaz:

[216011]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Burmese government about its Rakhine State Action Plan.

Mr Hugo Swire:

We welcome the Burmese Government's efforts to develop a comprehensive plan that seeks to address the complex and interrelated challenges in Rakhine. There are, however, some aspects of the Rakhine Action Plan which would, if implemented, undermine the prospects for peaceful co-existence and stability across the State. We have made our concerns on this clear to the Burmese government, most recently when I met with the Minister for Immigration and the Rakhine Chief Minister on 7 October.

Valerie Vaz:

[\[216060\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of political prisoners in Burmese prisons.

Mr Hugo Swire:

Estimates of the number of political prisoners in Burma vary. Organisations such as the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) (AAPPB) monitor the figures and provide regular status updates. Their latest from October, indicates that there are 75 political prisoners remaining in Burma, down from 2,073 in March 2011. Our Embassy in Rangoon remains in close contact with the AAPPB and other civil society networks to support their work. We continue to press for the unconditional release of all political prisoners in Burma.

Valerie Vaz:

[\[216157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Burmese government on its decision not to change the constitution of that country until after the general election in 2015.

Mr Hugo Swire:

Changing Burma's 2008 constitution to enshrine equal rights for all will be crucial for Burma's future stability. The UK is one of the leading international proponents of such change. Changes to many parts of the constitution are ultimately a matter for the people of Burma to decide directly by referendum. Ministers regularly raise the issue of constitutional change with their Burmese counterparts. The Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) discussed Burma's constitution with President Thein Sein when they met at the G20 Summit in Brisbane.

■ Central African Republic

David Simpson:

[\[215734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Government is taking to promote religious respect and the safety of Christians in the Central African Republic.

James Duddridge:

Addressing religious tensions in the Central African Republic (CAR) is an important part of supporting international efforts to protect the population from ongoing violence. The Inter-Religious platform in CAR is made up of Muslim and Christian leaders and has been at the forefront of peace-building and reconciliation efforts, engaging with

communities that have been directly affected by sectarian violence in CAR. We welcome their efforts to promote dialogue, and have called for similar actions from CAR's transitional government. As my hon friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Tobias Ellwood) said in Westminster Hall on 19 November, without justice, peace and reconciliation, there can be no future for the CAR.

■ Christianity

Mr Jeffrey M. Donaldson: [\[216225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his international counterparts at the UN about the persecution of Christians in other countries; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Lidington:

Freedom of religion or belief, including the right of Christians to profess their faith freely, is a key human rights priority for this Government. We work actively on it through the UN, encouraging all member states to implement in their own countries the commitments they have made in endorsing UN resolutions on this subject.

During the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York last week, UN Member States adopted resolutions on freedom of religion or belief and combating intolerance.

My right hon and noble Friend, the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Baroness Anelay of St. Johns has called upon all UN Member States to ensure that they translate these resolutions into practice and create a climate where no-one is persecuted or discriminated against on the grounds of their religion or belief.

The subject is also raised by means of country specific resolutions. One example is the UN Special Session on Iraq on 1 September when the UK requested a UN investigation into the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) abuses, which would include those directed at Christians, as well as Yazidis and other religious and ethnic minorities.

■ Electronic Government

Simon Kirby: [\[215664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure its services are available online; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Lidington:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is implementing its Digital Strategy which envisages providing its services digitally by default where possible. As envisaged in that strategy, the FCO has put in place a small Digital Transformation Unit with the necessary skills to drive that agenda. That Unit has put in place a prioritised plan for the transformation of the FCO's services and has thus far transformed Chevening Scholarship applications and begun the roll out of a new online booking service for Consular appointments.

■ North Korea

Fiona Bruce:

[215562]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment the Government has made of the effectiveness of radio broadcasts to North Korea as a means of engagement with ordinary North Koreans on issues such as human rights.

Mr Hugo Swire:

The best available source of information on access to media devices in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is a survey conducted by InterMedia as part of its 2012 report 'A Quiet Opening: North Koreans in a Changing Media Environment'.

http://audiencescapes.org/sites/default/files/A_Quiet_Opening_FINAL_InterMedia.pdf.

The report includes a section on the effectiveness of radio broadcasts which is best read in context and taking into account the authors' caveats about the report's findings. It is clear that, for those North Koreans willing and able to take the risk of listening, cross-border radio broadcasts can provide access to information that is otherwise not available within the DPRK. There are a number of radio stations that broadcast into the DPRK for this reason. Without further information, it is difficult to quantify the effectiveness of these stations.

■ South Sudan

Mr Henry Bellingham:

[215696]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assistance the UK has provided to Intergovernmental Authority on Development monitoring and verification teams in South Sudan to ensure that they enjoy freedom of movement in that country.

James Duddridge:

The UK led efforts to secure a UN-mandated protection force to support the Intergovernmental Authority on Development's (IGAD) Monitoring and Verification Teams' safe operation across South Sudan. In addition, we have committed £1.2 million of support to IGAD for the Monitoring and Verification Teams' work, including assistance with logistical and transport capacity. As I did with the South Sudanese Foreign Minister, Dr Barnaba Benjamin, during the UN General Assembly in New York in September, we continue to stress to all sides that obstructing the work of the Monitoring and Verification Teams constitutes a violation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

■ Thalidomide

Steve Baker:

[215770]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the German government on securing funding for British victims of thalidomide.

Mr David Lidington:

The British Government has made representations to the German Government on behalf of the Thalidomide Trust aimed at securing a meeting between the Trust and the relevant German authorities.

HEALTH

■ Bladder Cancer

Luciana Berger: [\[216172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to make available alternative forms of bladder cancer treatment for patients who are affected by the shortage of the BCG vaccine.

Luciana Berger: [\[216173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of patients whose treatment for bladder cancer will be affected by the shortage of the BCG vaccine; and what information has been provided to those patients.

Luciana Berger: [\[216174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether any patients currently receiving BCG treatment for bladder cancer have had their treatment suspended because of a shortage of vaccine supplies.

George Freeman:

The Department does not hold information on the number of patients whose treatment for bladder cancer will be affected or whether patients currently receiving Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) treatment for bladder cancer have had their treatment suspended because of BCG bladder instillations supplies

We are monitoring the situation closely to help ensure that everything possible is being done to make supplies available for United Kingdom patients. We are also in close contact with the British Association of Urological Surgeons who have issued advice for clinicians and patients.

■ Cancer

Mr John Baron: [\[215684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what information (a) his Department and (b) NHS England holds on the cancer survival rate of people aged over 75; how this information is being used to improve cancer survival rates of such people; what assessment his Department has made of the quality of this information; and what steps his Department is taking to improve the quality of this information.

Jane Ellison:

Public Health England's National Cancer Intelligence Network published the report 'Cancer survival in England by stage' in July 2014:

http://www.ncin.org.uk/publications/survival_by_stage

This included age-specific relative survival rates by cancer stage for breast, colorectal, lung, ovarian and prostate, for cases diagnosed in 2012. In all cancer types and for both sexes the older age groups have lower survival, this being especially evident for the oldest age groups. The difference in the all-stage relative survival between those aged 80-89 years and those aged 90-99 is statistically significant in all cancer types examined for both sexes, i.e. the oldest of the older age group have worse outcomes. Detailed survival data by age were included in the spreadsheets accompanying the report.

In addition, the Health and Social Care Information Centre publishes information on its Indicator Portal, showing breakdowns of the NHS Outcomes Framework survival indicators (see indicators 1.4i and 1.4ii):

<https://indicators.ic.nhs.uk/webview/>

The NHS England Five Year Forward View acknowledges that cancer survival is below the European average, especially for people aged over 75, and especially when measured at one year after diagnosis compared with five years. The Five Year Forward View ambitions for cancer include faster diagnosis, particularly: reducing emergency presentations; supporting people to visit their general practitioner (GP) at the first sign of something suspicious; supporting GPs with greater access to diagnostic and specialist advice; and expanding access to cancer screening programmes. NHS England believe that, if they are able to deliver the vision set out in the Five Year Forward View at sufficient pace and scale, over the next five years the NHS can deliver a 10% increase in those patients diagnosed early, equivalent to about 8,000 more patients living longer than five years after diagnosis.

We are not aware of any concerns about the quality of this information.

■ Cancer: Drugs

Mr John Baron:

[215686]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he and Ministers in his Department have had with NHS England about the implications for re-evaluating the Cancer Drugs Fund list on breast cancer patients; what the content of those discussions was; and if he will make a statement.

George Freeman:

Ministers have had no such discussions. Departmental officials have had discussions with NHS England regarding the changes NHS England has made to the standard operating procedures for the Cancer Drugs Fund. These discussions have not focussed on the potential impact of these changes on drugs available for specific types of cancer.

NHS England has assured the Department that no patient whose treatment is currently being funded through the Fund will have funding withdrawn, as long as it is clinically appropriate that they continue to receive that treatment. In addition, no drug will be removed from the Fund where it was the only therapy for that condition and doctors will be able to apply for particular drugs by exception.

Mr John Baron: [\[215687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans NHS England has to consult (a) charities and (b) patients during the two month notice period for de-prioritisation of drugs from the Cancer Drugs Fund list.

Pauline Latham: [\[215694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans NHS England has to consult (a) charities and (b) patients after the Cancer Drugs Fund panel meets on 15 and 16 December 2014 and before decisions on which drugs remain on the Cancer Drugs Fund list are made public.

George Freeman:

NHS England's Cancer Drugs Fund panel plans to meet on 15 and 16 December to assess, on the basis of the latest evidence, whether certain drugs should continue to be made routinely available through the Fund and to consider a number of new drugs for potential addition to the Fund.

NHS England has advised that a meeting will be held with representatives of charities and patient groups on 12 January 2015 to communicate the outcome of the panel's discussion, clarify the process by which decisions were made and the rationale for these.

This meeting will form part of the two month notice period prior to any drugs being formally removed from the national Cancer Drugs Fund list.

Eric Ollerenshaw: [\[215751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will direct the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to amend its drug approval system to ensure (a) more cancer drugs and (b) more drugs for cancers of unmet need pass its appraisal process.

George Freeman:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) plays a vital role in ensuring that National Health Service resources deliver the maximum benefit to patients and it has helped to secure access to clinically and cost effective drugs and treatments for many thousands of patients, including those with cancer. NICE is an independent body and is responsible for the development of its methods and processes.

The Government has announced an external review of the pathways for the development, assessment and adoption of innovative medicines and medical technologies. This review will consider how to speed up access for NHS patients to cost-effective new diagnostics, medicines and devices.

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[215781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to his Department's press release dated 28 August 2014, entitled Thousands more patients to benefit from additional £160 million for cancer drugs, whether the funding referred to (a) is new funding for medicines or (b) has been diverted from the purchase of other medicines.

George Freeman:

The additional £160 million that we announced on 28 August 2014 represents an increase to the budget of the Cancer Drugs Fund from £200 million to £280 million per

year. This increase has come from reprioritisation within the existing National Health Service budget for England.

■ Clinical Commissioning Groups

Rosie Cooper: [\[216131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that (a) clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) do not inherit budget deficits when taking responsibility for commissioning or co-commissioning specialised services and (b) existing health services commissioned by clinical commissioning groups are not adversely affected by the additional specialised services responsibilities of CCGs.

Rosie Cooper: [\[216233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether additional funding for running costs is provided to clinical commissioning groups given additional responsibilities for the commissioning or co-commissioning of specialised services.

Jane Ellison:

NHS England is responsible for the commissioning of specialised services. It is for Ministers to decide, with independent advice, the conditions that should be on the specialised commissioning list.

During 2015-16 there will be monitoring of all specialised commissioning expenditure against nominal clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) budgets. This information will enable both NHS England commissioners and CCG commissioners to better understand the financial position and any pressures on all specialised services. NHS England will also be engaging with CCGs through co-commissioning to carry out work to redesign pathways and invest in upstream interventions. In this context there will be no additional funding for CCG running costs for 2015-16 but this may be revisited in 2016-17.

For services that have been recommended for transfer, a new Task and Finish group is being established by NHS England through the NHS Commissioning Assembly. This group will look specifically at what support CCGs would require to be able to safely and effectively commission services devolved to them.

NHS England is committed to issuing commissioning guidance for the safe transfer of services from national NHS England responsibility to local CCG responsibility.

■ Dementia

Rehman Chishti: [\[216124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of adults in (a) Gillingham and Rainham constituency, (b) Medway and (c) England has been diagnosed with dementia in each of the last 10 years.

Norman Lamb:

Information on the number of people with dementia has been collected since 2006-07. Information is collected at National Health Service organisation level, and not constituency level. Data on the number of people with dementia in England, Medway

Primary Care Trust, and the Clinical Commissioning Groups that replaced it, are shown in the following table.

Number of patients on the Quality and Outcomes Framework dementia register and the raw prevalence rate for Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and previously Medway Primary Care Trust (PCT).

MEDWAY	NUMBER OF PRACTICES	TOTAL LIST SIZE	DEMENTIA REGISTER COUNTS	DEMENTIA PREVALENCE RATE
Medway CCG				
31 March 2014	57	290,818	1,377	0.47%
31 March 2013	57	284,552	1,332	0.47%
Medway PCT				
31 March 2012	60	281,126	1,274	0.45%
31 March 2011	61	282,378	1,093	0.39%
31 March 2010	66	281,829	1,020	0.36%
31 March 2009	63	275,295	946	0.34%
31 March 2008	67	277,800	825	0.30%
31 March 2007	67	276,354	777	0.28%

Number of patients on the Quality and Outcomes Framework dementia register and the raw prevalence rate for England.

ENGLAND	NUMBER OF PRACTICES	TOTAL LIST SIZE	DEMENTIA REGISTER COUNTS	DEMENTIA PREVALENCE RATE
31 March 2014	7,921	56,324,887	348,973	0.62%
31 March 2013	8,020	56,012,096	318,669	0.57%
31 March 2012	8,123	55,525,732	293,738	0.53%
31 March 2011	8,245	55,169,643	266,697	0.48%
31 March 2010	8,305	54,836,561	249,463	0.45%

ENGLAND	NUMBER OF PRACTICES	TOTAL LIST SIZE	DEMENTIA REGISTER COUNTS	DEMENTIA PREVALENCE RATE
31 March 2009	8,229	54,310,660	232,430	0.43%
31 March 2008	8,294	54,009,831	220,246	0.41%
31 March 2007	8,372	53,681,098	212,794	0.40%

■ Drugs: Licensing

Sammy Wilson:

[\[215692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the contribution of 7 November 2014 by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, Official Report, column 116, what the evidential basis is for the statement that the restraining factor is the lack of information for clinicians about off-label use.

George Freeman:

We know that new research evidence is being made available in healthcare all the time and that translating this into practice poses a number of challenges. We need to support clinicians in incorporating the most up to date and robust evidence into patient care and are in the process of setting up a round-table discussion with key stakeholders to look at how we can do that better in the case of off-label use of out-of-patent drugs.

■ General Practitioners

Luciana Berger:

[\[216028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will provide incentives to GPs to (a) promote keeping people in work and (b) help patients return to work after illness.

Jane Ellison:

In 2010 the 'fit note' replaced the 'sick note' to better support people to return to work when they can. It allows general practitioners (GPs) to give more information to patients about the functional effects of their health condition on their fitness for work and improve the likelihood of their patient keeping their job by discussing ways they could be supported at work with their employer.

Fit for Work will help support employees to stay in work, and help get them back to work after a period of sickness absence lasting, or likely to last four weeks. There are no current plans to provide incentives to GPs in relation to this programme.

Luciana Berger:

[\[216134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what (a) proportion and (b) number of GPs has completed the National Education Programme on Health at Work organised by the Royal College of GPs.

Jane Ellison:

A total of 2,865 general practitioners (GPs) attended the National Education Programme on Health at Work workshops that were run between July 2009 and March 2011. This is about 8% of the roughly 35,000 registered GPs at that time.

■ **General Practitioners: Buntingford**

Sir Oliver Heald:

[\[216027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans NHS England has to ensure GP services in Buntingford expand in line with the increases in population as a result of new and proposed housing developments.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

We are advised that NHS England is working closely with East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, existing Buntingford general practitioner practices and East Hertfordshire District Council on this issue. The demands that planned housing development will place on local services are understood, and a range of options continues to be explored, including relocation of existing services to larger facilities and new primary care services.

■ **In Vitro Fertilisation**

Toby Perkins:

[\[215676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the feasibility of transposition of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Quality Standard on Fertility into a Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) outcome indicator as a means of encouraging adherence to NICE's recommendation that all CCGs should fund three full cycles of IVF for eligible couples.

Jane Ellison:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is responsible for making recommendations to NHS England on potential indicators for inclusion in the Clinical Commissioning Group Outcomes Indicator Set (CCG OIS) based on its published quality standards. NICE's processes for developing potential indicators, based on its quality standards, include consideration by an independent advisory committee and public consultation. Assessment of the feasibility of turning this quality standard into an indicator would therefore rest with NICE. Indicators recommended by the NICE advisory committee are then considered by NHS England for inclusion in the CCG OIS.

The Department and NHS England expects all those involved in commissioning infertility treatment services to be fully aware of the importance of having regard to the NICE fertility guidelines.

■ Influenza: Vaccination

Luciana Berger:

[215772]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to his Department's publication, Flu Plan Winter 2014, published in April 2014-15, if he will introduce free flu vaccinations to people with learning disabilities on the same terms as for other clinical risk groups.

Jane Ellison:

Many people with learning disabilities are already eligible for free flu vaccination because they fall into the eligibility group of those with 'chronic neurological disease'.

The Flu Plan: Winter 2014/15 asks that general practitioner practices and other providers prioritise the improvement of vaccine uptake in those with chronic liver disease and neurological disease, including those with learning disabilities. This is because these groups are at the highest risk of mortality from flu but have the lowest rates of vaccine uptake. As well as the Flu Plan: Winter 2014/15, this was also stated in the Annual Flu Letter which was issued on 28 April 2014. A copy of the Annual Flu Letter is attached.

Attachments:

1. The Annual Flu Letter 2014 [Annual Flu Letter.pdf]

Luciana Berger:

[215773]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to encourage the uptake of the flu vaccine among people with learning disabilities.

Jane Ellison:

The 2014-15 Winter Flu plan, and the tripartite Annual Flu letter of 28 April 2014 which accompanied it, stated that those with learning disabilities are eligible for free flu vaccination.

NHS England has recognised that uptake of flu immunisation amongst people with learning disabilities needs improvement. As a consequence, NHS England has clarified with general practitioners that all people with learning disabilities are eligible for a free flu immunisation. This information has been shared with practices, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Area Teams.

NHS England commissioners have been asked to contact social care providers and Special Schools to emphasise that people with learning disabilities are entitled to a free flu immunisation. In support of this, template letters for schools and social care providers have been developed and made available.

■ Members: Correspondence

Mr Ben Bradshaw:

[216013]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he expects to reply to the letter of 31 October 2014 from the right hon. Member for Exeter about the NHS in Devon.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Earl Howe) replied to the Rt. hon. Member's letter of 31 October 2014 on 26 November 2014.

■ Mental Health Services

David Simpson: [\[215745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to reduce NHS waiting lists for psychological treatments and reduce the number of patients who commit suicide while on such lists.

Norman Lamb:

Our 2014-15 Mandate set a target for NHS England to ensure “everyone who needs it has timely access to evidence-based services.”

More people than ever before are getting talking therapies thanks to our £400 million investment. Nationally, 62% of people referred for talking therapies are treated within 28 days.

The new five-year plan for mental health, Achieving Better Access to Mental Health Services by 2020, sets out our ambition and the immediate actions we will take this year and next to achieve better access and waiting times in mental health services. From 2015-16 we will deliver further improvements in access rates.

We have identified £40 million additional spending to kick start change in the current year.

We have freed up a further £80 million from existing budgets for 2015-16. This will, for the first time ever, enable the setting of access and waiting time standards in mental health services; including a standard of a maximum wait of six weeks before starting psychological therapy under the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme. 75% of people must start within this time. As a back-stop 95% must start treatment within 18 weeks.

Our suicide prevention strategy continues to help us sustain, and reduce further, the relatively low rates of suicide in England.

Rehman Chishti: [\[216123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average waiting time is for talking therapies in (a) Gillingham and Rainham constituency, (b) Medway and (c) England.

Norman Lamb:

Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) commissions the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service for Medway and the constituency of Gillingham and Rainham.

The following table shows the mean and median waiting time for IAPT services across the Medway (CCG) and England.

	MEAN WAITING TIME (DAYS)	MEDIAN WAITING TIME (DAYS)
England	39.5	21
NHS Medway CCG	29.0	19

Note: Medians have been rounded up to the nearest whole number.

Data source: Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) Dataset

Achieving Better Access to Mental Health Services by 2020 sets out action the Government is taking to provide better access to mental health services within the next year, including a national waiting time standard for talking therapies.

£40 m in additional funding has been identified to enable change in the current financial year, and a further £80 million will be freed up for 2015-16 to support implementation of waiting times in mental health services.

■ Mental Health Services: Ethnic Groups

Luciana Berger:

[215774]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans his Department has to tackle inequalities in access to mental health services in the BAME community.

Norman Lamb:

This Government is committed to tackling inequalities in access to mental health services. This commitment is set out in our mental health action plan *Closing the Gap*, as one of 25 key priorities for change in mental health, published in January this year.

The 2014-15 mandate to NHS England makes clear that everyone should have timely access to the mental health services they need.

Closing the Gap recognises that people from black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities are less likely to access psychological therapies and we are working with the sector to find out why this is and what we can do to change it.

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme is working with a number of BAME groups to promote wider access of the service to all sections of the community. A grant scheme will be shortly launched to encourage community-based interventions to increase uptake of talking therapies, including from BAME groups.

In 2012-13 Time to Change, funded by the Department ran a mental health anti-stigma and discrimination programme focused on working with African and Caribbean communities, ring-fencing 25% of the grants fund for work with BAME communities, and to build partnerships with BAME organisations.

The Crisis Care Concordat, launched in February 2014, details how we plan to improve emergency support for people in mental health crisis across the country. It is part of a

far-reaching new agreement between police, mental health trusts and paramedics. The Concordat acknowledges that there are particular difficulties to achieving better mental health outcomes for people in BAME communities.

■ **Mental Health Services: Warrington**

Helen Jones: [\[216041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average waiting time is for an appointment with child and adolescent mental health services in Warrington; and how many people referred have been waiting for treatment (a) more than three months and (b) more than six months.

Norman Lamb:

The information requested is not collected.

■ **NHS: Pay**

Sir Peter Luff: [\[215693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of NHS staff will receive a one per cent or higher pay award through non-consolidated increases or incremental pay awards this year.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

All National Health Service staff who meet local performance standards will receive 1% or more pay through non-consolidated increases or incremental pay this year.

Just over 50% of staff are eligible for incremental pay progression subject to satisfactory performance, which averages a 3% rise.

The just under 50% of NHS staff who are at the top of their pay bands and therefore not eligible for incremental progression received an additional non-consolidated payment this year equal to 1% of basic pay.

■ **NHS: Research**

Nic Dakin: [\[215632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to support the Health Research Agency in its efforts to harmonise and streamline the regulation and governance of research in the NHS.

George Freeman:

The Government remains committed to streamlining research approvals, and the Health Research Authority (HRA) is the organisation created to deliver this.

The Government is providing an increased investment of over £4.5 million to enable the HRA to take forward the first year of plans for a three year programme to deliver 'HRA approval'. This is a key step in delivering the Plan for Growth objective of creating a unified approval process for health research. This funding means that the HRA will be

able to reduce duplication and bureaucracy by incorporating assessments by National Health Service staff alongside the independent research ethics committee opinion, which will result in one application, one assessment and one approval for research in the NHS in England.

The HRA will be established as a non-departmental public body on 1 January 2015. This is intended to give it greater independence and stability with its role having been agreed by Parliament. The HRA will have a duty to issue guidance on good practice in research management and conduct and NHS trusts and foundation trusts will have a duty to have regard to that guidance. This will help make NHS research management more consistent and proportionate and streamline governance of research in the NHS.

■ Patients: Safety

Paul Uppal:

[\[215682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the rates of (a) pulmonary embolism, (b) blood-stream infection and (c) foreign body left in after procedure has been in England in each year since 2000.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) has provided data on (a) a count of finished admission episodes (FAEs) where there was a primary diagnosis of pulmonary embolism and the number of FAEs as a rate per 100,000 of the total number of FAEs and (b) a count of finished consultant episodes (FCEs) with a primary or secondary diagnosis of pulmonary embolism and the number of FCEs as a rate per 100,000 of the total number FCEs, for the years 2000-01 to 2012-13.

This is summarised in the following table:

YEAR	FAEs WITH PRIMARY DIAGNOSIS OF "PULMONARY EMBOLISM"		FCEs WITH PRIMARY OR SECONDARY DIAGNOSIS OF "PULMONARY EMBOLISM"	
		RATE PER 100,000 OF TOTAL FAEs		RATE PER 100,000 OF TOTAL FCEs
2000-01	15,179	136.5	32,937	268.6
2001-02	14,735	133.0	33,537	271.8
2002-03	15,536	136.6	37,093	291.8
2003-04	16,095	136.3	39,196	294.8
2004-05	15,621	129.1	40,059	292.3
2005-06	16,347	128.9	43,360	300.6
2006-07	16,629	128.1	46,685	315.8

YEAR	FAEs WITH PRIMARY DIAGNOSIS OF "PULMONARY EMBOLISM"	RATE PER 100,000 OF TOTAL FAEs	FCEs WITH PRIMARY OR SECONDARY DIAGNOSIS OF "PULMONARY EMBOLISM"	RATE PER 100,000 OF TOTAL FCEs
2007-08	16,948	125.7	49,114	319.8
2008-09	18,214	128.7	56,029	345.2
2009-10	19,763	135.9	62,367	371.1
2010-11	20,908	140.4	67,477	390.7
2011-12	21,525	143.3	70,466	403.5
2012-13	23,578	155.7	79,058	446.3

Public Health England (PHE) collects data on blood stream infections caused by bacteria (bacteraemia) relating to specific organisms as part of its mandatory Healthcare Associated Infection surveillance programmes.

Microbiology laboratories in England, Wales and Northern Ireland also voluntarily submit data to PHE relating to episodes of bacteraemia and blood stream infections caused by fungi (fungaemia).

The data summarised in Tables 1-3, taken from PHE's mandatory surveillance programmes, represent bacteraemia cases reported in England resulting from: Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA); Methicillin-susceptible *Staphylococcus aureus* (MSSA) and *E.coli* where comparable data is available. Rates of all reported cases per 100,000 population are included, where available.

TABLE 1A: ALL REPORTED CASES OF MRSA BACTERAEMIA (APRIL 2007-MARCH 2014)

Financial year	April 2007 to March 2008	April 2008 to March 2009	April 2009 to March 2010	April 2010 to March 2011	April 2011 to March 2012	April 2012 to March 2013	April 2013 to March 2014
Count	4,451	2,935	1,898	1,481	1,116	924	862
Rate per 100,000 population			3.6	2.8	2.1	1.7	1.6

Note: Data is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mrsa-bacteraemia-annual-data>

TABLE 2: ALL REPORTED CASES OF MSSA BACTERAEMIA (APRIL 2011 - MARCH 2014)

Financial year	April 2011 to March 2012	April 2012 to March 2013	April 2013 to March 2014
Count	8,767	8,812	9,290
Rate per 100,000 population	16.5	16.5	17.4

Note: Data is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mssa-bacteraemia-annual-data>

TABLE 3: ALL REPORTED CASES OF E. COLI BACTERAEMIA (APRIL 2012-MARCH 2014)

Financial year	April 2012 to March 2013	April 2013 to March 2014
Count	32,309	34,275
Rate per 100,000 population	60.4	64.1

Note: Data is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/escherichia-coli-e-coli-bacteraemia-annual-data>

The data summarised in Table 4, taken from PHE's voluntary surveillance database, represents all voluntarily reported patient episodes involving either bacteraemia and/or fungaemia for the period of January 2008 to December 2012 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

TABLE 4: PATIENT EPISODES INVOLVING EITHER BACTERAEMIA AND/OR FUNGAEMIA 2008-2012, ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Calendar Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Count	95,931	94,190	92,867	94,166	95,647

Note: Data extracted from the Public Health England (PHE) voluntary surveillance database, LabBase2, on 3 December 2013.

Before 2009, information was not collated on foreign bodies retained after procedures (which is classed as a 'never event') and so we are unable to provide data for the period prior to 2009.

In 2009-10, there were nine retained foreign objects post procedure reported during this period.

In 2010-11, there were 67 retained foreign object never events reported to Strategic Executive Information System (STEIS) and 22 reported to the National Reporting and Learning Service (NRLS).

In 2011-12, there were 161 retained foreign object never events reported to STEIS and 86 reported to the NRLS in 2011-12.

In 2012-13, there were 130 retained foreign object never events reported to STEIS and 124 reported to the NRLS in 2012-13 (please note incidents are potentially reported to both systems but the exact degree of overlap of reported incidents during the period 2010-11 and 2011-12 is unclear).

Since April 2013 reports made to the NRLS and STEIS have been directly reconciled to provide a single total and provisional data published by NHS England shows 123 retained object never events were reported in 2013-14 and 44 in the six months to September 2014:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/patientsafety/never-events/ne-data/>

Methods for identifying and collating the data from two systems (NRLS and STEIS) have changed over the years, with specific reporting fields for Never events replacing keyword searches, and year-end attempts to reconcile events reported in both systems replaced with direct communication as and when incidents were reported. This is a further reason why events from the earlier years are not directly comparable. The numbers of Never Events reported for 2010-11 and 2011-12 were reported in Annex A of the 'The never events policy framework: An update to the never events policy'

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213046/never-events-policy-framework-update-to-policy.pdf

It should be noted that the updated policy expanded the list of never events from 8 to 25 in 2012 and the detail of definitions of retained foreign objects was also clarified in The never events list; 2013/14 update:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/nev-ev-list-1314-clar.pdf>.

Note numbers in different years are not directly comparable due to these definitional changes.

Paul Uppal: [215683]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many hospitals have been rated poor with regards to open and honest reporting of patient safety incidents in each month since May 2010.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

As at 28 November 2014, 91 trusts were recorded as poor (red) against the open and honest reporting indicator. Data prior to June 2014 is not available in this form.

Paul Uppal: [215725]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress he has made on implementing the recommendations of the Berwick report into Improving the Safety of Patients in England, published in August 2013.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Government has put in place a number of measures to support National Health Service organisations to respond positively to the Berwick Report '*Improving the Safety of Patients in England*' including greater transparency, openness and candour; ensuring safe staffing levels; creating a culture of learning and development with the establishment of 15 Patient Safety Collaboratives; and making patient safety a primary goal with a new ambition to halve avoidable harm and save 6,000 lives over the next three years, underpinned by the Sign up to Safety campaign.

■ Prescription Drugs**Andrew Griffiths:**[\[216045\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many prescriptions for (a) Pregabalin and (b) Gabapentin were issued in each English local authority in each of the last five years.

George Freeman:

The information requested is attached.

Prescribing information is not held at local authority level so primary care trust data is provided for 2010-11 to 2012-13 and clinical commissioning group data for 2013-14. It is not possible to provide the full five years requested as data is only held for the latest 60 months.

Attachments:

1. Prescriptions issued for Pregabalin & Gabapentin [Issued prescriptions for Pregabalin and Gabapentin 2010-11 and 2012-13.xlsx]

■ Royston Hospital**Sir Oliver Heald:**[\[216044\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent representations he has received on the redevelopment of Royston Hospital; and if he will make a statement.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Department has received no recent representations on the redevelopment of Royston Hospital.

We are advised that NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is working closely with NHS Property Services and Hertfordshire County Council to develop options for the Royston Hospital site. The CCG will continue to work with all parts of the local community to review these options and find the right solution for the longer-term future of the site, which is affordable for the CCG and its partners.

■ Thalidomide**Sandra Osborne:**[\[215750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent representations he has made to his German counterpart on thalidomide damage in the UK.

Norman Lamb:

I met with the Thalidomide Trust on 23 June 2014 and subsequently wrote to Manuela Schwesig, Federal Minister of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, on behalf of all four UK Governments, asking if she would meet with the Trust.

■ **Tuberculosis: Vaccination**

Luciana Berger: [\[216171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the shortage of the BCG vaccine on the incidence of tuberculosis (a) worldwide and (b) in the UK.

Jane Ellison:

Bacillus Calmette–Guérin (BCG) vaccine for the prevention of tuberculosis (TB) is procured centrally and supplied to the National Health Service on a national basis. There is no shortage of BCG vaccine in the United Kingdom at the current time.

BCG vaccine remains an important intervention to control TB in uninfected children globally. A scarcity of BCG vaccine would increase the risk of infections in children in high burden settings, and every effort should be made to ensure continued supply.

■ **Video Games: Young People**

David Simpson: [\[215743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what research his Department has conducted on links between aggressive teenage behaviour and the use of violent video games.

George Freeman:

The Department has not conducted or commissioned research specifically on this topic.

The Department's National Institute for Health Research welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including relationships between health issues and the use of video games. These applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

■ **Waste Disposal: Health Hazards**

Rosie Cooper: [\[216132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will request that the Health Protection Agency undertakes an assessment of the effects on public health of modern hazardous waste sites and the materials put to landfill in those sites.

Jane Ellison:

The former Health Protection Agency (HPA) became part of Public Health England (PHE) in April 2013.

In 2011, the HPA published a review of the 'Impact on Health of Emissions from Landfill Sites', which included landfills for hazardous waste. The review considered research from the Environment Agency, peer reviewed epidemiological studies and statements from the independent expert committee, the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer products and the Environment.

The review concluded that there has been no new evidence to change the previous advice that living close to a well-managed landfill site does not pose a significant risk to human health. As noted in the review, detailed site-specific risk assessment should remain an important part of the permitting and management process. PHE is consulted by the Environment Agency when they receive permit applications and variations for landfill sites, to ensure that public health is protected.

HOME OFFICE

■ Antisemitism

Guto Bebb:

[\[215618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of changes in the number of anti-Semitic incidents in the UK; and if she will make a statement.

Lynne Featherstone:

The UK Government takes all forms of hate crime very seriously. We deplore all religious and racially-motivated attacks. Between 2012-13 and 2013-14 police-recorded race hate crime increased by 4% (an increase of 1,595 offences) and religious hate crime by 45% (an increase of 700 offences) in England and Wales. The increase in recorded hate crime shows that more victims are coming forward and that the police are improving the way they identify hate crimes, and we welcome this.

The Community Security Trust monitors levels of antisemitism. Their most recent report, published at the end of July covering the period of January to June 2014, highlighted that there had been a 36% increase in the number of antisemitic incidents recorded compared to the same period in 2013 (307 incidents in 2014, compared to 223 in 2013). Following this, they recorded 314 antisemitic incidents in July, and 229 in August, making the combined total for those two months higher than the total for the whole of 2013.

When these events occur it is vital that the police take action to engage effectively with communities. Police forces in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland have recently been issued with new guidance for dealing with hate crimes, which includes advice on dealing with incidents and how to monitor and deal with community tensions.

We have also established a working group to tackle antisemitism which brings together community representatives and experts from across government to help explore issues affecting these communities.

■ Asylum

Philip Davies: [\[214949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many illegal immigrants from what countries of origin were granted asylum in each year since 2010; what the nature of their illegal status was before they were granted asylum; for what reason they were granted asylum; whether they entered the UK illegally; whether their cases involved a claim under the Human Rights Act 1998; and if she will make a statement.

James Brokenshire:

The following table outlines the data requested. Unfortunately, it is not possible to provide information regarding the reasons that an individual has been granted asylum, nor is it possible to provide the number of claims that include a claim made under the Human Rights Act 1998. Information on this is not centrally recorded, and the information requested in my Hon. Friends question could only be obtained through a manual search of individual case files. This would only be achievable at a disproportionate cost.

The data included in the table solely relates to the number of main claimants who claimed asylum and received a decision between 1st October 2006 and 31st December 2013 and have been granted asylum at the first case outcome. In line with our data protection principles, data sets with a cohort of fewer than 10 people have been replaced with a *. Illegal Immigrant has been interpreted as referring to those who have been identified as being an illegal entrant or an overstayer.

Attachments:

1. Main claimants who claimed asylum [214949 - Data Table -v3.doc]

■ Asylum: Afghanistan

Charlotte Leslie: [\[214513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many of the Afghan asylum seekers found in a shipping container at Tilbury Docks in August 2014 have (a) been granted asylum, (b) been refused asylum but remain in the UK and (c) been refused asylum and removed from the UK.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 20 November 2014]: Following the tragic incident at Tilbury, 34 individuals have claimed asylum and their cases are currently being considered. The UK has a proud history of granting asylum to those who need our protection and every claim will be considered on its individual merits.

■ Counter-terrorism

Diana Johnson: [\[215988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much funding that was previously allocated to the Prevent agenda is now allocated to integration projects.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 28 November 2014]: The 2011 Prevent Strategy separated Prevent and integration work. As a result the Department for Communities and Local Government leads the Government's integration strategy but no longer receives funding from the Home Office. It is therefore misleading to draw comparisons between Prevent funding figures before and after 2011.

Andrew Griffiths:

[\[216033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which community and voluntary sector organisations are engaged with the Channel deradicalisation programme.

James Brokenshire:

The sensitive nature of the programme means that organisations engaged with it do so in confidence. Therefore we do not release the requested details to protect the integrity and effectiveness of the programme.

■ Departmental Responsibilities

Diana Johnson:

[\[216248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on how many days between 7 October 2013 and 3 November 2014 (a) she, (b) the Minister for Crime Prevention, (c) the Minister for Immigration and Security, (d) the Minister for Policing, (e) the Minister for Organised Crime and (f) the hon. Member for Forest of Dean attended meetings (i) in her Department, (ii) attended visits in their ministerial capacity and (iii) had contact with their Private Office outside of her Department.

Karen Bradley:

Home Office Ministers have regular meetings with Ministerial colleagues and others as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

■ Entry Clearances: Australasia

Bob Stewart:

[\[215446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will amend visa regulations affecting citizens of Australia and New Zealand to allow them to stay in the UK.

James Brokenshire:

On 17 November we expanded our Registered Traveller (RT) scheme: Australians and New Zealanders being two of only five nationalities who may join the scheme. The scheme gives regular travellers to the UK who meet the qualifying criteria use of our ePassport gates or the EEA/RT lanes at Heathrow and Gatwick. We estimate that up to 75,000 Australians and 18,000 New Zealanders could now be eligible to join RT, expediting their clearance through the UK border. More details about RT can be found on <https://www.gov.uk/registered-traveller>

There are a wide range of opportunities available to citizens of Australia and New Zealand to stay in the UK. We currently have no plans to change the Immigration Rules beyond these.

■ Entry Clearances: Iraq

Mr David Jones:

[215153]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress her Department has made on issuing visas to the 17 residents of Camp Liberty, Iraq, whose admission to the UK has been agreed in principle by the Government.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 24 November 2014]: It has not been possible to make further progress on issuing visas until arrangements have been made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to transfer a large number of Camp Liberty residents out of Iraq to Albania. It is understood from the London office of the UNHCR that the move of some 240 Camp residents, including the 17 we have already agreed in principle to re-admit to the United Kingdom, was completed on 24 November.

■ Foreign Workers

Rosie Cooper:

[216234]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what process is in place for triggering a review of the Shortage Occupation List insofar as it relates to the overhead line worker sector.

James Brokenshire:

The Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) reviews the Shortage Occupation List when commissioned to do so by the Government. Such commissions are made approximately every two years.

As stated in previous written answers (213992/213993 and 214206, 17 November), the MAC is currently carrying out a review relating to this sector. It has issued a public call for evidence which closes on 5 December. Details can be found on the gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/migration-advisory-committee-mac-review-of-shortage-occupation-lists>

Rosie Cooper:

[216235]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the reasons were for the voltage restriction placed on the overhead lineworkers category on the Shortage Occupation List by the Migration Advisory Committee in its review published in February 2013; what organisations gave evidence on the restriction of the category to high voltage workers; and what organisations were invited to give evidence on that restriction.

James Brokenshire:

The Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) did not reconsider the skill level of linesworkers in its February 2013 report. As the report explains, the review of

linesworkers was limited to reviewing the inclusion of the job on the Shortage Occupation List, based on the MAC's "shortage" and "sensible" criteria only.

The MAC last considered the skill level, which led to only high voltage linesworkers being included on the Shortage Occupation List, on pages 28-29 of its March 2011 report, which can be read on the gov.uk website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-uk-shortage-occupation-list-for-tier-2>.

The Government expects the MAC to review the skill level of linesworkers on high and low voltage lines as part of its current review.

■ Homophobia

Ms Diane Abbott: [215547]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce homophobic hate crime; and if she will make a statement.

Ms Diane Abbott: [215549]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of homophobic hate crime have been recorded by the Metropolitan Police in (a) Greater London, (b) the London Borough of Hackney and (c) England since 2004.

Lynne Featherstone:

All forms of hate crime are deplorable and it is important that victims are protected and have the confidence to come forward. In May, we published our refreshed cross-Government hate crime action plan—Challenge it, Report it, Stop it, setting out the progress we have made and further steps we will take to address the issue. The government is driving forward work to tackle homophobic hostility and hate crime. We have toughened up sentencing and are working closely with the police and other agencies to increase reporting, improve support and prevent these terrible crimes happening in the first place.

As part of the government's action plan to tackle homophobia, we are working alongside the Equality and Human Rights Commission on a project to improve the reporting and criminal justice outcomes of victims of hate crime from lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities.

The Home Office does not hold information specifically on homophobic crimes – we have information on hate crimes based on sexual orientation but cannot break this down – it may also include crimes against heterosexuals (and perceived heterosexuals). The Home Office only receives recorded hate crime data at the police force area level and only holds data for the last three years. This data can be found in the table below.

A breakdown of statistics by force area can be found at the following links: 2011/12 data in Table 2.01

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/265928/hate-crime-2013-apptabs.xls 2012/13 and 2013/14 data in Tables 1.01 and 1.02 respectively

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364201/hosb0214-tabs.ods

Attachments:

1. Hate crimes [215547.stats.xls]

■ **Immigrants: Detainees**

Sarah Teather: [\[214974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much compensation her Department has paid for unlawfully detaining individuals under immigration powers in each of the last five years.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 21 November 2014]: The amounts paid by the Home Office in compensation following claims for unlawful detention were as follows:

2011-12 £4.5 million 2012-13 £5.0 million 2013-14 £4.8 million

It is not possible to provide similar information for earlier periods, as data are not held in the appropriate format and to extract them would incur disproportionate cost.

■ **Knives: Greater London**

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[215344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of knife crime were recorded by the Metropolitan Police in (a) Greater London and (b) Lambeth in each year from 2005 to date.

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[215345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of gun crime were recorded by the Metropolitan Police in (a) Greater London and (b) Lambeth in each year from 2005 to date.

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[215346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how her Department defines gang related incidents when recording incidences; how many incidents of gang related crime were recorded by the Metropolitan Police in (a) Greater London and (b) Lambeth in each year from 2005 to 2014.

Lynne Featherstone:

The number of offences recorded by the Metropolitan Police involving knives and firearms are shown in Tables A and B respectively. The figures are not available below police force area.

The number of offences involving knives has been collected by the Home Office since 2008/09.

The number of selected offences involving a knife or sharp instrument recorded by the Metropolitan police has fallen by 20% between 2008/09 and the year ending June

2014. The number of offences involving firearms recorded by the Metropolitan police has fallen by 60% between 2005/06 and the year ending June 2014.

The Home Office has not issued any definition of gang-related crime for the purposes of recording such crime by local police forces. The Home Office does not collect data on number of gang related crimes recorded by the police.

Attachments:

1. Number of offences involving knives & firearms [PQs 215345- 215346 - table.xls]

■ **Offences against Children**

Philip Davies:

[\[214825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) men and (b) women were (i) arrested, (ii) charged and (iii) cautioned for sexual activity with a child in each of the last five years.

Lynne Featherstone:

Data on arrests and resultant charges for sexual activity with a child are not held centrally by the Home Office.

Data on cautions for sexual activity with a child, supplied by the Ministry of Justice, are given in the table.

NUMBER OF MALES AND FEMALES CAUTIONED FOR SEXUAL ACTIVITY

with a child aged under 16, England and Wales, 2009-2013

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Males	343	382	420	431	341
females	16	14	12	18	17
Total	359	396	432	449	358

Source: Ministry of Justice

Mr Andrew Turner:

[\[215152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people under the age of 16 in each county were victims of sexual offences in the last year for which figures are available.

Lynne Featherstone:

[Holding answer 24 November 2014]: The police recorded crime data that the Home Office receives from the police forces of England and Wales relate only to how many crimes are recorded and not how many reports are received or how many people were

victims. It is only possible to centrally provide figures for certain sexual offences that identify the age of the victim in statute, namely:

- Rape of a female child under 16
- Rape of a female child under 13
- Rape of a male child under 16
- Rape of a male child under 13
- Sexual assault on a female child under 13
- Sexual assault on a male child under 13
- Sexual activity involving a child under 13
- Sexual activity involving child under 16
- Sexual grooming (the victim must be under 16)

Data for these offences by police force area are available in the police recorded crime open data available here <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables>

Mr Andrew Turner:

[215821]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people under the age of 16 have been the victim of a sexual offence in each police area in the last year for which data is available.

Lynne Featherstone:

[Holding answer 28 November 2014]: The police recorded crime data that the Home Office receives from the police forces of England and Wales relate only to how many crimes are recorded and not how many reports are received or how many people were victims. It is only possible to centrally provide figures for certain sexual offences that identify the age of the victim in statute, namely:

- Rape of a female child under 16
- Rape of a female child under 13
- Rape of a male child under 16
- Rape of a male child under 13
- Sexual assault on a female child under 13
- Sexual assault on a male child under 13
- Sexual activity involving a child under 13
- Sexual activity involving child under 16
- Sexual grooming (the victim must be under 16)

Data for these offences by police force area are available in the police recorded crime open data available here <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables>

■ Proceeds of Crime

Stephen Barclay: [\[216241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2014 to Question 215109, on which page of the NCA's Suspicious Activity Reports Annual Report 2013 the information requested in the original Question relating to Politically Exposed Persons is given.

James Brokenshire:

The table on Page 6 of the report shows the overall figures for SARs and consent SARs, which include those made relating to PEPs.

Stephen Barclay: [\[216242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2014 to Question 215111, on which page of the NCA's Suspicious Activity Reports Annual Report 2013 the information requested in the original Question relating to consent is given.

James Brokenshire:

The table on Page 6 of the report shows the overall figures for SARs and consent SARs.

Stephen Barclay: [\[216243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2014 to Question 215112, on which page of the NCA's Suspicious Activity Reports Annual Report 2013 the information requested in the original Question relating to Politically Exposed Persons is given.

James Brokenshire:

The table on Page 6 of the report shows the overall figures for SARs and consent SARs, which include those made relating to PEPs.

Stephen Barclay: [\[216244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2014 to Question 215108, on which page of the NCA's Suspicious Activity Reports Annual Report 2013 the information requested in the original Question relating to consent is given.

James Brokenshire:

The table on Page 6 of the report shows the overall figures for SARs and consent SARs.

■ Radicalism

Stephen Doughty: [\[216023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she last held discussions with Welsh Government Ministers regarding tackling extremism; and whether she plans to have further meetings with her counterparts in the devolved administrations to discuss tackling extremism.

James Brokenshire:

Home Office Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of international partners, as well as organisations and individuals in the public and private sectors, as part of the process of policy development and delivery.

Details of Ministerial meetings with external organisations and individuals are passed to the Cabinet Office on a quarterly basis and are subsequently published on the Cabinet Office website which is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministers-meetings-with-external-organisations-jul-sep-2013>

■ Religiously Aggravated Offences

Ms Diane Abbott: [215541]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many arrests and prosecutions there have been for Islamophobic hate crime in (a) Greater London, (b) Hackney and (c) England in the last 10 years.

Ms Diane Abbott: [215548]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many arrests and prosecutions related to homophobic hate crime there have been in (a) Greater London, (b) the London Borough of Hackney and (c) England since 2004.

Lynne Featherstone:

Arrests related to hate crime are not separately identifiable from arrests data reported centrally to the Home Office.

Data provided by the Ministry of Justice on the number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates' court for offences relating to acts intended to stir up religious hatred or hatred on the grounds of sexual orientation, under Sections 29B to 29G of the Public Order Act 1986, in England, from 2004-2013 (latest data available) can be viewed in table 1. The data held centrally by the Ministry of Justice on court proceedings do not specifically identify whether the offence prosecuted was on grounds of religious hatred or sexual orientation.

The number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates' court for offences relating to acts intended to stir up religious hatred or hatred on the grounds of sexual orientation, under Sections 29B to 29G of the Public Order Act 1986, in Greater London, from 2004-2013 (latest data available) can be viewed in table 2.

Data for the offences requested is not available at constituency level.

Attachments:

1. Religious hatred [PQ114 and 115 14 tables.xls]

Ms Diane Abbott: [215542]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of Islamophobic hate crime were recorded by the police in (a) Greater London, (b) Hackney and (c) England in the last 10 years.

Ms Diane Abbott:

[215543]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce Islamophobic hate crime; and if she will make a statement.

Lynne Featherstone:

The coalition government takes seriously all forms of hate crime, including anti-Muslim hatred. We have legislation in place to protect people from hostility, hatred and violence.

In May, we published our refreshed cross-Government hate crime action plan—Challenge it, Report it, Stop it, setting out the progress we have made and further steps we will take to address the issue. Specific actions to tackle anti-Muslim hatred include supporting educational workshops for young people, running a series of regional roadshows across the country to engage with communities, and publishing new hate crime guidance for police officers which provides advice on dealing with anti-Muslim hatred.

We also continue to support the work of cross-government Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group, which includes community representatives, to identify what more can be done to prevent anti-Muslim hatred, and respond to any emerging issues.

Our cross-government action plan brings together the work of a wide range of departments and agencies under three core principles: to prevent hate crimes happening in the first place; to increase reporting and victims' access to support; and to improve the operational response to hate crimes.

The Home Office does not disaggregate religious hate crime by religion. We only hold recorded hate crime data at the police force area level and for the previous three years. This data can be found in the table below.

A breakdown of statistics by force area can be found at the following links: 2011/12 data in Table 2.01

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/265928/hate-crime-2013-apptabs.xls 2012/13 and 2013/14 data in Tables 1.01 and 1.02 respectively

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364201/hosb0214-tabs.ods

Attachments:

1. Hate Crime [215542.stats.xls]

■ **Social Networking**

Diana Johnson:

[215990]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what amount her Department spent on (a) advertisements placed on social media websites, (b) other promotional activities on social media, (c) social media consultants and (d) other activity related to social media in each of the last five years.

Karen Bradley:

[Holding answer 28 November 2014]: The total spend since April 2010 by the Department in total is: a) Advertising placed on social media websites: £460,389 b) Other promotional activities on social media: £20,000 c) Social media consultants: £0 d) Other activity related to social media: £31,064 The following table outlines spend by the Department on social media advertising and promotional activity over the past five financial years

To note: • Spend includes net media costs, excluding production and related fees, and VAT

- Costs for 2014/15 shows campaign spend to date. • There was no spend in the 2010-11 Financial Year due to a Government-wide freeze on marketing and advertising spend
- Costs regarding 'other activity related to social media' include the cost to measure online conversation ('buzz monitoring') on social media channels as a way to evaluate campaign effectiveness.

Attachments:

1. Spend by the department on social media. [PQ 215990 TABLE.doc]

■ **Take-away Food**

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[216097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department has spent on take-away food for staff since May 2010.

Karen Bradley:

This information is not recorded in the Home Office financial systems in the required format and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ **Afghanistan**

Steve McCabe: [\[215857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to support the work of Tawanmandi.

Justine Greening:

The UK, together with Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, and Norway, has been supporting the Tawanmandi programme since 2011. The UK has committed £19.95 million out of a total of just under £34 million (at current exchange rates) from all donors.

■ British Overseas Territories

John Hemming:

[\[215721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what reports or assessments have been commissioned into child protection proceedings in the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies since 1994; when each such report or assessment was commissioned; which jurisdiction was the subject of each such report or assessment; and which external agency was involved in each case.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

Details of reports or assessments commissioned into child protection since 1994 would require extensive archive research at a disproportionate cost to the UK taxpayer.

DFID has supported the Overseas Territories (OTs) in developing capacity to manage and improve child safeguarding since 2005, working closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). This has included the joint commissioning of a number of reports and assessments, primarily:

- Pitcairn Child Safeguarding Reviews 2009, 2011 and 2013, conducted by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation and independent Social Work experts from New Zealand
- St Helena Child Safeguarding Review 2013, conducted by Lucy Faithfull Foundation
- In July the Foreign and Commonwealth Office announced it would be establishing an independent Inquiry into child abuse allegations on St Helena. The aim of this inquiry is to establish the truth surrounding allegations of a HMG and St Helena Government conspiracy to cover up child abuse in St Helena and make recommendations. Sasha Wass QC will be leading the inquiry and this was announced to Parliament on 20 November.

DFID does not provide support to the Crown Dependencies.

■ Developing Countries: Health Services

Paul Flynn:

[\[215691\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the effect on the health services in developing countries of doctors and nurses being recruited to work in the UK instead of their own country.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

There are no UK-specific estimates of the impact of international recruitment of health workers, but the UK has signed the World Health Organisation Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel and implements it through the UK Code of Practice for international recruitment. The UK Code specifies a list of developing countries that should not be targeted for international recruitment under any circumstances.

■ Electronic Government

Simon Kirby: [\[215666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to ensure its services are available online; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID makes its services available online on the GOV.UK platform. They include the DFID website (<https://www.gov.uk/dfid>), the new international development Funding Finder, the Development Tracker and the Supplier Portal.

■ Palestinians

Alex Cunningham: [\[215698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that a Gaza donor conference takes place in the near future; and what additional steps she has taken to (a) provide support for Palestinian children and (b) raise the importance of such support with her international counterparts.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

The Cairo Conference for Reconstructing Gaza took place on 12 October. The UK pledged £20m for early recovery interventions including disposal of unexploded ordnance, rubble clearance programmes and reconstructive surgery for those injured in the conflict. The United Nations Children's Fund has estimated that nearly 400,000 children in Gaza are in urgent need of psychological support; DFID's Rapid Response Facility has supported the provision of health and psycho-social care for those affected, and we continue to support the UN Relief and Works Agency which has deployed counsellors to all Gaza shelters to mitigate the impact of psychological trauma. We regularly raise the importance of such support with international counterparts, as well as the need for a durable ceasefire in Gaza that addresses all of the underlying issues.

■ Pay

Sir Richard Ottaway: [\[215749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the salary was at each payband used in her Department in (a) 2012, (b) 2013 and (c) 2014.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

The following table gives the salary range for each DFID pay band in (a) 2012, (b) 2013 and (c) 2014.

CIVIL SERVICE PAY BAND	DFID PAY BAND	DFID PAY RANGE MINIMUM - MAXIMUM 2012	DFID PAY RANGE MINIMUM - MAXIMUM 2013	DFID PAY RANGE MINIMUM - MAXIMUM 2014
Perm Sec	Perm Sec	£141,836 - £277,349	£141,836 - £277,349	£141,836 - £277,349

CIVIL SERVICE PAY BAND	DFID PAY BAND	DFID PAY RANGE MINIMUM - MAXIMUM 2012	DFID PAY RANGE MINIMUM - MAXIMUM 2013	DFID PAY RANGE MINIMUM - MAXIMUM 2014
SCS 3	SCS 3	£101,500 - £208,100	£103,000 - £208,100	£104,000 - £208,100
SCS 2	SCS 2	£82,900 - £162,500	£84,000 - £162,500	£85,000 - £162,500
SCS 1	SCS 1	£58,200 - £117,800	£60,000 - £117,800	£62,000 - £117,800
Grade 6	A1	£59,265 - £69,585	£61,381 - £70,290	£61,381 - £70,290
Grade 7	A2	£47,459 - £57,441	£49,410 - £58,160	£49,410 - £58,160
Senior Executive Officer	A2(L)	£38,894 - £44,817	£41,218 - £45,380	£41,218 - £45,380
Higher Executive Officer	B1	£29,118 - £35,225	£31,320 - £35,680	£31,320 - £35,680
Fast Stream	B1(D)	£26,800 - £36,827	£26,800 - £37,195	£26,800 - £37,195
Executive Officer	B2	£22,106 - £27,850	£23,930 - £28,210	£23,930 - £28,210
Administrative Officer	C1	£19,249 - £22,981	£19,500 - £23,275	£19,500 - £23,275
Administrative Assistant	C2	£15,866 - £19,839	£16,080 - £20,090	£16,080 - £20,090

■ Syria

Katy Clark:

[\[215928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what direct assistance her Department is providing to refugees from Syrian Kurdistan who are now living in the South East Anatolia region of Turkey.

Katy Clark:

[\[215947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment she has made of the humanitarian needs of refugees from Syrian Kurdistan living in Turkey.

Justine Greening:

According to the UN, there are currently just under 1.1 million Syrian refugees in Turkey. Over 192,000 of these have entered Turkey from the Kurdish areas around Kobane since mid-September. The majority of refugees from Kobane are women and children and the

main needs expressed are for basic relief items, particularly food, shelter, water and sanitation.

The UK has already provided mattresses, non-food items and shelter for distribution to the most vulnerable families. To date, the UK has allocated £24.2 million to partners working with Syrian refugees inside Turkey.

■ Ukraine

David Simpson: [\[215739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what reports she has received on the humanitarian situation within the civilian population of eastern Ukraine.

Justine Greening:

DFID humanitarian advisors undertook reporting missions to Ukraine in March, June, August and October 2014 and a UK humanitarian adviser has been posted to Kiev for three months to work with the Government of Ukraine and other donors to respond to the deepening humanitarian crisis.

■ West Africa: Ebola

Andrew Jones: [\[215624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much aid has been given to countries affected by the Ebola epidemic in each of the last three years.

Justine Greening:

The UK has provided £65.7 million in 2011, £73 million in 2012 and £82.4 million in 2013 of direct, bilateral Official Development Assistance to countries affected by Ebola (Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea). Additional aid to these countries has been provided by the UK through the multilateral aid system.

JUSTICE

■ Business: Human Rights

Lisa Nandy: [\[216003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what involvement his Department has had in plans to review the Government's Business and Human Rights Action Plan.

Simon Hughes:

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Business, Innovation and Skills Department jointly lead on the implementation of the UK National Action Plan in collaboration with a Steering Group made up of key Government Departments.

My department is a member of that Steering Group and continues to be involved in the work to implement the UK's commitments.

The Government will review the plan in 2015 and report on progress in the Annual FCO Human Rights Report. My department will contribute to that work.

■ Civil Proceedings: Welsh Language

Mr Elfyn Llwyd:

[\[216016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what his policy is on use of the Welsh language in civil proceedings relating to a matter in Wales which is being heard in England; what arrangements are made for witnesses who wish to give evidence through the medium of the Welsh language in those proceedings; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

Section 22 of the Welsh Language Act states that in any legal proceedings in Wales, the Welsh language may be spoken by any party, witness or other person who desires to use it. The act does not establish the right to use Welsh in court hearings outside Wales. However, HMCTS' Welsh Language Scheme allows judicial discretion to decide on whether evidence can be presented in Welsh for hearings taking place in England. If permission is granted HMCTS "will arrange translation facilities as readily and freely as they do in courts in Wales".

■ Claims Management Services

Mr David Ward:

[\[215148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will take steps to more effectively regulate claims management companies.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

A number of reforms have or are being made to strengthen the effectiveness of regulation of claims management companies (CMCs). These include a ban on CMCs offering financial rewards or similar benefits to potential claimants as an inducement to make a claim; the publication of CMCs under investigation and subject to enforcement action; key changes to the conduct rules to ensure that claims are substantiated before being pursued and any data received through telemarketing is legally obtained; the appointment of the first two independent non-executive board members to the executive-led Claims Management Regulation Board to provide a greater element of external challenge; expanding the Regulator's enforcement tools with a new power to impose financial penalties for conduct breaches; and bringing consumer complaints against CMCs within the remit of the Legal Ombudsman. The Government is committed to improving the ability to root out and punish bad practices by CMCs, better protect the consumers who use their services or are subjected to their marketing practices; and to help organisations that are on the receiving end of high volumes of unsubstantiated claims.

■ Counter-terrorism

Andrew Griffiths:

[\[216154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many offenders have been engaged with the National Offender Management Service deradicalisation programme in each of the last five years.

Andrew Griffiths: [\[216155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the budget is of the National Offender Management Service deradicalisation programme.

Andrew Griffiths: [\[216156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the National Offender Management Service deradicalisation programme.

Andrew Selous:

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS), as part of its extremism programme, has a variety of theological, motivational and behavioural programmes and interventions at its disposal to challenge those with extremist or radicalised views and to support those vulnerable to extremist messaging or radicalisation. The effectiveness of this work is regularly and independently assessed.

To enable it to carry out its extremism programme NOMS receives funding from the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) in the Home Office. We do not release the breakdown of funding per sector, as this could potentially reveal where the threat to the national security of the UK is greatest. This may impact negatively on the delivery of Prevent, and on the range of activities deployed to prevent terrorism. This could serve to weaken and prejudice the national security of the UK.

In addition, NOMS staff, as part of their daily role, contribute to the Organisation's extremism work. The extent of this work is not quantifiable in terms of resources allocated.

■ Electronic Government

Simon Kirby: [\[215667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to ensure its services are available online; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The Ministry of Justice has established a dedicated Digital Services team of digital specialists who are working to bring justice services online. Three of the Ministry of Justice's four exemplar services are now live and available online, the final exemplar will be completed shortly and many more projects are planned.

■ Employment Tribunals Service: North West

Helen Jones: [\[216133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people in (a) the North West and (b) Warrington entered sex discrimination claims at an employment tribunal in the (i) 12 months before and (ii) following the increase in fees in 2013.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

Data is held in the Employment Tribunal management information system according to the office where the claim is dealt with. Manchester covers the whole of the North West. Data is not available just for claimants from Warrington.

The caseload and performance of tribunals are published by the Ministry of Justice in Tribunal Statistics Quarterly:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/tribunals-statistics>

Table C4 of the publication shows the number of claims made each month since January 2012 in each HMCTS Region, including North West, under each of the main jurisdictions, including sex discrimination.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/352918/tribunal-statistics-annex-C.XLS

Fees were introduced to the Employment Tribunal on 29 July 2013. Data is currently only published up to June 2014. Data to September 2014 will be published on 11 December.

■ Written Questions: Government Responses**Philip Davies:****[215747]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for which written questions tabled by the hon. Member for Shipley in 2014, and answered with a promise to write a letter, a letter has (a) been and (b) not been sent.

Andrew Selous:

The Ministry of Justice takes its parliamentary correspondence very seriously, and every attempt is made to answer Parliamentary Questions on time. If this is not possible, Ministers commit to respond by letter once the necessary information has been obtained.

The way this data is collected changed from 4 June 2014. To provide information before that date would incur disproportionate costs. Since 4 June, Ministers committed to respond by letter to questions from the hon. Member for Shipley 28 times.

a) Letters have been sent to answer the following questions: 199722, 199724, 199725, 199726, 202556, 202782, 203440, 204455, 204505, 204641, 204642, 204652, 204653, 204660 and 205007.

b) Letters in response are being prepared for: 204500, 204646, 204681, 211070, 213919, 213927, 213928 (linked to 213927), 213935, 214192, 214193 (linked to 214192), 215016, 215018, and 215019 (linked to 215018). Of these, 9 were committed to since 20 November 2014.

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

■ Youth Offending Teams

Dan Jarvis: [216136]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, by what date he has asked officials carrying out the Youth Offending Team Stock Take announced on 17 November 2014 to report.

Dan Jarvis: [216228]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what criteria will be used to decide which youth offending team will be assessed as part of the fieldwork for the Youth Offending Team Stock Take announced by the Minister for Prisons, Probation and Rehabilitation on 17 November 2014.

Andrew Selous:

I refer the hon. Member for Barnsley Central (Dan Jarvis) to a previous answer of 25 November 2014 to questions 215430, 215431, 215432 and 215433:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-questions-answers/?page=1&max=20&questiontype=AllQuestions&house=commons%2clouds&uin=215430>

Dan Jarvis: [216229]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish the job titles of each official from his Department with responsibility for carrying out the fieldwork for the Youth Offending Team Stock Take announced by the Minister for Prisons, Probation and Rehabilitation on 17 November 2014.

Andrew Selous:

Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) play a key part in the youth justice system and the Government recognises their valuable contribution to the recent successes of the system. We want to improve our understanding of how YOTs are operating and how they have evolved in light of the changing circumstances surrounding the delivery of local youth justice services.

The stocktake is being coordinated by policy officials in the Ministry of Justice. They are working closely with the Youth Justice Board to finalise the details of this stocktake, which will establish a clearer picture of how the YOT model is operating nationwide.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE**■ Sinn Féin**

Mr Jeffrey M. Donaldson: [216085]

To ask the Leader of the House, what recent discussions he has had with other parties represented in the House of Commons on the payment of allowances to hon. Members representing Sinn Féin; and if he will make a statement.

Mr William Hague:

None. Short money is not available to parties whose Members have not taken the Oath.

However, under a resolution of the House of 8 February 2006, financial assistance is provided to opposition parties represented by Members who have chosen not to take their seats. It is under this resolution that Sinn Féin Members claim expenses in connection with the party's representative business.

It is the Government's view that this issue of representative money for parties that do not take the Oath is primarily a matter for the House itself to resolve.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Disclosure of Information

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[215873\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether requests for assistance have been made to her Department in the last 12 months by people, now living under protection schemes as a result of their membership of illegal organisations in the past, who have offered information and assistance in the upholding of the law in Northern Ireland.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

I am not certain which schemes the Hon Member is referring to. If such schemes exist, these would generally be expected to be a matter for the devolved authorities since they would fall within the devolved area of policing and justice. I am not aware of any requests of the type referred to in the question having been made to the Northern Ireland Office.

■ Smuggling

Mr Jeffrey M. Donaldson:

[\[216226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what discussions she has had with HM Treasury about the effect on tax revenues in Northern Ireland resulting from cross-border smuggling.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

I have regular discussions with Treasury ministers on these and other matters.

The failure to pay hydrocarbons oil duty in respect of diesel in Northern Ireland remains an issue, but one that is being addressed by HMRC as the overall percentage tax gap in respect of hydrocarbons oil duties across the UK has been reduced by almost a half between 2005/6 and 2012/13.

HMRC have had a number of notable successes in Northern Ireland including the uncovering of the largest ever toxic waste dump linked to diesel laundering in the UK on 4 November at Forkhill, when 2,000 litres of illicit fuel were seized.

HMRC's joint top priorities in Northern Ireland remain the tackling of fuel and tobacco smuggling, and they work closely with UKBA, the PSNI and An Garda Síochána and other agencies on both sides of the border on these issue.

PRIME MINISTER

■ Radicalism

Stephen Doughty: [\[216010\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what recent discussions he has had with the First Minister of Wales regarding tackling extremism; and what plans he has to discuss that issue at the next Joint Ministerial Council meeting.

Mr David Cameron:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to him on 9 September 2014, *Official Report*, column 568W.

■ Religious Freedom

Dr William McCrea: [\[216221\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what discussions he has had with other world leaders over the increasing threat to freedom of religion for (a) Christians and (b) members of other faith groups.

Mr David Cameron:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Stafford (Mr Lefroy) at Prime Minister's Questions on 19 November 2014, *Official Report*, columns 271-272.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

■ Electoral Register

Chris Ruane: [\[215316\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what registration rate was achieved by use of (a) Department for Work and Pensions and (b) local authority data matching in the confirmation dry run; and what rate was achieved by using all levels of data matching in the confirmation live run.

Mr Gary Streeter:

The confirmation dry run match rate with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) data for Great Britain is included in the Electoral Commission's report on the dry run, which is available on its website. Across Great Britain 78% of electors could be matched with DWP. Subsequent analysis, from the trial of local data matching by 139 electoral registration officers, suggested that local data matching added an average of 6% to the overall match rate.

The results of the confirmation live run for Great Britain were included in the Commission's recently published report on the live run in Scotland, which is also available on its website. The data for Great Britain was only available at this point as the transition to IER in Scotland began after the referendum on independence. The final match rate, after matching with DWP and local data, across Great Britain was 87%. These figures mean that overall approximately 40.5 million electors were matched.

Electoral Registration Officers are now working to target those existing electors who could not be matched, as well as those not currently on the registers at all.

The Commission will next report on the transition to Individual Electoral Registration in England and Wales in February 2015 following the publication of the registers by 1 December 2014. This report will be based on the results of our ongoing monitoring of performance as well as detailed, local authority-level data collected from EROs. A separate assessment for Scotland will be published in April 2015 following the publication of the revised registers there by 2 March 2015.

TRANSPORT

■ Blackpool

Paul Maynard:

[\[215793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which of his Department's capital investment programmes have involved expenditure in Blackpool North and Cleveleys constituency since 2010.

Claire Perry:

The most recent data available for total public expenditure on transport is given in HM Treasury's Country and Regional Analysis 2013.

Identifiable expenditure on transport in the North West region for the last 3 years is reproduced below. Equivalent data is not available below regional level.

TABLE A.8E IDENTIFIABLE EXPENDITURE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS (OF WHICH: TRANSPORT) BY COUNTRY AND REGION, 2010-11 TO 2012-13

£ MILLION	TRANSPORT		
National Statistics			
	2010-11 outturn	2011-12 outturn	2012-13 outturn
North West	2,099	1939	1876
	of which: current		
North West	830	678	619

£ MILLION	TRANSPORT		
	of which: capital		
North West	1268	1261	1257

■ Cycling

Andrew Jones: [\[215622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much government financial support has been budgeted for cycling initiatives in each of the next five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Department has recently consulted on future funding for cycling via the draft Cycling Delivery Plan. The consultation closed on 27 November 2014 and I will be in a position to provide a fuller answer to this once this consultation process has been completed and the final Cycling Delivery Plan has been published.

However, the work to meet our funding ambition set out in the draft plan has already begun; in November the Deputy Prime Minister and I announced a package of measures totalling £214 million, including a £114 million extension to our cycle cities programme, and £100 million investment to improve the conditions for cyclists and walkers travelling alongside and crossing Britain's most important and busiest roads from 2015/16.

■ Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency

Richard Burden: [\[216232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many employees of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency have resigned since 8 September 2014.

Claire Perry:

Since 8 September 2014 to date, 29 employees have resigned from the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.

■ Driving: Diabetes

Rosie Cooper: [\[216231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many drivers have lost their licence due to hypoglycaemic incidents in each of the last five years.

Claire Perry:

The number of drivers who have had their driving licence revoked or their application for a driving licence refused due to a hypoglycaemic incident in each of the last five years is set out below:

YEAR	NUMBER OF LICENCES REFUSED/ REVOKED DUE TO HYPOGLYCAEMIC INCIDENT
2009	210
2010	298
2011	703
2012	1,426
2013	1,066

The increase in the number of driving licences revoked or refused from 2011 results from the introduction of the changes to the minimum health standards for drivers with diabetes.

■ Electronic Government

Simon Kirby:

[\[215670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure its services are available online; and if he will make a statement.

Claire Perry:

The Department for Transport (DfT) provides 73 online transactions, including services from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, Highways Agency, the Maritime Accident Investigation Branch and Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency. DfT is transitioning these digital transactions to conform to the Digital by Default Service Standard. In addition to Electronic Vehicle Licensing, the Department has three out of the 25 Digital Exemplars, including View Driving Record, which is Live, and Personalised Registrations and Vehicle Management, which are usable by the public and on track to achieve Live status by April 2015.

Assisted Digital support is in place for each of the services. DfT is committed to continuing to provide multiple channels for accessing its services whilst recognising the savings to the taxpayer that can be realised by encouraging a channel shift to digital wherever and whenever possible, by making its digital services as easy to use as possible in conformance with the Digital by Default Standard.

Our digital team are tasked with improving digital awareness within the Department and ensuring that new developments are delivered in a digital way, whenever possible. They work closely with colleagues in the Cabinet Office and Government Digital Service to promote this approach and put the end user's needs at the heart of all our development, making government services as easy to access and user friendly as possible.

The Department published its Digital Strategy in 2012, which sets out our commitment to raising the bar for our existing digital services, bringing more services online, tackling

barriers to entry and helping those not able to use digital to ensure no one is left behind.

■ **Maritime and Coastguard Agency**

Mr Gordon Marsden: [\[216240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the average number of staff working the night shift at the National Maritime Operations Centre in Fareham was in the period October to November 2014.

Mr John Hayes:
The average number of staff working the night shift at the National Maritime Operations Centre (NMOC) in Fareham in the period October to November 2014 was six.

It should be noted that due to the flexibility offered by the new National Network the NMOC and Coastguard Operations Centres (CGOC) do not have fixed geographic boundaries. Workload is managed at the network rather than individual centre level as is the case with Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCC). Therefore, the operational area the NMOC covered during this period varied:

- From 1 October 2014 to 3 October 2014, the NMOC covered the operational zones relating to the former Solent and Portland MRCC areas of operation;
- From 3 October 2014 to 17 October 2014, the NMOC covered the operational zones relating to the former Solent, Portland and Falmouth areas of operation (the Falmouth CGOC site was undergoing its planned refurbishment); and
- From 17 October to 31 October, the NMOC covered the operational zones relating to the former Solent and Portland MRCC areas of operation (CGOC Falmouth was operating the operational zones relating to MRCC Falmouth’s former operational area).

Mr Gordon Marsden: [\[216245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 26 November 2014 to Question 215596, at what grades are the coastguards in place at the National Maritime Operations Centre.

Mr John Hayes:
The grades of the Coastguards employed at the National Maritime Operations Centre are as follows:

NEW COASTGUARD JOB TITLE	CIVIL SERVICE GRADE
Maritime Operations Officer	Administrative Officer
Senior Maritime Operations Officer	Executive Officer
Maritime Operations Specialist	Higher Executive Officer
Maritime Operations Controller	Senior Executive Officer
Maritime Operations Commander	Grade 7

Mr Gordon Marsden:

[\[216246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of coastguards opting for voluntary redundancy as part of the coastguard reform programmes received their redundancy payment within 30 days of leaving the service.

Mr John Hayes:

84 Coastguards have left the service on voluntary redundancy as part of the changes to Her Majesty's Coastguard.

Payments associated with voluntary redundancy are the responsibility of MyCSP and not the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA). The MCA does not have access to records relating to the speed of those payments.

Mr Gordon Marsden:

[\[216247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many staff must be employed at each maritime reserve co-ordination centre (MRCC) and the National Maritime Operations Centre in order to avoid any shifts falling beneath risk-assessed staffing levels; and how many staff were employed at each MRCC on 1 November 2014.

Mr John Hayes:

To support Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCC) staff to risk assessed watch levels HM Coastguard seeks to have 16 Coastguards available for watchkeeping duties (i.e. those employed at the MRCC excluding of long term sick, maternity leave and officers under training). The following table outlines the number of staff available for watchkeeping duties at each MRCC for November 2014:

MRCC	NUMBER
Aberdeen	18
Belfast	25
Dover	20
Holyhead	20
Humber	24
London	6
Milford Haven	24
Shetland	13
Stornoway	19

MRCC	NUMBER
Liverpool	17
Swansea	16
Thames	15

HM Coastguard closely monitor staffing levels and where it encounters difficulty staffing to risk assessed levels, due to leave, sickness and training, senior manager use, when necessary tried and tested mitigation measures to maintain operations:

- the long standing pairing arrangements which enable each MRCC to be connected to at least one other which is available to provide mutual support;
- increased overtime amongst MRCC staff ; and
- Coastguards on detached duty.

Due to the flexibility offered by the new National Network the NMOC and Coastguard Operations Centres (CGOC) do not have fixed geographic boundaries. Workload is managed at the network rather than individual centre level as is the case with Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCC). Therefore the number of Coastguards available to support staffing to minimum levels at the NMOC depends on:

- The season (Peak, High, Medium and Low);
- Whether it is a week day or week end; and
- The size of operational area, as one part of the national network, it is responsible for.

The number of Coastguards required to be available for watch keeping duties to support minimum watch levels at the NMOC for the areas it managed on 1 November 2014 (the former operational areas of Solent and Portland MRCC) was 24.

■ Railways: Hereford

Bill Wiggin: [\[216146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on how many days have there been delays on the Hereford to Paddington line due to signalling failures in each of the last three years; and what the length was of each such delay.

Bill Wiggin: [\[216147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many signalling failures were reported on the Hereford to Paddington line in (a) 2011, (b) 2012, (c) 2013 and (d) 2014 to date.

Bill Wiggin: [\[216151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on the causes of recent recurrent signal failures on the Hereford to Paddington line.

Claire Perry:

The Department does not hold this detailed information for the Hereford to Paddington line as it is an operational matter for Network Rail. The Hon. Member may wish to write to Network Rail's CEO at the following address:

Mark Carne, Chief Executive Network Rail, Kings Place, 90 York Way, London, N1 9AG.

Bill Wiggin:

[\[216150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much money was paid in compensation to passengers for delayed trains on the Hereford to Paddington line in (a) 2012, (b) 2013 and (c) 2014 to date.

Claire Perry:

The Department does not hold the requested information to that level of granularity. For those train operators which operate the Delay Repay compensation scheme, the Department holds the *total* compensation paid by year, but not by line, nor route, nor journey.

■ Rescue Services

Ms Margaret Ritchie:

[\[215724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with the Irish government on the joint operation of the UK and Irish coastguard services.

Mr John Hayes:

No recent discussions have been held at a Ministerial level with the Irish Government. However, officials, including the Chief Coastguard, maintain close liaison with the Irish Coastguard on matters relating to joint search and rescue.

Stephen Gilbert:

[\[216043\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many instances affecting HM Coastguard ships there have been of fouling from abandoned or lost fishing gear in the last two years; how many operational days have been lost from (a) ship and (b) personal activities as a result of those instances; and what estimate he has made of the cost of (i) the loss of operational activity and (ii) repairs.

Mr John Hayes:

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency operates two small vessels in Scotland. Neither has been fouled by abandoned or lost fishing gear in the last two years.

■ River Tyne: Bridges

Guy Opperman:

[\[215833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department expects the refurbishment of Ovingham Bridge in Hexham constituency to be finished; and if he will publish a stage by stage assessment of likely progress points.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Ovingham Bridge scheme is grant funded through the Department's Local Pinch Point Fund. The Department monitors progress through quarterly returns submitted by Northumberland County Council. The detailed programme and project management is a matter for the local authority as scheme promoter.

The most recent return reports that construction began last March and the scheme is due for completion in July 2015.

■ **Transport: Yorkshire and the Humber****Andrew Jones:**[\[215810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much the Government has spent on sustainable transport in (a) Harrogate and Knaresborough constituency and (b) Yorkshire and the Humber in each of the last three years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Department has committed £51.952m to the Yorkshire and the Humber area as part of a range of Local Sustainable Transport Fund projects, which will be ongoing until March 2015. To date, £47.812m of this funding has been paid out. This includes £1.653m for Harrogate and Knaresborough, of which £0.968m has been paid out. A further £19.684m in funding has also been provided to Yorkshire and the Humber through the Linking Communities, Cycle Safety and Cycling Ambition grant programmes. This means that over the past three financial years, the Department has paid £67.496m to the Yorkshire and Humber area (including Harrogate and Knaresborough), and has committed £71.636m up until March 2015.

The breakdown of these overall figures are as follows in the attached table, and include any funding claimed thus far in Quarters 1 and 2 of this financial year, where this breakdown is known.

In addition, the Integrated Transport Block can be used for small transport improvement projects, including cycle routes. The allocations for the past three financial years are below. The current financial year is also provided for information.

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
North Yorkshire	£4.474m	£4.091m	£4.091m	£5.753m
Yorkshire and the Humber	£47.760m	£43.666m	£43.666m	£61.403m

The background notes provide a summary for the funding programmes mentioned above. More detailed information on the individual schemes can be found on www.GOV.UK

Attachments:

1. 215180-table-Committed sustainable transport fund [215810 - table.xls]

■ Vehicle Certification Agency

Richard Burden:

[\[216086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress his Department has made on finding a private sector partner for the Vehicle Certification Agency.

Claire Perry:

The negotiation phase of the project to find a partner for the Vehicle Certification Agency is drawing to a close. I will make a statement on the outcome in due course.

TREASURY

■ Economic Growth: West Midlands

Karen Lumley:

[\[215379\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will take steps to create a powerhouse for Birmingham and the West Midlands.

Danny Alexander:

Maximising the economic potential of city regions is an important priority for this government, and we have a proud record of decentralisation. This year Birmingham and Solihull benefitted from a £357.4 million Growth Deal, alongside a £400 million investment in Birmingham New Street station and the exciting new HS2 project.

■ Hinkley Point C Power Station

Paul Flynn:

[\[215441\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what review his Department has conducted of the financial arrangements of the funding for the Hinkley C nuclear plant.

Danny Alexander:

As is usual for a project financing transaction, extensive due diligence is being carried out covering areas including:

- Project contractual structure
- Technical issues
- Equity funding arrangements

■ Infrastructure

Ann McKechin:

[\[215264\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential for UK pension funds to invest in public infrastructure projects.

Danny Alexander:

Institutional investors, including pension funds, are a promising source of investment in UK infrastructure. Institutional investors are particularly relevant for infrastructure as they

are looking for longer term investments to match defined liabilities that are realised when claims are made for pension or insurance purposes.

The government is encouraging greater involvement of institutional investors in UK infrastructure. The Pensions Infrastructure Platform (PIP) was announced in 2011 to help make infrastructure investment more accessible to pension funds. Earlier this year, 7 pension funds agreed to invest £100 million each. In February 2014 the PIP launched its first equity fund with a cap of £500 million, of which £250 million was committed, and has made a number of investments. The government also set up the Insurers' Infrastructure Investment Forum to give members of the Association of British Insurers (ABI) a direct communication link to government, exploring ways to maximise opportunities for insurance fund managers to invest in UK infrastructure. In December 2013, six insurers – Aviva, Friends Life, Legal & General, Prudential, Scottish Widows and Standard Life – said they will work alongside partners with the aim of delivering £25 billion of investment in UK infrastructure in the next five years.

■ National Insurance Contributions: New Businesses

Andrew Jones:

[215626]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the savings to businesses resulting from the Government's national insurance changes in (a) Harrogate and Knaresborough constituency, (b) Yorkshire and Humber region and (c) the UK

Mr David Gauke:

The Employment Allowance, which has been in place since April 2014, reduces an eligible employer's employer National Insurance Contributions (NICs) bill by up to £2,000 a year. Estimates of the number of employers benefitting from the allowance up to October 5th 2014, including breakdowns by region and constituency, are published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/employment-allowance-take-up-statistics>.

By October 5th around 856,000 employers in the UK, 66,000 in Yorkshire and The Humber, 1,800 in Harrogate and Knaresborough are estimated to have benefitted by up to £2,000 from the Employment Allowance in Harrogate and Knaresborough.

The Government has also committed to abolishing employer NICs up to the Upper Earnings Limit (£41,865 in 2014/15) for employees under the age of 21 from April 2015.

These policies demonstrate the Government's commitment to reducing the costs of employment for businesses across the UK.

■ Pensions

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[215874]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will discuss with the Financial Conduct Authority ways of ensuring that people with personal pensions becoming payable from April 2015 are aware of the potential drawbacks as well as advantages of transferring their pensions.

Mr David Gauke:

Under the Financial Conduct Authority's (FCA) consumer protection remit, it has already responsibility for ensuring that regulated firms treat their customers fairly and communicate in a way that is clear, fair, and not misleading. The FCA also has powers to take action against firms which engage in unauthorised business.

■ **Stamp Duty Land Tax: Suffolk****Mr David Ruffley:**[\[215719\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many properties sold in (a) Bury St Edmunds constituency and (b) Suffolk County Council area attracted stamp duty land tax levied at (i) zero per cent, (ii) one per cent, (iii) three per cent and (iv) four per cent in each of the last three years.

Mr David Gauke:

Estimates of the number of residential property transactions, rounded to the nearest 10, for Bury St Edmunds parliamentary constituency and Suffolk County Council are given in the following table, grouped by stamp duty land tax band.

BURY ST EDMUNDS

SDLT Band	0% (1)	1% (2)	3% (3)	4% (4)	higher (5)
2011/12	440	1140	420	50	<50
2012/13	430	1150	390	50	<50
2013/14	430	1390	520	80	<50

Suffolk

2011/12	3570	6140	2000	350	50
2012/13	3590	6220	2140	350	50
2013/14	3950	7680	2650	460	60

(1) Threshold is £125,000 in all years. The temporary increase in the threshold from £125,000 to £250,000 for first time buyers between March 2010 and March 2012 is ignored.

(2) £125,001 to £250,000

(3) £250,001 to £500,000.

(4) £500,001 to £1 million.

(5) Above £1 million. This includes the 5%, 7% and 15% bands. Due to tax payer confidentiality more detailed information cannot be provided for the higher bands.

Transactions with a value under £40,000, the current stamp duty land tax notification threshold, are excluded from figures for all years.

The number of transactions bearing stamp duty will be lower than the number shown in the non-zero bands due to various applicable reliefs, (e.g. disadvantaged area relief, group relief, registered social landlord relief). There are also some lease transactions which fall in the zero per cent band on account of consideration, but which bear stamp duty on the lease rental.

■ Tobacco: Smuggling

Mark Garnier: [215877]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to recover revenue lost to the illicit trade in tobacco.

Mark Garnier: [215878]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to tackle the illicit trade in tobacco.

Priti Patel:

Since 2000, HMRC's tobacco fraud strategy has reduced the illicit market for cigarettes from 22% in 2000/01 to 10% in 2013/14, and the illicit market for hand-rolling tobacco from 61% to 39% in the same period.

The current strategy to tackle tobacco smuggling was launched in 2011 and adopts a holistic approach to tackling the problem overseas, at the border and within the UK. This includes continual monitoring of intelligence to assess and respond to changes in criminal behaviours, partnership working with other enforcement agencies, such as Trading Standards, and use of a wide range of interventions and sanctions.

The strategy can be accessed on the HMRC website:

http://customs.hmrc.gov.uk/channelsPortalWebApp/channelsPortalWebApp.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=pagelImport_ShowContent&id=HMCE_PROD1_031246&propertyType=document

Mark Garnier: [215880]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent estimate has he made of the cost to the public purse of organised crime associated with the trade in illicit tobacco.

Priti Patel:

The most recent estimates of the total revenue losses associated with the tobacco illicit market were published on 16 October in the report 'Tobacco tax gap estimates 2013-14'.

This can be accessed on the HMRC website:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364011/141016_Tobacco_Tax_Gap_2014.pdf

It is not possible to disaggregate losses to organised crime from total losses.

■ Welfare Tax Credits: Denbighshire

Chris Ruane:

[216067]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people in each ward of (a) the Vale of Clwyd and (b) Denbighshire have received tax credits in each of the last five years.

Priti Patel:

The number of households in receipt of Tax Credits for 2012-13 and 2011-12 are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-tax-credits-statistics>, in the publications 'Personal tax credits: Finalised award statistics - geographical statistics' of each tax year. Information for Denbighshire can be found in Table 2 of each publication and information for the Vale of Clwyd can be found in Table 3.

Years prior to 2011-12 are available at

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121103084242/http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/final-award-geog.htm> and can be found in the publications 'Child and Working Tax Credits Statistics Finalised annual awards- Geographical analyses'.

HM Revenue and Customs does not record the number of people in receipt of a Tax Credit award as awards are calculated on a household basis and so the figures provided in the referenced publications are the number of households in receipt of Tax Credits. Households are interpreted by HM Revenue and Customs as single or couple claimants, with or without children.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Employment: Discrimination

David Simpson:

[215738]

To ask the Ministers for Women and Equalities, what steps her Department is taking to tackle discrimination of disabled people in the UK workforce.

Jo Swinson:

The Government is fully committed to the Equality Act 2010, which prohibits employers from discriminating against their disabled employees and job applicants with a disability. Employers are also required to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees so that they can work on a similar basis to employees that do not have a disability. Where an employee or potential employee believes that they have experienced disability discrimination, they can make a claim to an employment tribunal within six months of the alleged discrimination taking place.

The Government is committed to ensuring that all disabled people have the opportunities, chances and support that they need to gain and remain in employment, and there is a range of available provision to help them.

The Equality Act 2010 only applies to England Wales and Scotland. Northern Ireland has its own disability discrimination legislation - Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended).

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Children: Poverty

Dr William McCrea: [\[216112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of children living in poverty in each constituent part of the UK; and how many children were living in poverty in each such region in each of the last three years.

Esther McVey:

Estimates of the number and proportion of children in relative low income are published in the National Statistics Households Below Average Income (HBAI) series. This information is captured using the Family Resources Survey (FRS) and has been reported since 1998/99 in the DWP's Households Below Average Income (HBAI) publication. These estimates are available for each financial year up to 2012/13, the latest period for which estimates are available.

Comparable estimates are available for each of the constituent countries of the UK and for English regions. The survey sample sizes for these regions are not sufficiently large to support robust single-year figures, so estimates are provided using three-year averages. The latest estimates are for 2010/11-2012/13.

These estimates can be found at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-hbai-199495-to-201213>

Relevant estimates can be found in the "Supporting Data tables (Microsoft Excel files) WINZIP link. The Excel document is titled "chapter_4ts_risk_hbai14.xls".

■ Construction: Industrial Health and Safety

Mr Jeffrey M. Donaldson: [\[216012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions he has had with the Association for Project Safety on revisions to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Mark Harper:

I have had no such discussions with the Association for Project Safety (APS). The Health and Safety Executive, however, has had extensive discussions with APS about proposals

to revise the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 before, during and following its public consultation on these proposals earlier this year.

■ Electronic Government

Simon Kirby:

[215673]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to ensure its services are available online; and if he will make a statement.

Steve Webb:

The Department for Work and Pensions currently provides digital options for a number of services. For example, it has been possible to claim Jobseekers Allowance online since 2009 and as of Oct 2014 87.1% of all new claims are now made through that channel[1] and over 90% of Universal Credit claimants are making their claim online[2].

The Department for Work and Pensions' Digital Strategy committed to redesigning all services that handle over 100,000 transactions a year which will enable the provision of high quality digital services to claimants and the public.

Carer's Allowance digital service which has been in public beta since October 2013 and has recently successfully completed its go live assessment.

We are currently building an in-depth understanding of Personal Independence Payment service to see which parts of the process might best be delivered through digital channels.

In addition we are developing a digital service for New State Pension and are looking more broadly at further transformation to improve efficiency and good customer service, which will involve exploring further opportunities to put services online.

[1] DWP Business Plan transparency measure:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-business-plan-transparency-measures/dwp-business-plan-transparency-measures#proportion-of-new-claims-to-ja-submitted-online>

[2] UC at Work October 2014, page 42:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/368805/uc-at-work.pdf

■ Employment: Mental Illness

Ian Austin:

[215903]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support is available for people with a mental illness at work.

Mr Mark Harper:

The Government is committed to supporting people who develop a mental health condition while at work. Support can be provided by our innovative Access to Work Mental Health Support Service, which offers support to individuals with a mental health condition who are absent from work or finding work difficult, and their employer.

We will shortly be launching Fit for Work to support people off sick for four weeks or more to help them return to work, including many with a mental health condition. To ensure timely access to treatment, we are also introducing maximum waiting times for accessing talking therapies.

■ **Housing Benefit: Lancaster**

David Morris:

[216127]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have made applications for funding from the Discretionary Housing Fund in Lancaster district since the inception of that fund.

Steve Webb:

The Department does not hold this information. Information on applications for Discretionary Housing Payments should be sought from individual local authorities.

■ **Jobseeker's Allowance: Disqualification**

Stephen Timms:

[216058]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants of jobseeker's allowance have been issued with a three year benefit sanction in each month since October 2012.

Esther McVey:

The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ **Pensioners: Social Security Benefits**

Oliver Colvile:

[216051]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department has taken to increase awareness among pensioners of the benefits for which they are eligible.

Steve Webb:

Four months before people reach State Pension age, the Department writes, inviting them to claim their State Pension. An information leaflet about the State Pension is enclosed with that letter; it provides details of how to claim Pension Credit.

The easiest way for customers to claim Pension Credit is by telephone removing the need to complete lengthy application forms; they can also claim Housing Benefit at the same time, and are advised of Pension Credit when they claim their State Pension.

DWP has also introduced a web-based Pension Credit toolkit at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit>

Its purpose is to provide customer representative organisations with all the information needed in order to talk to pensioners about Pension Credit and other benefits they may be entitled to such as Attendance Allowance. In partnership with Age UK, local authorities and other groups, a structured campaign was undertaken to create awareness of the Toolkit amongst those who support our customers.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Wirral

Mr Frank Field:

[[216061](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he expects disabled people in Wirral with outstanding applications for personal independence payment to receive a decision on their claim.

Mr Mark Harper:

There are several reasons why a new claim could be outstanding and awaiting a decision. For example, the claimant is waiting to receive or has not yet returned their PIP 2 How your disability affects you form, the claimant is awaiting their assessment appointment date, the DWP have not yet made a decision on the claim, or the claimant has told DWP that they wish to withdraw their claim.

We keep the time taken to process claims under constant review and are absolutely committed to improving performance to ensure that claimants receive high quality, objective and fair decisions. We are already seeing improvements to our processes and outcomes and will continue to work further to reduce processing times and levels of work outstanding.

By the end of the year we expect that nobody will be waiting longer than 16 weeks for an assessment once we have received a completed 'How your Disability affects you' form.

■ Post Office Card Account: Scotland

Cathy Jamieson:

[[215846](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in each Scottish parliamentary constituency use Post Office card accounts.

Steve Webb:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on the 16 October 2014 to Question UIN [210281](#).

The information is not available.

■ Remploy

Ann Clwyd:

[[215748](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many former workers of the Remploy factory in Aberdare are (a) looking for work, (b) currently in work, (c) retired, (d) in receipt of employment and support allowance and (e) in receipt of jobseeker's allowance.

Mr Mark Harper:

For all disabled former Remploy workers made redundant as a result of factory closures, the Government put in place the £8 million guaranteed People Help and Support

Package (PHSP). The support package provides help to each affected disabled former employee for up to 18 months from the date they left Remploy.

As part of this support package the Department also asked all disabled former employees made redundant from Remploy to give permission to be tracked, and can only monitor the progress and outcomes of those individuals that have given permission.

Latest figures show that (a) 17 disabled former Remploy Aberdare workers are choosing to work with our Personal Case Workers to find another job and (b) 13 are currently in work, (c) 8 confirmed their intention to retire at the time they left Remploy, (d) 1 is in receipt of Employment Support Allowance, (e) and 3 are in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance.

■ Sick Leave: Medway

Rehman Chishti: [216122]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will estimate the number of days lost to long-term sick leave (a) in total and (b) for reasons related to mental health in (i) Gillingham and Rainham constituency and (ii) Medway in each of the last three years.

Andrew Stephenson: [216307]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will estimate the number of days lost to long-term sick leave (a) in total and (b) for reasons related to mental health in (i) Pendle constituency and (ii) Lancashire in each of the last three years.

Mr Mark Harper:

The information requested is not available. Such information as is available on long-term sickness absence is published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/long-term-sickness-absence>. In addition to this, there is an ONS publication on sickness absence here http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_353899.pdf

■ Social Security Benefits: Disqualification

Stephen Timms: [215974]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 24 November 2014 to Question 215334 and the Answer of 4 July 2013, Official Report, column 736W, (a) on what date and (b) for what reason his Department stopped estimating the amount of benefit withheld as a result of the application of sanctions.

Esther McVey:

The Department has never estimated the amount of benefit withheld as a result of benefit sanctions. Sanctions are designed to ensure claimants comply with their requirements in order to move off benefits and into work.

The answer of 25 March 2013, Official Report, column 986W, on social security benefits, contained a calculation of the amount of jobseeker's allowance (JSA) that claimants would have received if they had continued to be on benefit for the length of a fixed sanction. This is not the same as the amount withheld as a result of sanctions.

That answer made clear, it is not possible to robustly estimate the actual amounts withheld as we do not know what would have happened in the absence of sanctions. For example, of claimants who leave benefit during a sanction - some may have left irrespective of the sanction being applied, and some may have left because of the sanction. Furthermore, the calculation did not net the figures for hardship payments.

■ Social Security Benefits: Fraud

Mr David Lammy:

[\[216053\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much the Government has spent on advertising aimed at reducing benefit fraud since May 2010.

Mr Mark Harper:

Since May 2010 expenditure on advertising aimed at reducing benefit fraud has been:

EXPENDITURE FOR CAMPAIGNS

Year	Campaign	Total amount
2010/11	Targeting Benefit Thieves	£26,118
2011/12	Targeting Benefit Thieves	£82,605
2012/13	none	Nil
2013/14	Benefits. Are you doing the right thing? Phase I	£51,503
2014/15	Benefits: Are you doing the right thing? Phase II	£555,920

■ Social Security Benefits: Kilmarnock

Cathy Jamieson:

[\[215866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much benefit was withheld from claimants in benefit sanctions in Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Esther McVey:

The Department does not estimate the amount of benefit withheld as a result of benefit sanctions. Sanctions are designed to ensure claimants comply with their requirements in order to move off benefits and into work.

There are no benchmarks or targets for sanctions referrals.

■ **Social Security Benefits: Scotland**

Cathy Jamieson: [215862]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many households in each (a) parliamentary constituency and (b) local authority area in Scotland are subject to benefit cap.

Esther McVey:

The latest data, showing households capped as at August 2014, can be found here:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

■ **Take-away Food**

Jonathan Ashworth: [216102]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much his Department has spent on take-away food for staff since May 2010.

Steve Webb:

The Department does not routinely provide take-away food for its employees and does not have specific accounting information for take-away food expenditure. Consequently it is not possible to provide this information.

■ **Universal Credit**

Rachel Reeves: [216015]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, which families claiming universal credit will be able to claim free school meals when universal credit is fully rolled out.

Mr Mark Harper:

Currently receipt of Universal Credit provides automatic access to a range of passported benefits, including free school meals, for all those who meet the relevant qualifying criteria. We have been working closely with other Departments to consider how they might continue to deliver these benefits to those getting Universal Credit as it is rolled out. To ensure the benefits continue to be targeted at those who need them most, we have agreed to the introduction of a system of earnings thresholds to enable the continued delivery of passported benefits under Universal Credit.

We are now working with Departments to determine the right earnings thresholds which will be introduced as claimant numbers expand from 2015/16. Decisions on the provision of those benefits, including the eligibility and verification arrangements to confirm entitlement, will remain the responsibility of the Departments that own them. In the case of free school meals this will remain with the Department for Education.

Rachel Reeves: [216021]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people he expects to be claiming universal credit by May 2015.

Rachel Reeves: [216022]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many families with one person in work will be accessing universal credit by May 2015.

Stephen Timms: [216057]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of claimants of universal credit on (a) 1 April 2015 and (b) 1 October 2015.

Rachel Reeves: [216088]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many families with children he expects to be claiming universal credit by May 2015.

Mr Mark Harper:

The department published planning projections of the Universal Credit caseload on Page 30 in the publication 'Universal Credit at Work' published on 22 October 2014. The publication can be found at the below link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-at-work>

The Department is not setting targets for numbers in receipt of Universal Credit at various points in time.

■ Work Programme

Stephen Timms: [216056]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress he has made in implementing the recommendation in the Oakley Review that the Department should work with providers to pilot a new approach using warnings and non-financial sanctions following a first failure to comply with conditionality on the Work Programme.

Esther McVey:

I refer my Rt.Hon. Member to the answer I gave on 20 November 2014 to Question UIN [214804](#).

We have already published our response to the Oakley Report and a copy can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332137/ja-sanctions-independent-review-government-response.pdf

We have accepted all recommendations made by the Oakley Report and we have already implemented a number of improvements. Our response sets out a number of target completion dates for recommendations made by the Oakley Report.

We will look at the remaining recommendations and will keep the House informed on progress and implementation.

Stephen Timms: [216059]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people returned to Job Centre Plus from the Work Programme in May 2014; and how many of those people are (a)

in a community work placement, (b) subject to daily signing, (c) receiving intensive support, (d) no longer claiming benefit and (e) in none of those positions.

Esther McVey:

The number of people who returned to Jobcentre Plus from the Work Programme in May 2014 is published and can be found at:

<http://tabulation-tool.dwp.gov.uk/WorkProg/tabtool.html>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-tabulation-tool-guidance>

Information for the remainder of the question is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Nic Dakin:

[216175]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 26 November 2014 to Question 215554 when the sourcing activity is likely to be concluded; and whether the information about costs will be available at that time.

Esther McVey:

The commercial activity is expected to be concluded by the end of December. It is not the Department's intention to disclose commercially sensitive information.

■ Work Programme: Kilmarnock

Cathy Jamieson:

[215865]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people (a) were eligible for and (b) participated in the Work Programme in Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency in each month since October 2012.

Esther McVey:

In response to the first part of the question, statistics on the number of people who were eligible for the Work Programme are not available.

Information on those referred to the Work Programme, by parliamentary constituency, is published and can be found at:

<http://tabulation-tool.dwp.gov.uk/WorkProg/tabtool.html>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-tabulation-tool-guidance>

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Rivers: Pollution Control

Sir Oliver Heald:

[216160]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the findings of the WWF-UK report, The state of England's chalk streams, published in November 2014; and if she will make a statement.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 1 December 2014. The correct answer should have been:

Dan Rogerson:

The Government recognises the environmental and cultural importance of this rare river habitat. We will study the WWF's report and consider carefully any recommendations it contains.

Chalk rivers are well represented in both the national and European designated site network, which aims to protect sites of high conservation value. Action is underway on the majority of these sites to address pressures such as physical modification, effluent, diffuse pollution and abstraction.

A strategic programme of physical habitat restoration is underway on these rivers (including the 11 chalk river Sites of Special Scientific Interest that need restoration). Led jointly by Natural England and the Environment Agency, it involves a range of statutory and voluntary sector partners. Some 70 kilometres of chalk stream have been improved since 2011.

Defra has provided funding to support these activities. A new catchment based approach to support river basin management planning is strengthening local engagement and helping the Environment Agency to better understand and respond to pressures on the water environment.

Water companies are investing £3.4 billion between 2010 and 2015 to support the achievement of Water Framework Directive environmental objectives. This has contributed to substantial reductions in phosphate pollution, to which chalk streams are particularly sensitive, and additional investment is proposed to secure further improvements. Water companies are also engaged in research to overcome technical limitations on phosphorus reduction.

Changes have been made to 44 abstraction licences affecting chalk streams. The Water Act 2014 will enable the Environment Agency to make further progress in preventing unsustainable abstraction. The Government is also putting in place a balanced package of measures to further tackle agricultural pollution.

The benefits of these actions are likely to take some time to be reflected in reported water body status because the environment can take a considerable time to recover once pressures have been reduced.