



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 2 February 2015 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:38 P.M., 02 February 2015). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Cybercrime

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[221998\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what guidance has been issued by the Crown Prosecution Service on prosecuting digital and online crime.

Mr Robert Buckland:

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has issued comprehensive and detailed Legal Guidance to its prosecutors on a wide range of digital and online crimes including those which target computer systems and those other crimes (such as stalking and child sexual abuse) where the internet or communications technology is used in order to commit the offence.

In addition, the CPS is committed to keeping its prosecutors up-to-date with developments relating to digital and online crime, through the provision of learning and development modules that include cyber stalking, online fraud, online grooming, prosecuting cases involving social media and handling digital evidence.

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell: [\[222076\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many recruitment and employment agencies the Law Officers' Departments have used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Mr Robert Buckland:

The table below shows the number of recruitment and employment agencies that have been recorded as being used by the Law Officers' Departments to source both permanent and temporary staff in each complete financial year since 2010-11:

| YEAR | RECRUITMENT OR EMPLOYMENT AGENCY | | |
|---------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| | Treasury Solicitor's Department* | Crown Prosecution Service | Serious Fraud Office |
| 2010/11 | 28 | 22 | 5 |
| 2011/12 | 26 | 13 | 6 |
| 2012/13 | 17 | 5 | 4 |
| 2013/14 | 17 | 6 | 6 |

* TSol data also covers the Attorney General's Office and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate.

■ Prosecutions

Mr Elfyn Llwyd: [\[222188\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many prosecutions for summary offences were discontinued as a consequence of delay in obtaining data from (a) social media companies and (b) the forensic examination of computers or mobile phones in the most recent year for which figures are available.

Mr Robert Buckland:

The Crown Prosecution Service does not maintain a central record of prosecutions dropped as a result of delays in receiving data from social media companies or from the forensic examination of computers or mobile phones. Obtaining this information would require a manual review of individual case files which would incur a disproportionate cost.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

■ Business: Loans

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[222353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many companies have received financial support to date under the Direct Lending scheme; and on what dates such support was provided.

Matthew Hancock:

On 5 October 2014, my Rt hon Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the first Direct Lending Facility loan, which helped Carillion secure a significant contract with the Dubai World Trade Centre.

There is now a pipeline of 40 potential loans ranging from £5m to over £1bn

■ Communication

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[222563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what his Department's communications budget has been for each financial year from 2010-11 to 2014-15.

Jo Swinson:

Admin Budget

2014/15 £5,588,000

2013/14 £5,657,000

2012/13 £5,538,223

2011/12 £6,047,000m (this includes the internal Communications budget of £703k, in later years this was moved outside of the communications budget area)

Programme Budget

2014/15 £12,888,000

2013/14 £6,046,000

2012/13 £2,700,000

Figures for earlier years are no longer held centrally and will require access to the Department's previous financial system. I will write to the hon Member with this information once it has been extracted and place a copy of this letter in the libraries of both Houses.

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell: [\[222075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many recruitment and employment agencies his Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Jo Swinson:

The Department operates a delegated recruitment model with individual business units managing their own recruitment campaigns. Information on each campaign is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Bill Esterson: [\[222243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many staff in his Department were recruited through employment or recruitment agencies in each year since 2010-11.

Jo Swinson:

The Department operates a delegated recruitment model with individual business units managing their own recruitment campaigns. Information on each campaign is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Employment Schemes: Mental Illness

Stephen Timms: [\[222451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what progress his Department has made with pilot projects to assist people with mental health conditions return to work.

Nick Boles:

The procurement stage of the mental health pilots is underway. The Skills Funding Agency published an invitation to tender (ITT) on the 5th January 2015 for organisations in direct receipt of Community Learning funding and on the register of training organisations, with a closing date of 6th February 2015.

Learning providers will design courses in collaboration with local mental health services. External evaluators will assess the impact of different delivery approaches, including reduction in participants' use of medical services, progression to further learning / training and return to work.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has committed £20 million to the mental health pilots over two years (£5m 2015-16 and £15m 2016-17).

■ Engineering: Females

Chi Onwurah:

[\[222178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, with reference to the announcement of 12 June 2014 on the £30 million fund to secure the supply of engineers and boost the number of women in the sector, what budget was provided for the developing women engineers strand of that fund in 2014-15; how much has been spent on that strand of work in 2014-15 to date; and what forecast he has made of total spending on that strand of work in 2014-15.

Nick Boles:

“Women in Engineering” is one of a number of calls under the Employer Ownership Fund that have been run in response to recommendations from the Perkins review of engineering skills. A nominal maximum budget of £10m was allocated to the “Women in Engineering” call, but it was not as successful as the other calls in attracting bids - there were only two successful applications which have been awarded a total of £104,320, of which £12,288 is expected to be drawn down this year.

There is no underspend of the Employer Ownership budget which is fully allocated for FY2014/15. All unallocated funds from calls that have closed have been assigned to new calls that will also address the recommendations of the Perkins review such as the current call aimed at improving engineering skills in smaller companies.

■ Exports: Advisory Services

Mr Chuka Umunna:

[\[222354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many companies have received financial support to date under the Passport to Export scheme in each month of the present financial year to date.

Matthew Hancock:

The number of companies receiving financial support, under the Passport to Export Scheme in each month of the present financial year are:

| MONTH | PASSPORT COMPANIES |
|--------------|---------------------------|
| April | 262 |
| May | 287 |
| June | 266 |
| July | 277 |
| August | 211 |
| September | 178 |

| MONTH | PASSPORT COMPANIES |
|--------------|---------------------------|
| October | 140 |
| November | 145 |
| December | 119 |

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[222355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many companies have been accepted to receive support under the Gateway to Global Growth scheme in each of the last 12 months.

Matthew Hancock:

The number of companies that have been accepted to receive support under the Gateway to Global Growth scheme in each of the last 12 months is as follows:

| GATEWAY COMPANIES RECRUITED IN 2014 | COMPANIES |
|--|------------------|
| Month | |
| January | 140 |
| February | 192 |
| March | 19 |
| April | 160 |
| May | 136 |
| June | 115 |
| July | 175 |
| August | 123 |
| September | 143 |
| October | 222 |
| November | 100 |
| December | 131 |
| TOTAL | 1656 |

■ Land: Wales

Chris Ruane: [\[221987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how much and what proportion of land was registered in Wales in each year since 1985.

Matthew Hancock:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 27 January to Question UIN [221369](#). Land Registry does not hold the requested figures on the proportion of land registered in Wales in each year since 1985.

Chris Ruane: [\[221988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what assessment he has made of the ownership of unregistered land in Wales.

Matthew Hancock:

Land Registry figures show that on 31 March 2014 22.08% of the land in Wales was unregistered. Land which is currently unregistered will be registered with the Land Registry when there is a dealing with it. Land Registry continues to encourage and facilitate voluntary registration.

■ Local Government: Urban Areas

Iain McKenzie: [\[222498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will conduct an evaluation of the progress of City Deals in (a) England and (b) Scotland; and if he will make a statement.

Matthew Hancock:

There is a full and robust process for monitoring and implementing and evaluating all city deals which is overseen by the Local Growth Committee chaired by my Rt Hon Friend the Deputy Prime Minister.

■ Oil: Prices

Alex Cunningham: [\[221931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what assessment he has made of the effect that the present low price of oil is having on the preservation and development of the oil and gas industry skills base.

Matthew Hancock:

[Holding answer 29 January 2015]: In December 2014, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills published in partnership with Oil and Gas UK and OPITO (the Oil and Gas Skills body), "Fuelling the next generation: A study of the UK upstream oil and gas workforce". This report gives an assessment of the skills base of the oil and gas industry, though the evidence was gathered before the full extent of the current fall in oil prices became apparent.

I am aware that some companies have since declared redundancies. We will continue to work closely with industry through Pilot, the Oil and Gas Industry Council and with the newly formed Scottish Energy Jobs Taskforce to assess the impact of the present low oil price on the preservation and development of the oil and gas industry skills base.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Communication

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[222564\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what his Department's communications budget has been for each financial year from 2010-11 to 2014-15.

Mr Francis Maude:

My Department is responsible for cross-Government communication as set out in the Annual Government Communication Plan. As part of our long-term economic plan we have substantially reformed Government communications since the 2010 General Election, abolishing the Central Office of Information and ensuring that Government communications activity is better coordinated and more effective. Thanks to these reforms we have halved the cost to taxpayers of government communications since the 2010 General Election. The NAO has confirmed that Government made savings of £378 million in each of the last two financial years on proactive paid-for communications, compared to a 2009-10 baseline. This is based on proactive (paid-for) communications spend of £589m in 09/10, £216m in 12/13 and £210m in 13/14.

My department regularly publishes data on: www.data.gov.uk showing how public money has been spent and how government is performing against its objectives and goals.

■ Electoral Register: Coventry

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[222324\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people were on the electoral roll in each parliamentary constituency in Coventry on (a) 17 February and (b) 1 December 2014.

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 - People on Electoral Roll [PQ 222324 ONS 24.pdf]

■ Electoral Register: Warrington

Helen Jones: [\[222387\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many registered voters there were in each parliamentary constituency in Warrington on (a) 17 February and (b) December 2014; and

what proportion of the population eligible to vote that figure represented in each constituency on each of those dates.

Helen Jones: [\[222403\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of how many and what proportion of students in Warrington North constituency were registered to vote on 1 December 2014.

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 - Registered Voters [PQ 222387, 222403 ONS 27, 28.pdf]

■ **Employment Agencies**

Lucy Powell: [\[222077\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many recruitment and employment agencies his Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Lucy Powell: [\[222081\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many recruitment and employment agencies his Office has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Lucy Powell: [\[222093\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many recruitment and employment agencies 10 Downing Street has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Bill Esterson: [\[222244\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many staff in his Department were recruited through employment or recruitment agencies in each year since 2010-11.

Bill Esterson: [\[222248\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many staff in his Office were recruited through employment or recruitment agencies in each year since 2010-11.

Mr Francis Maude:

The Prime Minister's Office and the Deputy Prime Minister's Office are an integral part of the Cabinet Office. The number of recruitment and employment agencies used to source staff for Cabinet Office and the number of staff employed by Cabinet Office through recruitment and employment agencies is not held centrally.

As part of our long-term economic plan, this Government has cut the amount spent on central Government consultancy and contingent labour from £2.45 billion in 2009/10 to £1.06 billion in 2013/14 – a reduction of 57% compared to the last year of the previous Government.

■ Government Departments: Ministerial Policy Advisers

Mr Douglas Carswell: [\[221941\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the cost has been to the public purse of independent policy advisers across all government departments since May 2010.

Mr Francis Maude:

Independent policy advisers is not a category of staff or profession that is recognised in the Civil Service. Departments may commission policy advice externally including through the Contestable Policy programme. Comprehensive details are not held centrally.

■ Internet

Mr Elfyn Llwyd: [\[222225\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many reports of the use of spyware against individuals have been made to the police in England and Wales in each of the last five 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 - Use of Spyware [PQ-22222.PDF]

■ Training

Chi Onwurah: [\[222382\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 December 2014 to the hon. Member for Mid Sussex to Question 218376, when he plans to publish the curriculum and reading list.

Chi Onwurah: [\[222385\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his Department provides guidance to the civil service on the (a) number of days of training that should be available to each civil servant and (b) training budget that should be available per full-time equivalent civil servant.

Mr Francis Maude:

Information will appear on gov.uk this week. I will place a copy in the library.

Through its programme of Civil Service Reform, the Government is taking urgent action to address long-standing skills gaps in the Civil Service. Our four priority areas remain digital, project management, commercial and leadership skills.

■ Unemployment

Stephen Timms: [\[222453\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average proportion of working age people unemployed for longer than (a) 12 months and (b) two years was in each of the last 10 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 - Unemployment [PQ 222453 ONS 31.pdf]

■ **Unemployment: Young People**

Stephen Timms:

[\[222452\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the rate of youth unemployment as a proportion of the overall rate of unemployment was in each of the last 10 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 - Rate of Unemployment [PQ 222452 ONS 30.pdf]

Rushanara Ali:

[\[222628\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many young people aged between 18 and 24 have been unemployed for longer than (a) 6 months, (b) 12 months and (c) 2 years in (i) Tower Hamlets, (ii) London and (iii) the UK in each of the last five 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 - Unemployment [PQ 222628 ONS 32.pdf]

■ **Young People: Greater London**

Rushanara Ali:

[\[222508\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 28 January 2015 to Question 221825, what estimate his Department has made of the number and proportion of people aged 16 to 18 who have had an unknown educational status in London in each of the last five 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 - Unknown Educational Status [PQ 222508 ONS 26.pdf]

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

■ Bishops

Chi Onwurah: [\[222446\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Banbury, representing the Church Commissioners, what discussions the Commissioners have had with Church of England bishops on the laying on of hands during the consecration of (a) female and (b) male bishops; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Tony Baldry:

The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of York have always had the power to delegate to another bishop their role as chief consecrator. The five guiding principles of the House of Bishops' declaration which underpinned General Synod's agreement to women bishops clearly provided a framework to make it possible for arrangements to develop for the Church of England to maintain the highest possible degree of communion and contribute to mutual flourishing across all the diverse traditions that exist. Paragraph 30 of the House of Bishops' declaration gave a very clear commitment to continuing the supply of traditionalist Catholic Bishops and Headship Evangelical Bishops.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Affordable Housing: South West

Kerry McCarthy: [\[907351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what recent comparative assessment his Department has made of the supply of and demand for affordable housing in (a) Bristol and (b) the South West region.

Stephen Williams:

The Department has made no centralised comparative assessment. Local planning authorities are responsible for assessing and providing for affordable housing needs. 1,950 new affordable homes have been provided in Bristol since 2010.

■ British Muslim Initiative

Stephen Barclay: [\[222220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what funds his Department has allocated to the British Muslim Initiative in each of the last 10 years.

Stephen Williams:

My Department has not allocated any funding to the British Muslim Initiative in any of the last 10 years.

■ Coastal Communities Fund

Chris Ruane: [\[221354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 15 December 2014 to Question 906630, what the 117 projects funded by the Coastal Communities Fund are.

Penny Mordaunt:

A table (attached) has been placed in the Library of the House giving details of the 211 projects awarded grants under the Coastal Communities Fund to date. These include the 117 projects referred to in the Answer of 15 December 2014 and a further 94 projects which have been awarded grants from the Fund since then. The table covers all grants awarded in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Attachments:

1. Table of CCF Projects [221354 Ruane - Table of CCF Awards Rounds 1 to 3.xlsx]

■ Community Relations

Lyn Brown: [\[222231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 15 January 2015 to Question 219487, what criteria his Department has used to cease funding integration projects and activities since 2010.

Lyn Brown: [\[222233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 15 January 2015 to Question 219487, what criteria his Department has used to allocate funding to integration projects and activities since 2010.

Lyn Brown: [\[222234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 15 January 2015 to Question 219487, what agreements exist on what the outputs and outcomes will be for each of the organisations and activities funded through his Department's integration budget.

Stephen Williams:

Decisions on the provision of funding for integration projects and activities are supported by an assessment of value for money, deliverability and feasibility, as well as consideration of how the likely outcomes will contribute to creating the conditions for integration. Each organisation receiving funding has a grant agreement against which it is monitored to ensure that agreed milestones are met. Funding for a project ceases on the date set out in the grant agreement, or earlier if the organisation concerned fails to meet requirements set out in that agreement.

Lyn Brown: [\[222232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 15 January 2015 to Question 219487, what funding was provided in financial year 2010-11 for the integration projects and activities listed in the Answer.

Stephen Williams:

There was no explicit integration programme in 2010/11. However, the following projects and activities received funding in 2010-11:

| | |
|--|----------|
| CONTEXTUALISING ISLAM | £65,000 |
| Cornish Language | £150,000 |
| Faith-based Regeneration Network | £130,000 |
| Holocaust Memorial Day | £750,000 |
| INFORM | £140,000 |
| Inter Faith Network | £535,000 |
| National Citizens Service - Young Advisers | £133,500 |
| National Community Tensions Team | £96,000 |
| Post-Holocaust Issues Envoy | £20,000 |

None of the other projects listed in the previous answer received funding that year.

■ **Cordoba Foundation**

Stephen Barclay: [\[22222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what funds his Department has allocated to the Cordoba Foundation in each of the last 10 years.

Stephen Williams:

My Department has not allocated any funding to the Cordoba Foundation in any of the last 10 years. However, I understand the organisation did receive some funding indirectly under the last Labour Government through their allocations to local authorities under the Prevent programme – a scheme which was widely criticised. We refocused the *Prevent* strategy in 2011 to ensure that we target resources better.

■ **Devolution: Greater Manchester**

Lisa Nandy: [\[222345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 26 January 2015 to Question 221428, whether he plans to bring forward legislative proposals on the Greater Manchester devolution agreement and the election of a directly elected city-region mayor before Parliament is dissolved for the 2015 general election.

Kris Hopkins:

We are currently consulting on draft secondary legislation which would facilitate the transitional governance proposals for Greater Manchester. It is our goal that such

secondary legislation would be ratified in this Parliament, subject to Parliamentary approval.

We intend that the subsequent primary legislation that I mentioned in my previous answer would then be introduced early in the next Parliament, to facilitate the first direct elections for a Greater Manchester mayor in 2017.

■ Economic Growth: Coastal Areas

Peter Aldous:

[\[907348\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to support economic growth in coastal communities.

Penny Mordaunt:

On 26 January, the Government announced £46 million of funding to 67 projects around England and Scotland's coast. All of these will make a big contribution to supporting growth and jobs in these areas. In total, the Coastal Communities Fund is now supporting 211 projects across the UK with a value of £116 million and is forecast to support nearly 12,400 new jobs, and provide over 6,000 apprenticeships and training places.

In addition to the Coastal Communities Fund, many other Government programmes also support growth in coastal areas. For example, over £500 million was committed through Growth Deals in July 2014 for projects to improve the economic competitiveness of coastal areas, and a number of successful Enterprise Zones are encouraging investment in coastal locations.

The Government remains committed to supporting growth in all areas of the country, including coastal communities.

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell:

[\[222078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many recruitment and employment agencies his Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Kris Hopkins:

We have interpreted sourcing by recruitment and employment agencies to mean companies (third party suppliers) that we engage in recruiting permanent staff for the Department. We have used a total of five different agencies to source staff since 2010-11. A breakdown by year is provided below. The Department has not sourced any staff through recruitment or employment agencies from the beginning of the reporting year 2014/15 to date.

Year Number of agencies used to source staff

2010/11 3

2011/12 2

2012/13 1

2013/14 3

My Department has reduced staffing costs from £218 million a year in 2009-10 to £95 million in 2013-14. There is and remains a need to replace staff from general turnover and where we need specific technical skills. We are committed to open recruitment, so we can obtain individual staff with the best expertise from the private sector, the voluntary sector and other parts of the public sector.

■ Fracking

Barry Gardiner:

[\[222625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether it is a requirement that an environmental impact assessment be prepared for all hydraulic fracturing developments.

Brandon Lewis:

Currently, where a development involving hydraulic fracturing is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, an environmental impact assessment is required by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011. The Government is currently considering the detail of the amendment on hydraulic fracturing (NC19) introduced during the Infrastructure Bill last week, and we will make further statements in due course.

■ Local Government Services

Ms Diane Abbott:

[\[907340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the effect of real terms cumulative changes in local authority spending power on services in communities with the greatest needs since 2010-11.

Kris Hopkins:

Since 2010, we have delivered fair local government finance settlements to every part of the country. All councils have balanced their budgets, and most have reduced council tax in real-terms and maintained public satisfaction with services. Councils facing the highest demand for services continue to receive more funding and have higher spending power than less deprived authorities.

■ Local Plans

Sir Oliver Heald:

[\[907343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the use of neighbourhood plans to ensure development is in accordance with the wishes of local residents.

Brandon Lewis:

Over 1,300 communities in England have started neighbourhood planning, giving them the power to shape development and growth in their area. Once in force,

neighbourhood plans form part of the statutory development plan. Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

■ Mayors

Lisa Nandy: [\[222436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 26 January 2015 to Question 221426, what mechanisms will be put in place to enable the public to hold the city-region Mayor to account other than at election time; and whether he plans to consult the public about those arrangements.

Kris Hopkins:

In addition to the primary accountability of the Elected Mayor to the people of Greater Manchester through the ballot box, the Mayor, as all elected mayors, will be subject to scrutiny by elected members of Greater Manchester, scrutiny meetings being open to the public, to whom this Government has given the right to film, blog, tweet or use any other type of social media. The Mayor will also be subject to the provisions of the local government Transparency Code.

■ Mayors: Greater Manchester

Lisa Nandy: [\[222437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 26 January 2015 to Question 221428, whether the preliminary equality screening has begun and when the results of that screening will be published.

Kris Hopkins:

As stated in my earlier reply, the proposed Bill will be accompanied by an Impact Assessment and a preliminary equality screening will be undertaken before we decide whether a full Equality Impact Assessment is necessary.

Lisa Nandy: [\[222438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 26 January 2015 to Question 221428, whether the people of Greater Manchester will have a say in determining the salary for the city-region Mayor created by the devolution agreement.

Lisa Nandy: [\[222439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 26 January 2015 to Question 221428, whether he plans to set an upper salary limit for the city-region Mayor of Greater Manchester.

Kris Hopkins:

Local government allowances for elected representatives are locally-set, within the legal framework set out in legislation.

We would envisage that the provisions for the setting and scrutiny of allowances for an elected mayor in Greater Manchester should operate on similar lines as for other elected mayors and councillors.

Lisa Nandy: [\[222553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what arrangements he plans to put in place to allow the public to hold the appointed eleventh leader of the Greater Manchester city-region to account before the anticipated elections in 2017.

Kris Hopkins:

In the transitional period before the Mayor is elected, the appointed eleventh leader will be chair of the Combined Authority and will not exercise any functions individually.

■ Members: Correspondence

Sir Alan Beith: [\[222509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, when he plans to reply to the letter dated 22 October 2014 from the right hon. Member for Berwick upon Tweed about planning appeals in Warkworth, Northumberland.

Brandon Lewis:

The rt. hon. Member's letter of 22 October referred to papers that were not included with the letter. These were forwarded onto my Department in a further letter of 19 November. A response to that letter was sent on 30 January 2015.

■ Middle East Eye

Stephen Barclay: [\[222221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what funds his Department has allocated to Middle East Eye in each of the last 10 years.

Stephen Williams:

My Department has not allocated any funding to Middle East Eye in any of the last 10 years.

■ Planning Permission

Bill Esterson: [\[222386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department issues to local authorities on ensuring that applications for planning consent make clear who the developer is.

Brandon Lewis:

The Government specifies the information that must be contained on planning application forms; this information includes the name of the applicant. Information about the applicant is not normally a material consideration in the determination of planning applications because planning permission runs with the land and is not awarded to individuals.

■ Poverty

Stephen Timms: [\[222450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, when his Department last published data about the extent of deprivation in different parts of the UK.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Department for Communities and Local Government produces measures of neighbourhood deprivation in England. The most recent publication is the [English Indices of Deprivation 2010](#), published in March 2011. The devolved administrations each publish their own Indices of Deprivation but there is no UK-wide version. The Department is currently updating the English Indices of Deprivation, for publication in summer 2015.

■ Rabbits: Animal Breeding

Kerry McCarthy: [\[222510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many local authorities have approved planning applications for rabbit farms in each of the last five years for which data is available; and how many such farms were approved by each local authority in that period.

Brandon Lewis:

The requested information is not held by the Department. Although the Department collects information from local planning authorities on the numbers of planning applications decided each quarter, the numbers of applications relating to rabbit farms are not separately identified.

■ Radicalism

Stephen Barclay: [\[220830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to paragraph 4.2 of the report of the Prime Minister's Task Force on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism, published in December 2013, in which local authorities the Government has intervened because they are deemed not to be taking the problem of radicalisation seriously.

Stephen Williams:

[Holding answer 19 January 2015]: No local authority has been subject to statutory intervention because of a failure to take seriously the problem of radicalisation. The Government maintains close links with local authorities on work to tackle radicalisation. Should the need arise we will work with local authorities to address any concerns before considering whether there is any need for intervention.

■ Refuges

Dan Jarvis:

[\[222340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of refuges for women victims of domestic violence that have closed in each year since May 2010.

Kris Hopkins:

This Department does not make estimates of the number of refuge places for those fleeing domestic abuse. Decisions on the provision of accommodation for victims of domestic abuse are for local authorities. We expect local authorities to commission services based on the needs of their communities, taking account of locally available data sources.

Whilst Government does not directly fund domestic abuse refuges this Government has provided £6.5 billion to help vulnerable people through housing related support. A proportion of this money will be used by local authorities to commission refuge services. In addition we have made over £500 million available since 2010 to local authorities and the voluntary sector to prevent and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping including support for victims of domestic abuse.

In November 2014 we made available £10 million (2014-16) for local authorities, working with specialist domestic abuse service providers, to stop the closure of refuges and improve and grow existing provision. We also issued new statutory guidance that makes clear the practice of providing refuge to support only to local victims is unacceptable and which set out clear standards that refuges services should meet.

The dynamics of domestic abuse mean that accommodation can play an important role in the resolution of interpersonal abuse and conflict. This is why the homelessness legislation in England provides one of the strongest safety nets in the world for families with children and for vulnerable people who become homeless through no fault of their own.

We also fund UKRefugesOnline a UK wide database of domestic violence services which supports the national 24 hour free phone domestic violence helpline. This service enables those working with victims of domestic violence to identify appropriate services and potential refuge vacancies around the country so that victims can get the help they need as quickly as possible.

In addition, this Government has ring-fenced nearly £40 million of funding for specialist local domestic and sexual violence support services until 2015. This funding is used to part-fund 54 multi-agency risk assessment conference co-ordinators and 144 independent domestic violence advisers. We have piloted and rolled out Clare's Law and domestic violence protection orders; extended the definition of domestic abuse to cover controlling behaviour and teenage relationships; run two successful campaigns to challenge perceptions of abuse; and placed Domestic Homicide Reviews on a statutory footing to make sure lessons are learned from individual tragedies. More recently we have added an amendment to the Serious Crime Bill at Commons Committee stage to

create a new offence of domestic abuse. The amendment closes the gap in the current legal framework to capture repeated or continuous coercive and controlling behaviour, specifically where that behaviour takes place in an ongoing intimate partner or inter-familial relationship.

■ Shops

Eric Ollerenshaw: [\[907349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he has taken to support local shops and high streets.

Chris White: [\[907350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he has taken to support local shops and high streets.

Penny Mordaunt:

Since 2010, we have helped create over 360 town teams, given over £18 million to towns - funding successful initiatives such as 'Love your Local Market'. We have increased business rate discounts for 300,000 businesses, strengthened the role of Business Improvement Districts, introduced new permitted development rights and are tackling aggressive parking enforcement.

■ Social Rented Housing: Repairs and Maintenance

Rushanara Ali: [\[222507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of introduction of Florrie's law on total cumulative costs charged to leaseholders in (a) Tower Hamlets, (b) London and (c) the UK.

Brandon Lewis:

We have not made a detailed assessment of the cumulative savings to leaseholders from our reforms to increase protection against unreasonable charges.

The Government is determined to protect the rights of leaseholders, and the introduction of Florrie's Law means that councils cannot levy huge bills for government-funded repair work on those who have little or no hope of meeting their demands.

The Government has gone further in protecting leaseholders by ensuring that any local authority who bid for a share of the £145 million Decent Homes backlog funding for 2015/16 had to:

- set out the council estimates for the main elements of works to each estate, both for tenanted and leaseholder properties;
- explain how it would fund the extra costs on each estate if the £15,000 cap is lower than the estimated works costs for leaseholders;
- state what help it would be giving to leaseholders, such as loans or deferred payment arrangements;
- offer affordable repayment terms;
- provide a sample of its documentation showing how it explains estimated charges to leaseholders. This will include: alerting resident leaseholders to the cap; how it describes the works; a breakdown of charges for the main elements of the works; overheads; contingency;

dispute protocols; and how any savings are distributed to leaseholders where profit-sharing arrangements exist; and - publish on its website the details of its procurement strategy.

This Government's changes to leaseholder protection apply only to England.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Aerials

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown: [\[222271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what targets he has set for mobile telephone coverage improvements through the MIP local telephone mast project; and when he expects those targets to be met.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Government is committed to taking mobile coverage to as many premises as possible - the target is to cover those in the last 0.3-0.4% of the population who receive no basic mobile coverage. The programme is due to complete in 2016.

■ Broadband

Chi Onwurah: [\[222383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 19 January 2015 to Question 220723, whether that advertising campaign was funded from the BBC topslice.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The national broadband marketing campaign was funded from the Superfast Broadband Programme budget, which is in turn funded from the TV licence fee.

■ National Gallery

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[222441\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what the cost has been of hiring externally contracted staff at the National Gallery during the last 12 months.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[222442\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate he has made of the cost of hiring externally contracted staff at the National Gallery during the next 12 months.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Department has not made any estimates of the National Gallery's externally contracted staff. The National Gallery operates at arm's length from the Department, and as such has responsibility for making its own estimates. I have therefore asked the Director of the National Gallery to write to the Hon. Member. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[222443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent representations he has received about plans to hire externally contracted staff at the National Gallery.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Department was informed of the National Gallery's proposal to outsource visitor services and security in July 2014. The National Gallery operates at arm's length from the Department, and as such has responsibility for its own staffing and service arrangements.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[222444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether his Department has been informed by the National Gallery of any proposals to vary the level of the Gallery's services to the public during the next 12 months.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Department has not been informed by the National Gallery of any proposals to vary the level of service to the public during the next twelve months.

■ Social Networking

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[221971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps the Government is taking to regulate social media providers.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Government has not taken any steps to regulate social media providers beyond the basic provision of the criminal law. The open nature of the Internet has been central to its ability to deliver innovative services that consumers want and need, and we believe it is important that this should continue. We do, however, expect social media companies to act responsibly towards their consumers and have encouraged them to put robust processes in place, including having clear and easy to use reporting buttons, and to act promptly when abuse is reported.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces: Crimes of Violence

Karl Turner: [\[219607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many allegations of (a) rape, (b) sexual assault and (c) domestic violence were made to the (i) Royal Military Police, (ii) Royal Naval Police and (iii) Royal Air Force Police in each year since 2010.

Anna Soubry:

[Holding answer 9 January 2015]: All allegations of rape, sexual assault and domestic violence made by or against members of the Armed Forces are taken very seriously by

the Ministry of Defence. An investigation may be conducted by either the civil or Service police.

The tables below show the number of alleged cases of rape and sexual assault (including assault by penetration) that were investigated, or where the investigation is still ongoing, by each branch of the Service police in each year from 2010 to 2014.

ROYAL NAVY POLICE (RNP) INVESTIGATIONS

| YEAR | RAPE (AS DEFINED BY SCHEDULE ONE OF THE SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT 2003) | SEXUAL ASSAULT (INCLUDING ASSAULT BY PENETRATION (AS DEFINED BY SCHEDULE TWO & THREE OF THE SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT 2003) |
|------|---|---|
| 2010 | 2 | 1 |
| 2011 | 0 | 10 |
| 2012 | 0 | 3 |
| 2013 | 1 | 11 |
| 2014 | 1 | 9 |

ROYAL MILITARY POLICE (RMP) INVESTIGATIONS

| YEAR | RAPE (AS DEFINED BY SECTION ONE OF THE SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT 2003) | SEXUAL ASSAULT (INCLUDING ASSAULT BY PENETRATION (AS DEFINED BY SECTION TWO & THREE OF THE SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT 2003) |
|------|--|--|
| 2010 | 19 | 64 |
| 2011 | 18 | 48 |
| 2012 | 22 | 36 |
| 2013 | 23 | 43 |
| 2014 | 26 | 40 |

ROYAL AIR FORCE POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

| YEAR | RAPE(AS DEFINED BY SECTION ONE OF THE SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT 2003) | SEXUAL ASSAULT (INCLUDING ASSAULT BY PENETRATION (AS DEFINED BY SECTION TWO & THREE OF THE SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT 2003) |
|------|---|--|
| 2010 | 3 | 9 |
| 2011 | 2 | 5 |
| 2012 | 2 | 4 |
| 2013 | 2 | 8 |
| 2014 | 1 | 2 |

Domestic violence is not a crime classification, but may be recorded under the crime classification of violence, for example battery, assault or grievous bodily harm. For the Service police to establish which offences are as a result of domestic violence would require an individual review of all cases, which could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ **Armed Forces: Mental Illness**

Dan Jarvis:

[\[222253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 27 January 2015 to Question 221805, what estimate he has made of the number of service personnel who have suffered mental illness in each of the last 10 years.

Anna Soubry:

The following table shows the number of UK Armed Forces personnel who were assessed as having a mental health condition, either at one of the military Departments of Community Mental Health (DCMH) or one of the facilities contracted by Ministry Of Defence (MOD) to provide in-patient treatment, from 2007 to 2014.

| FINANCIAL YEAR (FY) | NUMBER OF PERSONNEL ASSESSED |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 2007-08 | 3,559 |
| 2008-09 | 3,199 |
| 2009-10 | 3,753 |
| 2010-11 | 3,894 |
| 2011-12 | 3,927 |
| 2012-13 | 4,943 |

| FINANCIAL YEAR (FY) | NUMBER OF PERSONNEL ASSESSED |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 2013-14 | 5,159 |

Up to the end of FY2011-12, data was sourced from DCMH returns. From FY 2012-13 onwards, additional figures were obtained from the electronic patient record held on the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP). DMICP records include mental healthcare treatment provided at other facilities, such as local military primary health centres.

The MOD has compiled central records of personnel with mental health conditions since 2007. To identify mental health assessments prior to 2007 would require a search of individual medical records and would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Armed Forces: Offences against Children

Karl Turner: [\[219606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many allegations of child abuse there have been in the armed forces in each year since 2010.

Anna Soubry:

[Holding answer 9 January 2015]: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) holds information about investigations of alleged child abuse where the Service Police had jurisdiction and the investigative lead. Numbers of investigations in each year since 2010 are set out below. Information about allegations that have been investigated by the Home Office Police Forces is not held by the MOD.

Child abuse is defined here as offences under Section 1 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933, Section 27 of the Offences Against the Persons Act 1861 and any offences within the Sexual Offences Act 2003 where the victim was under 18.

| YEAR | NUMBER OF INVESTIGATIONS BY THE SERVICE POLICE |
|------|--|
| 2010 | 31 |
| 2011 | 17 |
| 2012 | 18 |
| 2013 | 16 |
| 2014 | 16 |

■ Military Aircraft

Angus Robertson: [\[222053\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 14 January 2015 to Question 220804, on military aircraft, if he will place a copy of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory document in the Library.

Mr Mark Francois:

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory document titled "Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA): Fast-Jet Mid Air Collision Risk (Typhoon)" dated 12 March 2014, redacted in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, will be placed in the Library of the House shortly.

■ NATO

Mr Tom Watson: [R] [\[222431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 12 January 2015, to Question 220027, if he will place in the Library a copy of the terms of reference agreed at the meeting of the NATO Reaper MQ-9 Users Group.

Mr Mark Francois:

Once all four MQ-9 Users Group participant nations have formally signed off the group's Terms of Reference and agreed to their public release, a copy will be placed in the Library of the House.

■ Syria

Mr Tom Watson: [R] [\[222433\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Written Statement of 21 October 2014, Official Report, column 63WS, on the Middle East, how many UK Reaper aircraft are conducting missions in Syria; and whether authorisations have been sought for any missions by those aircraft other than for surveillance.

Mr Mark Francois:

No UK Reaper missions have been conducted in Syria other than for surveillance purposes. No authority has been granted for the discharge of weapons from UK Reaper aircraft operating in Syrian airspace. I am withholding information on the number of UK Reaper aircraft conducting missions in Syria as its disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ Trident

Angus Robertson: [\[222052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the year-on-year future spending on the development phase of the replacement for Trident.

Mr Philip Dunne:

As stated in the UK Future Nuclear Deterrent 2014 Update to Parliament, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) is more than halfway through a five year, £3.3 billion, Assessment Phase for the Successor submarine programme.

To the end of financial year 2013-14, a total of £1,243 million has been spent on this Assessment Phase. The MOD expects to commit around a further £2 billion before a Main Gate investment decision in 2016.

Estimated spending for individual years is being withheld as it relates to the formulation of Government policy and release would prejudice commercial interests.

■ Unmanned Air Vehicles

Mr Tom Watson: [R] [[222427](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 19 January 2015 to Question 220792, whether his Department has identified any defect in the Reapers returned to the UK.

Mr Mark Francois:
No.

Mr Tom Watson: [R] [[222434](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 19 January 2015 to Question 220793, for how long his Department intends to store Reapers in the UK.

Mr Mark Francois:
No decision has been taken on how long the Reapers will be stored in the UK.

Mr Tom Watson: [R] [[222435](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 19 January 2015 to Question 220792, whether any personnel from Squadron 39 are currently embedded with US forces.

Mr Mark Francois:
There are currently five personnel from the UK Reaper Force on loan service to US Forces in an instructional and test and evaluation role. They are based in the US but are still under UK administration.

■ USA

Angus Robertson: [[220401](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) value and (b) start and finish date is of each contract for foreign military sales procured by UK defence staff based in the US in each year since 2012.

Mr Philip Dunne:
[Holding answer 19 January 2015]: Between January 2012 and December 2014, British Defence Staff US (BDSUS) agreed 77 new foreign military sales (FMS) cases with the US Government. These cases relate to the supply of goods and services to be provided over

the period January 2012 to March 2021 and were worth \$784 million. Between January 2012 and December 2014, BDSUS also agreed 244 amendments and modifications to existing cases. These modifications and amendments were worth an additional \$417 million and relate to the supply of goods and services to be provided over the period January 2012 to March 2021. Details for each individual FMS case, amendment and modification are attached with negative figures representing a reduction in agreed FMS case value.

Attachments:

1. Contracts for Foreign Military Sales [220401 - Contracts for FMS Procured by UK Defence Staff in the US.doc]

EDUCATION

■ Children in Care: Alcoholic Drinks and Drugs

Steve McCabe:

[\[222184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2015 to Question 219299, if she will collect information on the number of children in residential care addicted to narcotics or alcohol.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The Department for Education collects data on the number of children in residential care who have a substance misuse problem whether it is with drugs or alcohol. There are no plans to break that collection down into two sub categories. If children in residential care have a substance misuse problem – whatever the substance is – the support and services they need should be set out in their care plan. This government has introduced a significant programme of reform to improve the quality of care in children's homes. The 'Quality Standards' for children's homes, which, subject to parliamentary approval, will come into force in April 2015 include a health and wellbeing standard. This standard will be measured against the advice, services and support provided to promote children's health and well-being and ensure they have healthy lifestyles.

■ Children in Care: Drugs

Steve McCabe:

[\[222185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2015 to Question 219299, what steps her Department takes when young people living in residential care with substance abuse issues refuse intervention.

Mr Edward Timpson:

Every looked after child must have a care plan, which takes account of their needs, including any health needs. Problems with substance misuse would be considered as part of this. The Department for Education would expect homes to support young people in dealing with substance misuse and draw in specialist health and substance misuse support to advise and offer treatment where needed.

Young people may refuse the support offered or may not wish to co-operate with a particular treatment or intervention. In these circumstances care staff and relevant health professionals will need to consider whether alternative forms of support or a more specialist placement would be appropriate in meeting the child's needs.

Care staff will still need to work with the consent of the child or young person. Good quality relationships and trust established early between care staff and young people will support this.

However, in circumstances where refusal of treatment poses a significant risk of permanent injury or death, ultimately a court could overrule the young person's decision.

Current statutory guidance for children's homes is clear that:

"When a child or young person needs additional assistance to promote their health, the children's homes staff should work with the child's social worker so that they have proper and immediate access to any other specialist support required." - (Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Vol 5: Children's homes para 2.49).

■ Children's Centres

Dan Jarvis: [\[222557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate her Department has made of the average unit cost of a designated Sure Start Children's Centre.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Local authorities have the freedom to target their resources where they will best support the needs of local communities, provided they meet their statutory duty to ensure sufficient children centre services.

Children's centres are funded through the Early Intervention Grant (EIG), part of the 'Business Rates Retention Scheme'. This includes money to provide early education for two-year-olds and funding to retain a national network of children's centres.

The Department for Education does not make estimates of unit costs for children's centres because of the variety of approaches to the structure of a children's centre network, and delivery of services, that local authorities are free to employ – bearing in mind statutory guidance – to best meet local need.

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell: [\[222082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many recruitment and employment agencies her Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Mr Nick Gibb:

The numbers of agencies used are provided in the table below:

| FINANCIAL YEAR | TOTAL NUMBER OF AGENCIES USED |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2014 - 2015 to date | 18 |
| 2013 - 2014 | 14 |
| 2012 - 2013 | 18 |
| 2011- 2012 | 6 |
| 2010 - 2011 | 11 |

■ Foster Care

Steve McCabe: [\[222181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 12 January 2015 to Question 220174, what information her Department holds on children born outside the UK reported to be in private fostering arrangements, who are subsequently placed in residential care.

Steve McCabe: [\[222182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 12 January 2015 to Question 220174, what information her Department holds on the number of new private fostering arrangements of children born outside the UK which have broken down.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The information requested is not available.

The Department for Education publishes all the information it collects on private fostering arrangements in the statistical first release entitled Notifications of private fostering arrangements in England: 2014:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/notifications-of-private-fostering-arrangements-in-england-2014

■ Free Schools

Kevin Brennan: [\[222135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for what reason she did not publish the applications forms for the Kings Science Academy, Bradford and the Beccles Free School, Suffolk along with the application forms for the other successful Wave 1, 2 and 3 free schools; and if she will publish those application forms.

Mr Edward Timpson:

In the interests of transparency we plan to release all successful free school applications. The first part of this transparency release was on 16 January 2015 when we published successful applications from waves 1 – 3. The department aims to publish successful applications from waves 4 – 7 in June.

There is an ongoing police investigation at Kings Science Academy, Bradford, and it would be inappropriate to release the application at this time.

The Beccles Free School, Suffolk, application was published the following working day on 19 January 2015.

■ New Schools Network

Dan Jarvis: [\[222555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the total value is of the contract awarded by her Department to the New Schools Network.

Dan Jarvis: [\[222556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the contract awarded by her Department to the New Schools Network expires.

Dan Jarvis: [\[222558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what annual funding her Department has allocated the New Schools Network in (a) 2015-16 and (b) 2016-17.

Mr Edward Timpson:

Following a competitive bidding process, in January 2014, the department approved grant funding for New Schools Network (NSN) to provide pre-application support to parents, teachers and community groups and others hoping to open free schools. The grant also enables NSN to support free schools in the pipeline and open free schools.

The grant has a total value of £2,961,200 and runs from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2016.

It is worth £1,486,200 in 2015-16. The department may extend the grant to 2016-17.

■ Pre-school Education: Finance

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [\[222230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the increase in the schools budget from £35 billion to £39 billion announced in the Spending Review 2010 included Early Years Entitlement funding under the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Mr David Laws:

The real terms increase in the schools budget set out at Spending Review 2010 did not include early education funding. However, funding for early education has increased by over £1 billion from 2010-11 to 2014-15, following the continued entitlement to 15 hours of free early education per week for all three and four-year-olds and the roll-out of the new entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds.

■ Schools: Swimming

Karen Lumley: [221844]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the feasibility of teaching water safety education in schools as a distinct topic from the national curriculum requirement for schools to teach children to swim.

Karen Lumley: [221845]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools currently teach water safety education.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The Government is fully committed to ensuring young people learn to swim and stay safe in water. In reforming the national curriculum, the new physical education (PE) programme of study, including the specifications for swimming and water safety, were developed through consultation with subject experts and teachers. The draft programme of study was subject to statutory consultation from 7 February to 16 April 2013.

Swimming and water safety is compulsory for primary-aged children in maintained schools; the national curriculum specifically states that pupils should be taught to perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations. The programme of study for PE is available online here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-physical-education-programmes-of-study>.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

■ Coal Gasification

Alex Cunningham: [222204]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, when his Department's Working Group on Underground Coal Gasification last met; and what the conclusions were of that meeting.

Matthew Hancock:

The fourth meeting of the Group took place on 1st December 2014. The minutes of that meeting and all previous meetings of the Group will shortly be posted to the Government web site.

Alex Cunningham: [222205]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, when he last met the Coal Authority to discuss the potential development of a deep Underground Coal Gasification sector in the UK.

Matthew Hancock:

I last met with the Coal Authority on 6th January 2015 as part of its core role and strategy in managing c£1bn of environmental and safety liabilities associated with coal mining. The Coal Authority's role in relation to Underground Coal Gasification is the granting of licenses to access coal reserves for potential exploitation. They are a member

of the Department's Working Group on UCG which is examining licensing policy in this area.

Alex Cunningham: [\[222207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if he will make an estimate of potential tax revenues from the development and operation of the deep offshore underground coal gasification projects from licences issued by the Coal Authority in each region and constituent part of the UK.

Matthew Hancock:

Underground Coal Gasification is an emerging technology and there are currently no commercial projects. As such no estimate has been made of potential tax revenues.

Alex Cunningham: [\[222208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if he will update his Department's estimates of the UK coal resource which could be suitable for deep underground coal gasification development in (a) onshore and (b) offshore locations.

Matthew Hancock:

No licences have been granted by the Coal Authority for onshore UCG projects and we do not have any estimates for onshore UCG resource.

At present there are 20 current conditional offshore licences granted by the Coal Authority for potential underground coal gasification (UCG) projects. The licensees' estimates of the coal resource suitable for UCG in these licence areas equates to some 4.1 billion tonnes.

Alex Cunningham: [\[222209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to simplify regulations applying to deep offshore Underground Coal Gasification projects.

Matthew Hancock:

DECC has established a Working Group to co-ordinate our interests in deep offshore Underground Coal Gasification and review the current licensing processes. This group is considering the regulatory process and will provide advice shortly.

■ Coal Gasification: Scotland

Alex Cunningham: [\[222211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what recent discussions he has had with the Scottish Government on (a) deep offshore Underground Coal Gasification and (b) developing access rights for that gasification technique following the recommendation in the Smith Commission report on devolving powers on shale gas mineral access rights to the Scottish Parliament.

Matthew Hancock:

Ministers have had no recent discussions with Scottish Ministers on these issues.

■ Electricity Generation

Mike Weatherley: [\[221520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what plans he has to make provision for alternate means of electricity generation (a) to replace ageing nuclear power stations and (b) to meet the reduction in carbon emissions required by the Industrial Emissions Directive.

Matthew Hancock:

The Government has a range of measures in place to secure investment in new electricity generation capacity. As part of our reforms to the electricity market we have introduced a Capacity Market which will ensure we have sufficient reliable capacity on the system to meet demand, and Contracts for Difference to ensure we get the investment we need in low carbon capacity to meet our carbon reduction objectives.

The Government is supporting industry's construction of new nuclear power plants via facilitative actions. Industry is currently planning a capacity of 16GW or more by 2030, exceeding the 9.4GW capacity of the existing nuclear fleet.

■ Energy: Billing

Pat Glass: [\[222023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what information his Department holds on the number of families with children in (a) North West Durham constituency and (b) the UK who are currently in debt to their energy suppliers.

Matthew Hancock:

The Department does not hold information on how many families are in debt with their energy companies.

Ofgem closely monitors domestic energy suppliers' performance and publishes information in relation to debt owed by domestic electricity and gas account holders in Great Britain, but they do not publish data relating to families with children or constituency areas. At the end of 2013, latest data available, 1.5 million domestic electricity account holders and 1.4 million domestic gas accounts holders were in debt to their energy supplier:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/ofgem-publications/92186/annualreport2013finalforpublication.pdf>.

(Ofgem's Domestic Suppliers' Social Obligations: 2013 Annual Report)

Attachments:

1. Domestic Suppliers Social Obligations: 2013 Report [annualreport2013finalforpublication.pdf]

Jim Fitzpatrick: [\[222299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what information his Department holds on how many families with children in Poplar and Limehouse constituency are in debt to their energy companies.

Matthew Hancock:

The Department does not hold information on how many families are in debt with their energy companies.

Ofgem closely monitors domestic energy suppliers' performance and publishes information in relation to debt owed by domestic electricity and gas accounts holders in Great Britain, but they do not publish data relating to families with children or constituency areas. At the end of 2013, latest data available, 1.5 million domestic electricity account holders and 1.4 million domestic gas account holders were in debt to their energy supplier Ofgem's Domestic Suppliers' Social Obligations: 2013 Annual Report:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/ofgem-publications/92186/annualreport2013finalforpublication.pdf>.

Attachments:

1. Domestic Suppliers Social Obligations: 2013 Report [annualreport2013finalforpublication.pdf]

■ Energy: Prices**Chi Onwurah:**[\[222108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if he will amend the Social and Environment Statutory Guidance to the Gas and Electric Market Authority to include families with children as a vulnerable group.

Matthew Hancock:

[Holding answer 29 January 2015]: The Ofgem Review of 2010-11 recommended that the Social and Environmental Statutory Guidance to the Gas and Electricity Market Authority should be replaced with a new Strategy and Policy Statement. The guidance will be repealed once the statement is designated. The draft statement, which Government consulted on last year, makes it clear that helping vulnerable households is one of the Government's strategic priorities to which Ofgem should have regard to when carrying out its regulatory functions.

■ Fuel Poverty**Pat Glass:**[\[221923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what steps he is taking to support families with children who fall behind on payments to energy companies.

Matthew Hancock:

This Government has implemented a range of measures to help vulnerable households reduce their energy bills, including colder weather payments and warm home discount.

For those customers who fall behind on payments, suppliers are obligated to take their ability to pay into account when setting a repayment plan. Some suppliers also provide special grants and services to help families. Further information is available free from the Home Heat Helpline on 0800 33 66 99.

Pat Glass: [\[221924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to ensure that families with children are treated as a vulnerable group by energy companies.

Matthew Hancock:

A new Strategy and Policy Statement, which Government consulted on last year makes it clear that helping vulnerable households is one of the Government's strategic priorities to which Ofgem should have regard when carrying out its regulatory functions. The statement will replace the existing Social and Environmental Statutory Guidance to the Gas and Electricity Market Authority, as recommended by the Ofgem Review of 2010-11.

Derek Twigg: [\[222549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many families with children in (a) Halton and (b) the UK are currently in debt to their energy companies.

Matthew Hancock:

The Department does not hold information on how many families are in debt with their energy companies.

Ofgem closely monitors domestic energy suppliers' performance and publishes information in relation to debt owed by domestic electricity and gas accounts holders in Great Britain, but they do not publish data relating to families with children or constituency areas. At the end of 2013, latest data available, 1.5 million domestic electricity account holders and 1.4 million domestic gas account holders were in debt to their energy supplier, Ofgem's Domestic Suppliers' Social Obligations: 2013 Annual Report:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/ofgem-publications/92186/annualreport2013finalforpublication.pdf>.

Attachments:

1. Domestic Suppliers Social Obligations: 2013 Report [annualreport2013finalforpublication.pdf]

■ **Fuel Poverty: North East**

Chi Onwurah: [\[222408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what steps the Government is taking to prioritise support for families with children when they fall behind on their energy bills in (a) the North East and (b) Newcastle upon Tyne.

Matthew Hancock:

This Government has implemented a range of measures to help vulnerable households across Great Britain reduce their energy bills, including colder weather payments and warm home discount.

For those customers who fall behind on payments, suppliers are obligated to take their ability to pay into account when setting a repayment plan. Some suppliers also provide special grants and services to help families. Further information is available free from the Home Heat Helpline on 0800 33 66 99.

■ Offshore Industry

Alex Cunningham: [\[221873\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what recent steps he has taken to protect (a) employment levels, (b) infrastructure integrity and (c) production capacity in the offshore oil and gas industry.

Matthew Hancock:

[Holding answer 28 January 2015]: My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State has asked Andy Samuel, Chief Executive designate of the Oil and Gas Authority, to accelerate work with industry to identify key risks to oil and gas production in the UK Continental Shelf and identify what further measures might be taken by government and industry to mitigate them, including on infrastructure.

Dr Samuel will also be attending the Aberdeen City Oil and Gas Summit on 2 February and participating in the jobs taskforce set up by the Scottish Government.

We are speedily implementing the Wood Review recommendations which aim to ensure maximum economic recovery of the UK's oil and gas resources.

Alex Cunningham: [\[222163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what recent discussions he has had with (a) trades unions and (b) Oil and Gas UK on employment levels in the offshore energy sector.

Matthew Hancock:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State meet with Oil and Gas UK and senior representatives from the oil and gas industry on 15th January in Aberdeen and tasked Dr Andy Samuel to lead an urgent commission to identify risks and what further measures might be taken by Government and industry to mitigate them. I convened PILOT on 13 January, including Trade Unions, Dr Samuel and industry representatives.

Dr Samuel and DECC officials also participated in the Jobs Taskforce which was held in Aberdeen on the 28 January and I will be visiting Aberdeen on 5 February.

■ Offshore Industry: Employment

Alex Cunningham: [\[222147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of the slowdown of activity in the North Sea in recent months on (a) seafarer and (b) helicopter crew employment levels in the offshore oil and gas industry supply chain.

Matthew Hancock:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change has engaged with the Oil and Gas Industry at a senior level to understand the current challenges. He has had no direct engagement with the Seafarers or the Helicopter industry.

■ **Oil: Prices****Mr Nigel Dodds:**[\[221516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what steps he will take to ensure that, in relation to home heating and travel, consumers will benefit directly from the recent fall in oil prices.

Matthew Hancock:

The Government has been absolutely clear that it expects the fall in crude oil prices to be passed to consumers as quickly as possible.

The price of petrol is at its lowest since October 2009 and diesel since March 2010. Heating oil is at its lowest price since October 2010.

We will be watching oil companies carefully to make sure they continue to pass through the falling oil price, bringing benefits to consumers and the wider economy.

Consumers and motorists and heating oil users are entitled to the best value for money and the Government is determined to ensure that they get it.

Alex Cunningham:[\[221871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what discussions he has had with the Oil and Gas Authority regarding the (a) regulatory and (b) industry response to the slump in global oil prices.

Matthew Hancock:

[Holding answer 28 January 2015]: My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State met Andy Samuel, Chief Executive designate of the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA), on 15 January and asked him to accelerate work with industry to identify key risks to oil and gas production in the UK Continental Shelf and identify what further measures might be taken by government and industry to mitigate them. This is in the light of the recent falls in global oil prices and is complementary to the strategic work the OGA is being set up to lead. I met Dr Samuel on 13 January and asked him to present his findings by the end of February. The OGA is scheduled to become operational as an Executive Agency of DECC from 1 April 2015.

■ **Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme****Mr David Davis:**[\[222390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, whether the payments made under the non-domestic renewable heat incentive scheme have been at the projected lower levels during the summer months since the start of the scheme.

Amber Rudd:

Non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) installations are paid quarterly. Payments are based upon heat meter readings submitted by applicants every 3 months from the date when the (accredited) application was submitted. These readings, in conjunction with the tariff level at which an installation was accredited, determine the level of payments.

Using the quarterly data collected, we have assessed the seasonality of renewable heat generated under the scheme, using natural gas demand as a comparator – see attached. The attached chart shows this seasonality is as expected, with scheme generation correlating with the seasonal variation in gas demand, including the lower demand in the summer months.

Attachments:

1. Charts for WPQ 222390 on RHI [Charts for WPQ 222390.pdf]

Mr David Davis:[\[222391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many inspectors are employed by Ofgem to ensure compliance with the non-domestic renewable heat incentive; for how many such inspectors Ofgem has made budgetary provision; and if he will make a statement.

Matthew Hancock:

Ofgem have a comprehensive audit strategy in place to ensure accredited installations remain compliant with the rules of the Non Domestic RHI. As part of this audit strategy, Ofgem have contracted with an external audit company to conduct a programme of site visits throughout the year, and therefore does not directly employ any inspectors. Ofgem takes the necessary compliance action on the basis of the audit reports received. Ofgem does not disclose details which could compromise the detection or deterrent effects of its audit programme, but the volume of audits is based on expert advice to deliver value for money while protecting the public purse.

■ Restoration**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**[\[221386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, whether the final recipient of Restoration Lump Sum was (a) private companies or (b) the public purse.

Matthew Hancock:

The British Coal Corporation operated a practice whereby it retained a portion of sums payable to those private sector firms it contracted to operate surface mining sites on its behalf. On a site by site basis, those formed lump sums which were progressively paid to the contractor for the purposes of funding restoration.

■ Sellafield

Paul Flynn: [\[221725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, with reference to the Written Statement of 13 January 2015, HC WS183, on Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, if he will publish on his departmental website the documents on the basis of which the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority concluded that a change in the parent body contractor for Sellafield management was now the best way forward.

Matthew Hancock:

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) will be placing appropriate information in the public domain in due course on the change of model at Sellafield.

Paul Flynn: [\[221726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, with reference to the Answer of 24 February 2014, Official Report, columns 141-2W, on Sellafield, what the evidential basis was for the Government's decision to endorse the decision of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority to continue the contract of Nuclear Management Partners into a second five-year period as the best way forward at that time.

Matthew Hancock:

The Government approved the original contract (for a 17 year period, with fixed review points) with Sellafield Ltd under the ownership of Nuclear Management Partners (NMP) in 2008. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) is responsible for managing that contract. All aspects of the contract review and the decision to extend the contract into the second term were made by the NDA Board in line with its duties and responsibilities under the Energy Act 2004.

The NDA reached its decision to roll the contract forward based on a thorough review of performance in the first period of the contract and consideration of all available options. That showed that whilst mixed, Sellafield was on track to meet 90% of its targets in the first five years of Nuclear Management Partners' contract and there had been significant improvements in safety.

The Department has oversight of all NDA activity and, given the particular importance of Sellafield, Ministers were kept fully informed of progress. We were satisfied that the NDA's review was thorough and endorsed the Board's decision on the basis that at the time it represented the best way forward.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Advertising

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[222496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her Department's advertising budget was in each financial year from 2010-11 to 2014-15.

Dan Rogerson:

The Core Department does not budget at this level of detail. Therefore, the information requested cannot be provided.

■ **Agriculture: Industrial Health and Safety**

Mark Pritchard:

[222296]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will meet the National Farmers' Union and the Health and Safety Executive to discuss possible measures to reduce the number of (a) injuries and (b) deaths in the farming sector.

George Eustice:

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) leads on health and safety in agriculture and provides essential information and guidance on this matter. I have no plans to meet the HSE or National Farmers' Union at present to discuss this issue.

However, I support the work of campaigns such as 'Make the Promise', to highlight the importance of farm safety.

■ **Animals: Poisoning**

Mr Nicholas Brown:

[222056]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate she has made of the number of animals which died from consumption of ethylene-glycol based anti-freeze in the last year; and what steps the Government has taken to reduce the number of animal deaths from ingestion of that substance.

Dan Rogerson:

We have no estimate for the number of animals that have died from ingesting anti-freeze. In common with most chemicals supplied for domestic use, anti-freeze is covered by the Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations. These require suppliers of dangerous chemicals to give information about the potential hazards to their customers, usually provided on the package itself.

■ **Communication**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[222497]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her Department's communications budget was in each year from 2010-11 to 2014-15.

Dan Rogerson:

The table below sets out the Core Department's communications budget in the years requested. The figures shown represent the total cost of the Department's Communications Directorate, including both pay and non-pay costs. The Directorate is responsible for both internal and external communications.

| YEAR | COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET (£M) |
|---------|-------------------------------|
| 2010-11 | 14.4 |
| 2011-12 | 13.0 |
| 2012-13 | 5.5 |
| 2013-14 | 4.3 |
| 2014-15 | 4.1 |

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell:

[\[222084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many recruitment and employment agencies her Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Dan Rogerson:

The number of recruitment and employment agencies core Defra has used to source both temporary and permanent staff in each year since 2010-11 is as follows:

| FINANCIAL YEAR | NO OF RECRUITMENT / EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES |
|----------------|---|
| 2010/11 | 39 |
| 2011/12 | 22 |
| 2012/13 | 18 |
| 2013/14 | 22 |
| 2014/15* | 21 |

*to 31 Dec 2014

■ Environment Protection: British Overseas Territories

Barry Gardiner:

[\[222174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many project applications have been submitted to the UK Overseas Territories Environment and Climate Fund (Darwin Plus) in each of the last three years.

George Eustice:

The number of applications submitted to the UK Overseas Territories Environment and Climate Fund (Darwin Plus) since its introduction in 2012 is as follows:

| YEAR | NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS |
|------|------------------------|
| 2012 | 44 |
| 2013 | 50 |
| 2014 | 44 |

Barry Gardiner: [\[222175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the role that the UK Overseas Territories Environment and Climate Fund (Darwin Plus) plays in delivering on (a) the UK Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy and (b) the UK's international environmental commitments.

George Eustice:

Most Darwin Plus projects last around 2 years so the majority of those approved in the first round in 2012 (starting work in April 2013) are still on-going. As a result no formal evaluation of the impact of Darwin Plus projects has yet taken place.

To obtain funding, applicants must demonstrate that the project will contribute to key UK Overseas Territories' (UKOT) environmental priorities (including the Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy and the annual Joint Ministerial Council Communiqué).

Projects are required to provide progress reports during the life of the project, and a final report at the end. These reports will be reviewed to assess how well projects have met their objectives. Once we have a range of completed projects available for evaluation we intend to make an assessment of how the portfolio of Darwin Plus projects has contributed to the delivery of the UK Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy and the UK's international environmental commitments that have been extended to the OTs.

Barry Gardiner: [\[222268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department plans to continue funding for the next round of the UK Overseas Territories Environment and Climate Fund (Darwin Plus).

George Eustice:

Defra remains committed to Darwin Plus, which was established under the 2012 Overseas Territories White Paper and is co-funded by Defra, DFID and FCO. We are also committed to funding the 27 live projects announced at the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council Meetings in November 2013 and December 2014. These are mostly two-year projects. Funding decisions for the next spending round will be taken after the General Election in May 2015.

■ Floods: Norfolk

Mr Henry Bellingham: [\[221989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what further investment in Norfolk's flood and sea defences she plans to make; and if she will make a statement.

Dan Rogerson:

We have allocated £57.6 million in flood and coastal erosion risk management Grant-in-Aid for projects in Norfolk over the next six years. This will support approximately 64 schemes led by Internal Drainage Boards, the Environment Agency, local councils and water companies.

■ Fly-tipping

Jim Shannon: [\[222114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will bring forward legislative proposals to enable the seizure of vehicles involved in fly tipping and illegal dumping.

Dan Rogerson:

Local authorities and the Environment Agency currently have powers to seize vehicles and property under the Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989.

We are currently consulting on proposals to commence similar powers under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and introduce new regulations, setting out revised procedures in respect of the stop, search and seizure of vehicles suspected of being involved in waste crime, including fly-tipping and illegal dumping of waste. The revised procedures will make it easier for local authorities and the Environment Agency to exercise the powers in order to identify who is responsible for committing waste offences. Subject to the outcome of the consultation we plan to make the Commencement Order and lay the revised regulations in March this year.

■ Food: EU Action

Kerry McCarthy: [\[222547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what representations she has made to the European Commission on publication of its communication on Building a Sustainable European Food System.

George Eustice:

The Government responded to the consultation which closed in October 2013 and welcomed the aims and objectives of the Communication on Building a Sustainable European Food System to improve actions to achieve a more sustainable food system across Europe.

Defra officials worked closely with the Commission and other Member States on the content of the draft communication.

■ Game: Animal Breeding

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[222501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer to the hon. Member for East Londonderry of 4 December 2014 to Question 217167, if she plans to publish the study on the scientific evidence for the welfare of game birds reared in cages.

George Eustice:

We still plan to publish the report in due course.

■ Game: Birds

Mr David Anderson: [\[222009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will ban the use of battery cages to confine breeding pheasants and partridges used for sporting purposes.

George Eustice:

The Government commissioned research into the use of cage rearing systems which it will publish in due course.

In the meantime, the Animal Welfare Act 2006 makes it an offence to cause any unnecessary suffering to an animal or to fail to provide for its welfare. In addition, the statutory Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds Reared for Sporting Purposes, which is made under the 2006 Act, provides game rearers with information on how to meet the welfare needs of their birds, as required under the 2006 Act.

■ Milk: Origin Marking

Jesse Norman: [\[222149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to improve the labelling of milk products so that it is easier to identify their country of origin.

George Eustice:

The Secretary of State met with European Commissioners in November to press for better country of origin labelling of milk and milk products. We have been encouraging businesses to volunteer the origin of the liquid milk in dairy products through the UK industry Voluntary Principles on Country of Origin Labelling.

The Commission is due to publish a feasibility report in February on origin labelling of milk and milk products. We expect this be discussed at the 16 March Agriculture and Fisheries Council.

■ Milk: Prices

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:

[\[221946\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will take steps to ensure that supermarkets (a) do not sell British milk below the cost of production and (b) include British milk under their Fairtrade agendas.

George Eustice:

All operators in the supply chain should receive a fair price for their goods. We regularly bring together supermarkets, processors and farmers through the Dairy Supply Chain Forum to discuss issues such as collaboration, risk management and market volatility. I am meeting industry leaders shortly to discuss what more can be done to get through this volatile period and help to build a long-term resilient dairy industry where businesses can thrive.

The Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) was set up to help suppliers if they feel they are being treated unfairly by retailers, and we encourage dairy suppliers to use the GCA where they feel the grocery code has been breached.

The Fairtrade mark is a private initiative which can be used for products which have been sourced from products in developing countries.

■ Non-native Species: British Overseas Territories

Barry Gardiner:

[\[222264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assistance her Department offers the UK Overseas Territories to identify and tackle the threat that invasive invertebrate pests pose to native plants.

George Eustice:

The UK Government is committed to assisting our Overseas Territories (OTs) in protecting their biodiversity. Territory Governments are constitutionally responsible for the conservation of their natural environments and we work in partnership with them to identify where our support can be most effective, including through access to technical advice and expertise, training and through the OTs Environment and Climate Fund (Darwin Plus).

Preventing the establishment of invasive alien species and eradicating or controlling invasive species is one of our priorities in supporting biodiversity conservation in the OTs. Defra has funded various projects on biosecurity, bio-control and the spread of non-native species in the OTs, including contributing funding to a RSPB-led study of 2,000 islands within 11 OTs to assist in the prioritisation of the eradication of invasive vertebrates, a review of the rate, spread and risks posed by invasive species in the Falklands, and developing capacity to restore islands by the removal of invasive species in five Caribbean Territories.

Defra also funds the Overseas Territories Pest Identification Service operated by the Food and Environment Research Agency which identifies invasive invertebrate plant pests.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Antisemitism

James Morris: [R] [222008]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on the terror threat to Jewish targets in Europe.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We work closely with our international partners in the EU and beyond to tackle the threat that terrorism poses to all communities, with regular discussions on security and counter-terrorism issues. Currently, we are working with European partners to further strengthen areas of operational and policy co-operation, to support information and international data sharing, to implement a common strategy to counter the threat from 'foreign fighters', and to counter radicalisation both within and outside the EU.

■ British Nationals Abroad: Terrorism

Mr Nigel Dodds: [222400]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what advice his Department provides to UK citizens employed in academic institutions internationally on (a) countries in which there is a terrorist threat and (b) what to do in the event of a terrorist attack.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office provides online travel advice for British nationals (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>).

This includes information and advice about the threat from terrorism. We also publish a page of information and advice about how to reduce your risk from terrorism while abroad (<https://www.gov.uk/reduce-your-risk-from-terrorism-while-abroad>).

In the event of an attack we advise British nationals to first and foremost follow the guidance of the local authorities.

■ British Overseas Territories

Barry Gardiner: [222266]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department plans to continue funding for the next round of the UK Overseas Territories Environment and Climate Fund (Darwin Plus).

Mr Hugo Swire:

We remain committed to Darwin Plus, which was established under the Overseas Territories White Paper and is co-funded by Defra, DFID and FCO. We are also committed to funding the 27 live projects announced at the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council Meetings in November 2013 and December 2014. These are mostly two-year projects. Funding decisions for the next spending round will be taken after the General Election.

■ Burma

Mr David Ward:

[\[222511\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the government of Burma has taken steps to implement the declaration to end sexual violence which it signed in June 2014.

Mr Hugo Swire:

While we welcomed the Burmese government's endorsement of the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict and attendance at the Global Summit in June 2014, their implementation of the commitments contained within it has been limited.

We continue to raise the issue of sexual violence with the Burmese government, as I did I when I met Deputy Foreign Minister U Thant Kyaw in June 2014. Most recently, my Right Hon. Friend the Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Lynne Featherstone), in her capacity as Champion for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, discussed sexual violence with senior members of the Burmese government and civil society during her visit to Burma in January.

While there have been some developments, such as the conviction in a civilian court last year of a Burmese soldier for the rape of a minor, there is much more that can and should be done. We continue to encourage the Burmese government to take concrete action, by strengthening legislation, reducing impunity for perpetrators, and improving access to justice for survivors.

The Declaration also commits the international community to support conflict-affected states in strengthening their capacity to prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflict. The UK has allocated over £300,000 to projects doing this in Burma. The prevention of sexual violence in conflict is also a key element of our defence engagement with Burma and is included, along with the importance of human rights and the rule of law, in any education courses we deliver to the military in Burma.

■ Egypt

Mr Nigel Dodds:

[\[222364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on allegations that rape is being used as a tool by the police in Egypt to suppress activists; and if he will make representations on this matter to his counterpart in that country.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are deeply concerned by the Amnesty International report about sexual assaults on activists. Our embassy in Cairo is in close and regular contact with local Non-Governmental Organisations, particularly those focussing on the rights of women and gender-based violence. We raised our concerns regarding the conditions for detainees and the rights of women during the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review of Egypt's human rights record. We also called on the Government of Egypt to

move forward their National Action Plan on Violence Against Women with a clear, credible implementation plan and to invite the Special Rapporteur for Violence Against Women to visit. In 2014 the UK sponsored a delegation of Ministry of Justice officials to meet UK counterparts and discuss issues of gender-based violence. These discussions helped inform drafting of the new Egyptian law. We continue to discuss the issue of gender-based violence with the Government of Egypt and are seeking practical ways that we can work together in this area.

Tim Farron: [\[222392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the Egyptian government about the case of Karim Ashraf Mohamed al-Banna.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Our Embassy in Cairo is closely monitoring the case of Karim Ashraf Mohamed al-Banna. I raised the importance of protecting the human rights enshrined in Egypt's constitution, which include freedom of belief and worship, with a number of senior figures in the Egyptian Government, most recently during my visit to Cairo on 12-16 January. UK officials also discussed the importance of religious freedom with the Egyptian Deputy Assistant Minister for Human Rights, Dr Mahy Abdel Latif, on 14 January 2015. Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers have been clear throughout recent events in Egypt that freedom of religion or belief needs to be protected. We deplore all discrimination against any individual on the basis of their religion or belief as well as constraints on their freedom to manifest their religion or belief. As article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell: [\[222085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many recruitment and employment agencies his Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Civil Service-wide Recruitment Freeze was introduced in May 2010, which limits new appointments to front-line and business critical roles only, this usually means specialist roles.

The number of recruitment and employment agencies we have used for external recruitment in the UK from financial year 2010-11 onwards is:

2010/11 2011/12 2012/13 2013/14 2014/15

7 4 8 6 2

Recruitment agencies are used to recruit for positions that require specialist skills and expertise not available elsewhere in the organisation.

The FCO also has a separate contract in place with Hays Specialist Recruitment for the provision of temporary staff for essential frontline roles whilst internal recruitment processes take place.

■ Iran

Guto Bebb: [\[222270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the recent call by the Chief of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran for increased uranium enrichment.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are aware of these statements. Under the Joint Plan of Action, which has been extended until the end of June 2015, Iran committed to significant restrictions on its nuclear programme, including not to enrich beyond 5%. These measures are aimed at addressing our proliferation concerns. We remain committed to negotiating a comprehensive agreement, under which Iran would need to agree to further restrictions on its programme.

Tim Farron: [\[222393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of possible Iranian reactions to increased sanctions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Under the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) the E3+3 committed, for the JPOA's duration, not to introduce new nuclear-related sanctions against Iran. The Government believes that further sanctions legislation between now and 30 June - when the JPOA expires - would severely undermine Iranian confidence in the negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear agreement and would risk derailing the process. This is why the Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron), made the case against new sanctions legislation on his recent visit to Washington.

■ Islamic State

Mr David Anderson: [\[221961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, for what reasons the Kurdistan regional government did not participate in the London conference of the International Coalition against ISIS in January 2015; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We recognise and deeply appreciate the significant role of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and Kurdish forces in combating ISIL (the self-styled Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) and the sacrifices made by the Kurdish people. Iraq was represented at the Counter-ISIL Coalition Small Group meeting on 22 January by Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi and Foreign Minister Ibrahim Al-Jaafari. We look forward to seeing the KRG as part of a Government of Iraq delegation at any future meetings.

■ Laos

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[222409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the Government of Laos about (a) the case of Pastor Sompong Supatto and (b) freedom of religion.

Mr Hugo Swire:

We regularly raise human rights concerns with the Lao government, including adherence to their international human rights commitments which protect freedom of religion and belief. We are aware of several cases of Christians being arrested for worshipping, including the case of Pastor Sompong Supatto. Laos is currently undergoing its UN Universal Periodic Review, a UN Human Rights Council led review of its human rights record. We submitted an advance question to the Review on freedom of religion. The annual EU-Laos Human Rights Dialogue is scheduled for October, and we expect freedom of religion and individual cases to be raised. We will continue to work with the EU and other like-minded partners to raise our concerns about religious freedom with the Lao government.

■ Libya

Guto Bebb: [\[222276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Lebanese counterpart following the terror attacks by the al-Nusra Front in Tripoli.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I discussed the issue of Lebanese security and stability with the Prime Minister and Speaker for Parliament when I visited the country in December. I made clear that the UK will continue to support Lebanon's efforts to achieve peace and stability. We have allocated almost £20m to strengthening Lebanon's borders and have been providing the Lebanese Armed Forces with practical equipment and training since 2012.

Our Ambassador to Lebanon condemned the terror attacks by the al-Nusra Front in Tripoli. He has since discussed the incident with senior members of the Lebanese Government, including the Prime Minister and Interior Minister, and affirmed the UK's commitment to supporting Lebanon in the fight against terrorism.

■ Middle East

James Morris: [R] [\[222007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Egyptian counterparts on the closure of the Rafah crossing.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are concerned about the closure of the Rafah Crossing and the impact that has on urgent medical and other priority cases in Gaza. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and

Weybridge (Mr Hammond), most recently raised the importance of reopening the Rafah crossing when he spoke with the Egyptian Foreign Minister on 14 January. We continue to raise this issue in our contacts with the Egyptian government.

■ Nigeria

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[222410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will raise at the UN the issue of a co-ordinated response to the threat of Boko Haram in North Eastern Nigeria.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have continued to raise the threat posed by Boko Haram in regional and multinational forums, including at the United Nations. On 19 January, the United Nations Security Council adopted a Presidential Statement on Boko Haram and the recent abhorrent attacks in Nigeria. This statement condemned Boko Haram and welcomed plans by the region to take forward work on a Multinational Joint Task Force to further coordinate their efforts against Boko Haram.

■ Nuclear Disarmament

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[222027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his overseas counterparts on the multilateral disarmament of nuclear weapons.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Multilateral nuclear disarmament discussions are held throughout the year in Geneva at the UN Conference on Disarmament. There are annual meetings in New York of the UN General Assembly First Committee and the UN Disarmament Commission and a five-yearly cycle of Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committees and Review Conferences, where the UK is normally represented at Ambassador or Official level. The UK also meets annually with the P5 nuclear weapon states at senior official level to discuss disarmament and non-proliferation issues, with the next meeting to be held in London on 4-5 February.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[222035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps the Government has taken towards its aim of achieving nuclear disarmament.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I refer the Hon Member to the written ministerial statement (HCWS210) made on 20 January by the Secretary of State for Defence.

■ Palestinians

Mr Liam Byrne: [\[222139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism on the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM) is a temporary tool to enable the reconstruction of Gaza. It does not obviate the need for the Israeli authorities to lift the movement and access restrictions on Gaza. Donors also need to fulfil the pledges made at the October 2014 Cairo Conference in order to ensure that people whose homes were damaged or destroyed will be able to procure materials to rebuild their homes, to fund much needed infrastructure projects and to address the urgent electricity and water needs for Gaza.

The Department for International Development contributed £500,000 to the GRM, as part of our Cairo Conference pledge.

Mr Liam Byrne: [\[222140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government has taken to support the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM) is a temporary tool to enable the reconstruction of Gaza. It does not obviate the need for the Israeli authorities to lift the movement and access restrictions on Gaza. Donors also need to fulfil the pledges made at the October 2014 Cairo Conference in order to ensure that people whose homes were damaged or destroyed will be able to procure materials to rebuild their homes, to fund much needed infrastructure projects and to address the urgent electricity and water needs for Gaza.

The Department for International Development contributed £500,000 to the GRM, as part of our Cairo Conference pledge.

■ Saudi Arabia

Dr Julian Huppert: [\[222150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to secure the release of Raif Badawi.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are seriously concerned by Raif Badawi's case. The UK condemns the use of cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment in all circumstances. We have raised the case at a senior level with the Saudi authorities, most recently the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Right Hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), raised the matter with the Saudi Ambassador to London.

■ Turkey

Guto Bebb: [\[222275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Turkish counterpart regarding the reported relocation of Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal to Turkey; and what steps he is taking to ensure that terrorist groups are not aided by a NATO member country.

Mr David Lidington:

We have had no discussions with the Turkish government regarding Khaled Meshaal's reported relocation to Turkey. We are aware of reports that Turkey maintains a dialogue with Hamas. We will, however, continue to call on Turkey and those in the region with influence over Hamas to press them to end armed violence and support reconciliation and peace talks with Israel.

We maintain a regular dialogue at all levels with the Turkish government on a range of terrorism threats. Turkey is a valued foreign policy and security partner to the UK.

HEALTH

■ Cancer

Dr Julian Huppert: [\[222219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to increase his Department's investment in cancer services; whether NHS England plans to provide increased funding to clinical reference groups to ensure they have sufficient resources to improve specialised services; and if he will create a recognised cancer leadership team to provide support and strategic oversight to NHS England, Public Health England (PHE) and his Department, in conjunction with the introduction of cancer lead roles at PHE and his Department.

Jane Ellison:

On 11 January, NHS England announced a new independent cancer taskforce to develop a five-year action plan for cancer services that will improve survival rates and save thousands of lives. It will produce a new cross-system national cancer strategy to 2020, building on NHS England's vision for improving cancer outcomes as set out in the NHS Five Year Forward View.

The taskforce will work in partnership with the cancer community and other health system leaders, and will be chaired by Dr Harpal Kumar, Chief Executive of Cancer Research UK. It will include cancer specialist doctors and clinicians, patients groups and charity leaders, including Macmillan Cancer Support, Public Health England, local councils, and the Royal College of general practitioners.

The action plan will set a clear direction covering the whole cancer pathway from prevention to living with and beyond cancer and end-of-life care and address issues such as data, workforce and research. It will also consider how services need to develop and innovate in future. The taskforce will assess the opportunity for improved cancer care

and produce a statement of intent by March 2015, with the new strategy to be published in the summer.

NHS England has also launched a major new programme to test innovative ways of diagnosing cancer more quickly at more than 60 sites across the country, and committed a further £15 million over three years to evaluate and treat patients with a type of modern radiotherapy.

Decisions about future funding for cancer services and any changes to the structures nationally to support the delivery of cancer commissioning will be taken in light of the output from the Cancer Taskforce. Specialised commissioning teams will negotiate contracts with providers for 2015-16 in line with NHS England's published commissioning intentions.

■ Cancer: Drugs

Alex Cunningham: [\[221865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect on cancer patients of the delisting of treatments from the Cancer Drugs Fund; and if he will make a statement.

Alex Cunningham: [\[221866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he took to ensure that the process of reviewing the treatments listed on the Cancer Drugs Fund fully took into account the needs of patients who have cancers with limited treatment options.

George Freeman:

The review of the cancer drug fund national list ensures that more patients will be able to access drugs that provide better outcomes for their cancers. The reappraisal of drugs has meant that some patients who would have received the de-listed drugs would switch to alternative cancer drug fund drugs and the remainder would be offered conventional treatments.

NHS England approved the principles, tested out through consultation in October 2014, that the National Cancer Drugs fund (CDF) panel review the drugs currently on the list, assessing clinical benefit in relation to drug cost as part of that assessment for the first time. The review took place in December 2014 and has ensured that only those drugs demonstrating a suitable degree of clinical benefit, at appropriate costs, remain on the list. The CDF panel comprises expert clinicians working with cancer patients and treatments every day.

Nic Dakin: [\[222351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what revised estimate he has made of the total Cancer Drugs Fund spend for 2015-16, following the re-evaluation of the Cancer Drugs Fund list in December 2014.

George Freeman:

NHS England estimates that an increase of £60 million will be made to the Cancer Drugs Fund in 2015/16; from £280 million in 2014/15 to an expected £340 million in 2015/16.

Further information about the Cancer Drugs Fund budget can be found on NHS England website and accessed via the following link:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/2015/01/12/cancer-drug-budget/>

■ Cancer: Nottinghamshire

Gloria De Piero: [221810]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many and what proportion of patients with each type of cancer began first treatment within 62 days of a GP referral at (a) Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and (b) Nottingham University Hospitals in each quarter since 2005.

Jane Ellison:

Such information as is available is in the attached tables.

All patients with cancer should have high quality, compassionate care, and we expect every part of the National Health Service to deliver against national standards. We expect the NHS to look urgently at any dips in local performance and take action to make sure all patients get access to cancer treatment as quickly as possible. NHS England has set up a taskforce to look at a long term strategy for improving cancer care.

Attachments:

1. Cancer waits: Nottingham [20150127 PQ221810 TABLES.xlsx]

Gloria De Piero: [221815]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many and what proportion of patients at (a) Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and (b) Nottingham University Hospitals were seen by a consultant within two weeks of a GP referral with each type of cancer in each quarter since 2005.

Jane Ellison:

Such information as is available is in the attached tables.

All patients with cancer should have high quality, compassionate care and we expect every part of the National Health Service to deliver against national standards. We expect the NHS to look urgently at any dips in local performance and take action to make sure all patients get access to cancer treatment as quickly as possible. NHS England has set up a taskforce to look at a long-term strategy for improving cancer care.

Attachments:

1. Two week wait by cancer type since 2005 [Two week wait by cancer type since 2005.xlsx]

■ Defibrillators

Karen Lumley: [221843]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the instructions provided with automated external defibrillators; and what

assessment he has made of the ability of an untrained individual to use such defibrillators effectively on the basis of those instructions alone.

George Freeman:

The Medical Devices Directive states that where a device bears instructions required for its operation such information must be understandable and appropriate for the intended user. As far as practicable and appropriate, the information needed to use the device safely must be set out on the device itself and/or on the packaging for each unit or, where appropriate, on the sales packaging.

Furthermore, regarding post market surveillance the manufacturer must undertake to institute and keep up to date a systematic procedure to review experience gained from devices once in use. This includes an obligation for the manufacturer to notify the competent authorities (the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for the UK) immediately of any adverse incidents or problems with the device which have led or might have led to serious health issues or the death of a patient or user. This would include issues with labelling or the Instructions for Use.

A search of the MHRA Adverse Incident database found 534 entries related to defibrillators since 1 January 2012 to the present. Of those, six concern issues related to the Instructions for Use. All of those six concern defibrillators intended for use by professional users and not automatic external defibrillators for use by the public.

Karen Lumley:

[221846]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what research has been undertaken by his Department into the effect that an individual's knowledge of cardiopulmonary resuscitation has on their (a) confidence and (b) efficacy in using an automated emergency defibrillator.

Jane Ellison:

The Department has not funded research into the effect that an individual's knowledge of cardiopulmonary resuscitation has on their confidence and efficacy in using an automated external defibrillator. However, Professor Gray, the National Clinical Director for heart disease in NHS England, contributed to a study, the findings of which were published last year, which suggested that improving public confidence in using public access defibrillators was probably a factor in the successful deployment of these devices. The article can be found at:

<http://heart.bmj.com/content/100/8/619.full?sid=eeec7a42-ee93-4458-b5cc-ec29680245a3>

■ **Diabetes**

Mr Nigel Evans:

[222167]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will launch a public campaign to stem the rise in the number of people with Type 2 diabetes.

Jane Ellison:

Public Health England in partnership with NHS England and Diabetes UK are currently developing proposals for a nationally scaled diabetes prevention programme. This will consider the contribution of public campaigns to raise awareness of the risks of Type 2 diabetes and the lifestyle modifications that can prevent and reduce risk.

Mr Nigel Evans:[\[222168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of how many diabetes sufferers are not getting the recommended number of annual checks in (a) Lancashire and (b) England.

Jane Ellison:

The table below shows the completion rate for all eight measurable care processes assessed in the National Diabetes Audit (NDA), the number of patients completing all eight care processes and the number not completing all eight care processes. This is provided for England and the eight clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) in the Lancashire area. Also provided is the participation rate for England and each CCG.

The care processes are those which the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence recommend should be part of an annual check for people with diabetes.

Data is not available in the format requested as figures on the completion of annual checks are not held centrally at county level.

The data provided is from the 2012-13 audit year.

| | REGISTRATIONS - ALL DIABETES ¹ 2012-13 NDA | ALL 8 ² CARE PROCESS COMPLETION RATE | NUMBER OF REGISTRATIONS COMPLETED ALL 8 PROCESSES | NUMBER OF REGISTRATIONS NOT COMPLETED ALL 8 PROCESSES | PARTICIPATION RATE ³ |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
| England | 1,858,974 | 59.5% | 1,106,561 | 752,413 | 70.8% |
| NHS Blackburn with Darwen CCG | 9,070 | 70.6% | 6,400 | 2,670 | 100.0% |
| NHS Blackpool CCG | 9,659 | 65.9% | 6,362 | 3,297 | 100.0% |
| NHS Chorley and South Ribble CCG | 8,718 | 66.0% | 5,756 | 2,962 | 96.8% |
| NHS East Lancashire CCG | 17,856 | 66.7% | 11,907 | 5,949 | 94.9% |

| | REGISTRATIONS - ALL DIABETES ¹ 2012-13 NDA | ALL 8 ² CARE PROCESS COMPLETION RATE | NUMBER OF REGISTRATIONS COMPLETED ALL 8 PROCESSES | NUMBER OF REGISTRATIONS NOT COMPLETED ALL 8 PROCESSES | PARTICIPATION RATE ³ |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
| NHS Greater Preston CCG | 8,114 | 62.6% | 5,079 | 3,035 | 79.4% |
| NHS Lancashire North CCG | 3,895 | 72.0% | 2,805 | 1,090 | 61.5% |
| NHS West Lancashire CCG | 5,539 | 63.9% | 3,541 | 1,998 | 100.0% |
| NHS Fylde and Wyre CCG | 7,016 | 71.5% | 5,019 | 1,997 | 85.7% |

¹ All diabetes includes maturity onset diabetes of the young, other specified diabetes and not specified diabetes

² The eye screening care process has been removed from this figure due to data quality issues. This figure comprises the following care processes:

HbA1c

Blood pressure

Cholesterol

Serum creatinine

Urine albumin

Foot surveillance

Body Mass Index

Smoking

³ Participation is calculated from the percentage of general practices (GP) practices participating in the NDA 2012-13 out of all GP practices within the CCG

Mr Nigel Evans:

[222169]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will re-introduce the NHS Diabetes dedicated improvement service.

Jane Ellison:

NHS Improving Quality (NHS IQ) was founded on 1 April 2013 through a collaboration agreement between the Department of Health and NHS England. This was in recognition of the need for a system wide focus on improvement to be provided by establishing an improvement body within NHS England. The responsibilities of NHS Diabetes have now been passed to NHS IQ.

NHS IQ has a number of programmes of work under way to reduce premature mortality from diabetes and improve the care of people with diabetes including:

- piloting new pathways of care to detect and manage asymptomatic coronary heart disease in patient groups with diabetic foot disease with the aim of reducing premature mortality in these patients by 600 lives per year from 2015-16;
- supporting the NHS Health Check programme, a key component of which is detecting the risk factors for diabetes;
- supporting the implementation of the Cardiovascular Disease Outcomes Strategy;
- working to achieve patient centred, co-ordinated services for people living with long-term conditions, including diabetes; and
- providing signposting and links to useful improvement resources relating to diabetes.

More information on this work can be found on the NHS IQ website at:

www.nhsiq.nhs.uk

■ Doctors**Dan Jarvis:**

[222254]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of practising doctors in the UK in each year since May 2010.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

No estimate has been made of the number of practising doctors in the United Kingdom in each year since May 2010.

The General Medical Council (GMC) is the regulatory body for doctors and holds a register of all doctors registered to practise in the UK. Doctors must be registered with the GMC to work as a doctor in any healthcare setting, not just the National Health Service.

The attached table taken from the annual NHS workforce census, published by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC), shows the total number of doctors (including general practitioners) working in the NHS in England at 30 September each year. The latest available statistics are for 2013 and were published on 25 March 2014. The next census will be published by the HSCIC on 25 March 2015.

The HSCIC also publishes provisional monthly NHS hospital and community health service (HCHS) workforce statistics for directly employed staff (not general practitioners)

in the NHS in England. The latest data for October 2014 shows there are 104,920 hospital doctors working in the NHS in England, a 10% increase since May 2010.

The provision of health services in the UK is a devolved issue. Information on the number of practicing doctors in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland may be available online at the following addresses:

Wales: wales.gov.uk/topics/health/?lang=en

Scotland: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health

Northern Ireland: www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index.htm

Attachments:

1. Doctors in England between 2010-13 [Doctors in England between 2010-13.xlsx]

■ **Employment Agencies**

Lucy Powell:

[222087]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many recruitment and employment agencies his Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Department uses recruitment agencies to recruit some Senior Civil Servants (SCS). The Department has used the following number of recruitment agencies as shown in the table below to support the appointment process for Senior Civil Service roles in each year since 2010-11:

| FINANCIAL YEAR | NUMBER OF RECRUITMENT AGENCIES |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| 2010-11 | 2 |
| 2011-12 | 4 |
| 2012-13 | 2 |
| 2013-14 | 5 |
| 2014-15 to date | 3 |

Below SCS level, recruitment agencies are not used for the major parts of recruitment or for entire recruiting processes.

■ **Exercise**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[222155]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when his Department last reviewed the effectiveness of public health measures designed to increase the uptake of exercise in adults and children in the UK.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[222156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that adults in the UK increase their uptake of exercise to match NHS activity guidelines.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[222157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that children in the UK increase their uptake of exercise to match NHS activity guidelines.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[222158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what funding his Department has made available to pensioners in the UK to increase their uptake of physical activities in the last three years.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[222159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what funding his Department has made available to children from low-income backgrounds to increase their uptake of physical activities in the last three years.

Jane Ellison:

Promoting and increasing levels of physical activity is a key priority for the Department. This is supported by a well-developed and wide-ranging programme of actions, including:

- The four UK Chief Medical Officers' recommendations for physical activity published in 2011. These are the first United Kingdom-wide guidelines and are in line with international recommendations. For the first time, the guidelines have included a life course approach and guidelines for sedentary behaviour. I have asked Public Health England to develop a '5-a-day' style message to ensure we improve the effectiveness of these guidelines in public messaging.
- Work with other Government departments to ensure all children and young people have opportunities to be physically active and enjoy sport so, particularly the least active and those not currently engaged with sport. Alongside this the Department is investing almost £222 million in programmes such as the PE and Sport Premium for Primary Schools, School Games, and Change4Life Sports Clubs to ensure all children and young people have opportunities to be physically active. We are also funding Play England £1 million over a three year period to promote playing outdoors. The project is currently running a pilot in 10 deprived areas to help school children become more active and also reduce sedentary behaviour in adults.
- Investment of £1.2 million in five English cities to deliver a range of interventions to support residents to build walking into their day-to-day lives. Evidence shows that these programmes have been very successful at encouraging older people to become more active. In addition, the Department works closely with the Ramblers/McMillan Cancer Support to promote the nationwide Walking for Health Programme which has a wide participation by older people.

- Work with a range of organisations in the voluntary and private sector as part of the Department's Public Health Responsibility Deal, to promote physical activity amongst adults and children.

In February 2014, the Government published "Moving More, Living More" (MMLM), a cross-Government campaign to deliver a physical activity legacy from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. As part of this, I chair a Ministerial Sub-Group of the Cabinet Committee for Olympic and Paralympic Legacy. The role of the Sub-Group is to take forward the commitments made in MMLM and ensure that relevant Government departments are making a contribution to the physical activity agenda. The Ministerial Sub-Group is supported by an officials' group which meets monthly and reports to Ministers on progress.

In October 2014, Public Health England published, "*Everybody active, every day*" with full ministerial involvement. Building on 'Moving More, Living More', this framework aims to increase the levels of physical activity in local communities by identifying key areas where more action is needed. The Department is now working with a range of partners to take forward the recommendations of this report, as part of the MMLM programme of work.

■ General Practitioners: Vacancies

Derek Twigg: [\[222550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many practices in (a) Halton and (b) England had vacancies for GPs on 1 January 2015.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

Information on vacancies is not collected by the Department. However, the hon.

Member will be reassured that the number of general practitioners working and training in the National Health Service has increased by over 1,000.

■ Health Professions: Nottinghamshire

Gloria De Piero: [\[221816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many registered (a) nurses, (b) midwives, (c) doctors and (d) surgeons have been made redundant at (i) Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and (ii) Nottingham University Hospitals in each year since 2010.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

I refer the hon. Member to my previous answer given in PQ[221817](#), which shows there has been an overall increase of 35 hospital doctors and 137 nurses, including midwives, at Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust since 2010. In the same time period, there has been an overall increase of 117 doctors and 601 nurses, including midwives, at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust.

Information on the number of (a) doctors, including surgeons and (b) qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff that have been made redundant at Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, since 2010, is shown in the attached tables.

Attachments:

1. Staff redundancies since 2010 [Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS FT & Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust- Redundancies.xlsx]

■ Heart Diseases**Paul Burstow:**[\[222024\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many discharge episodes there have been with a (a) primary and (b) secondary diagnosis of coronary heart disease in (i) each clinical commissioning group or its predecessor organisation and (ii) England in each of the last 10 years.

Jane Ellison:

The attached tables show a count of finished discharge episodes with a primary diagnosis and secondary diagnosis of coronary heart disease by primary care trust of treatment for the years 2004/05 to 2012/13 and by clinical commissioning group of treatment for 2013/14.

Attachments:

1. Finished discharge episodes CHD: primary&secondary [PQ222024 discharge episodes.xlsx]

■ Homosexuality**Diana Johnson:**[\[222055\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which organisations (a) were invited to and (b) attended roundtable discussions with him regarding conversion therapy in early March or late April 2014.

Norman Lamb:

The Department invited the following organisations to a round table event to discuss gay conversion therapy on 2 April 2014:

Association of Christian Counsellors

British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies

British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy

British Psychoanalytic Council

British Psychological Society
Department of Communities and Local Government
General Medical Council
Royal College of General Practitioners
Health and Care Professions Council
National Counselling Society
NHS England
PACE
Pink Therapy
Relate
Royal College of Psychiatrists
Stonewall
UK Council for Psychotherapy

The following organisations were also invited but were unable to attend.

Inter Faith Network
Professional Standards Authority

■ Hospital Beds: North West

Derek Twigg: [\[222551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 26 January 2015 to Question 221512, what the delayed discharges referred to in the Answer by local authority area are.

Norman Lamb:

The information requested is shown in the attached tables.

Attachments:

1. Delayed discharges by local authority area [PQ222551 Table.docx]

■ Hospitals: Hygiene

Nigel Mills: [\[221964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of levels of hand hygiene compliance in hospital Trusts.

Nigel Mills: [\[222412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will review the adequacy of his Department's current guidance to NHS trusts on how to monitor hand hygiene levels.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

Auditing of hand hygiene compliance is a local responsibility, and the Department does not collect this information centrally.

The Health and Social Care Act 2008 Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance sets 10 compliance criteria to manage healthcare associated infections. This includes one covering infection prevention and control which refers to hand hygiene and recommends that providers undertake hand hygiene audits.

The hand hygiene provisions appear to be operating satisfactorily and it is therefore not proposed that provisions relating to guidance on hand hygiene are changed as part of the revisions to the Code of Practice, which is currently out for consultation.

■ **Hospitals: Infectious Diseases**

Nigel Mills:[\[221936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with (a) NICE and (b) the Care Quality Commission about healthcare-associated infections in the last 12 months; and what steps he is taking as a result of those discussions.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Department's work on healthcare associated infections (HCAs) with these organisations over the last year has been led by officials and progress on how we are supporting the health service in driving down infections is summarised below.

Relevant work being undertaken by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) or recently completed is shown in the table below.

NICE GUIDANCE

| SUBJECT | TIMELINE |
|---|-------------------------|
| NICE guidelines: Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) – changing risk-related behaviours. | Expected March 2016 |
| Healthcare associated infections: prevention and management | Expected February 2016 |
| Sepsis – NICE clinical guideline in development with final guidance. Quality standard will follow approx. 6-12 months after completion of the clinical guideline. | Expected 2016 |
| NICE guidelines on Effective Antimicrobial Stewardship. | Expected May 2015 |
| Antibiotics for neonatal infections – Quality Standard 75. | Published December 2014 |
| Hepatitis B – NICE quality standards Quality | Published July 2014 |

| SUBJECT | TIMELINE |
|---|----------------------|
| Standard 65. | |
| Non-antibiotic clinical management of infectious diseases – included in the library of public health Quality Standards. | Published April 2014 |
| Infection prevention and control – Quality Standard 61. | Published April 2014 |

The Department has put in place new requirements for registration with the Care Quality Commission which require providers to assess the risk of, and prevent, detect and control the spread of healthcare associated infections. These new fundamental standards come into force in April.

Nigel Mills: [\[221940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make an estimate of the (a) average and (b) total cost to the NHS of healthcare-associated infections.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The most recent reliable estimate of the cost of healthcare associated infections is derived from the Plowman Report, which estimated the cost to be £1 billion per year.

Although there is no systematic analysis of average costs of all healthcare associated infections, the average cost of Meticillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia is estimated to be £7,000 per case and Clostridium difficile infection is estimated to be £10,000 per case.

Nigel Mills: [\[221942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to incentivise NHS trusts to reduce levels of healthcare-associated infections.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The NHS Standard Contract is a key enabler for commissioners to secure improvements in the quality of services for patients and to hold providers of National Health Service funded care to account.

Each provider is required to have a healthcare associated infections reduction plan for each contract year (and to comply with its obligations under that plan) that must reflect local and national priorities relating to healthcare associated infections, including antimicrobial resistance. Under the NHS Standard Contract, commissioners may impose financial sanctions where providers fail to achieve healthcare associated infections reduction targets. These are set out at:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/nhs-standard-contract/>

These robust measures have played their part in reducing annual Meticillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus bloodstream infections by 59% and Clostridium difficile infections by 45% since May 2010.

■ Hospitals: Nottinghamshire

Gloria De Piero:

[221813]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many and what proportion of people at (a) Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and (b) Nottingham University Hospitals waited more than 18 weeks to start consultant-led treatment for non-urgent conditions in each quarter since 2005.

Jane Ellison:

Information is not available for the full time period requested.

Information on the number and proportion of admitted and non-admitted patients who completed a Referral to Treatment pathway in longer than 18 weeks since 2007 is shown in the attached tables.

Attachments:

1. Nottingham waiting times [Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS FT & Nottingham University Hospitals waiting times.xls]

■ Human Papillomavirus: Vaccination

Grahame M. Morris:

[221935]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with Public Health England on targeted campaigns in regions where HPV vaccination rates have fallen below the national average; and if he will make a statement.

Jane Ellison:

We have not had any discussion with Public Health England on targeted campaigns in regions where the human papillomavirus vaccination coverage rates have fallen below the national average.

Under the NHS public health functions agreement between the Secretary of State and NHS England, NHS England is responsible for improving or at least maintaining vaccination coverage in line with relevant performance indicators in the agreement, whilst reducing variations in local levels of performance between geographical areas. NHS England commissioning teams have access to a data repository which provides comparisons of relative performance by local areas and providers and enables improvement plans to be put in place where appropriate.

■ In Vitro Fertilisation

Fiona Bruce: [\[222039\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, on what date the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority Expert Panel became aware of the 2003 study by John Zhang et al reported in Fertility and Sterility September 2003 Volume 80, Supplement 3, Page 56.

Jane Ellison:

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority has advised that it is not possible to determine the exact date the Expert Panel first became aware of this abstract.

■ Influenza

Jim Shannon: [\[222115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he has taken to reduce influenza infections in the NHS.

Jane Ellison:

The Flu Plan: Winter 2014/15, and the Annual Flu letter highlights the importance of vaccinating health and social care workers with direct patient contact. Frontline health and social care workers have a duty of care to protect their patients from infection. This includes getting vaccinated against flu. A copy of both documents are attached.

In September 2014, a letter was sent to the National Health Service and local authorities from the Department of Health, Public Health England and NHS England to seek their support in increasing flu vaccination uptake among front line health and social care workers. On 15 January 2015, the Chief Medical Officer wrote to NHS Medical Directors urging them to continue to vaccinate health care workers and requesting that they consider requiring unvaccinated staff to wear face masks when undertaking direct clinical work with patients to prevent the risk of influenza infection.

The flu fighter campaign, run by NHS Employers provides support to NHS trusts to encourage staff to protect themselves, their patients and their families by having the seasonal flu vaccination. NHS Employers provides advice and guidance on running local healthcare worker vaccination campaigns, as well as posters and other campaign resources.

Attachments:

1. The Annual Flu Letter 2014/15 [Flu Immunisation Letter 2014-15.pdf]
2. The Flu Plan: Winter 2014/15 [FluPlan 2014-15.pdf]

■ Meningitis: Vaccination

Andrew Gwynne: [\[222307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the work of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation concerning the meningitis B vaccine as an NHS treatment; and if he will make a statement.

Jane Ellison:

We have accepted the recommendation of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation that a national routine meningococcal B (MenB) immunisation programme for infants should be introduced to protect against MenB disease, subject to the vaccine being procured at a cost-effective price.

The Department is continuing negotiations with the manufacturer to seek supply of the MenB vaccine, Bexsero[®] at a cost-effective price.

■ Mental Health Services: York**Sir Hugh Bayley:**[\[221799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress has been made by NHS property services, the Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group and the Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust in preparing plans for the replacement of (a) Bootham Park Hospital and (b) Lime Trees in York; when he plans to make a public announcement about those plans; and if he will make a statement.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

NHS Property Services is taking a leading role as the requirements for health facilities in York are established. Until the future is decided and to ensure that services can continue to be provided from the site, the Company is investing £1.3 million in Bootham Park and Cherry Tree House in order to improve the experience of patients.

Work has also recently been completed on a full refurbishment of Mill Lodge, which enabled child and adolescent mental health services to relocate there from Lime Trees in December 2014. As a result of the completed works, Mill Lodge now has sufficient capacity to provide local care for a number of young people closer to their homes than was previously possible.

In order to ensure the National Health Service makes the best use of its mental health estate in York for the long-term benefit of local people, the Company is working with the Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group, Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and York City Council to develop a coherent, joined-up estates plan.

We look forward to updating the House on the progress being made later in the year.

■ Mental Health Services: Young People**Andrew Griffiths:**[\[222239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people aged 18 and under waited more than (a) one month, (b) two months, (c) three months, (d) six months and (e) one year for mental health treatment in each of the most recent five years for which figures are available.

Norman Lamb:

This information is not centrally collected.

Improving access and reducing waiting times for children and young people's mental health services, and improving data and transparency on these services are government priorities.

A new child and adolescent mental health services minimum dataset is in development which will contain data on the waiting times for children and young people waiting for mental health treatment. Our current estimate is that data will be collected nationally from spring 2016.

We have launched the children and young people's mental health and well-being taskforce, which is considering how to improve access and reduce waiting times for children and young people. A report of the Taskforce's findings will be published in spring 2015.

We have also introduced the first waiting time standards for mental health. *Achieving Better Access to Mental Health Services by 2020* outlines the first waiting time standards for mental health and includes a standard which will ensure that by 2016 at least 50% of people of all ages referred for early intervention in psychosis services will start treatment within two weeks. This is backed by £33 million investment.

■ Muscular Dystrophy: Drugs

Mr David Anderson: [\[222036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the Government plans to commission Translarna during NHS England's public consultations on its principles and approach to decision making on drug licensing.

Mr David Anderson: [\[222037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department plans to make Translarna available whilst NHS England's public consultations are completed on the principles and approach to decision making on drug licensing; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Anderson: [\[222038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for how long NHS England's public consultations about the principles and approach to decision making on drug licensing will last.

Jane Ellison:

Translarna (ataluren) was given conditional approval for the treatment of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy by the European Medicines Agency in August 2014.

NHS England is responsible for commissioning treatments for specialised services.

At its Board meeting on 17 December, NHS England decided that the consultation on prioritisation for specialised services should be 90 days. The length of the consultation period reflects the importance of these decisions and advice received from patient groups. Decisions on prioritisation, including the advice from the Clinical Priorities Advisory Group on the routine commissioning of Translarna (ataluren), will not be completed until the consultation has closed and the consultation responses have had

due consideration. NHS England launched the consultation on 27 January 2015 and it is open for responses until 27 April 2015.

Any prioritisation which is urgent on clinical grounds will continue to be dealt with quickly through NHS England's existing procedures. The route of individual funding requests remains the same.

■ NHS Direct

Sir Hugh Bayley: [\[221797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people living in (a) York, (b) Yorkshire and Humber and (c) England sought advice from NHS Direct in each of its last five years of operation.

Jane Ellison:

This information is not held centrally.

■ NHS Trusts

Debbie Abrahams: [\[222256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which parliamentary constituencies are (a) completely and (b) partly within the (i) Community Health Trust and (ii) Mental Health Trust coverage area.

Debbie Abrahams: [\[222257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which parliamentary constituencies are (a) completely and (b) partly within the (i) Foundation Trust and (ii) NHS Trust coverage area.

Norman Lamb:

Community health trusts, mental health trusts, foundation trusts and NHS trusts do not have "coverage areas" in England. All English parliamentary constituencies are served by one or more of these NHS organisations or organisations providing similar services.

■ NHS Walk-in Centres: York

Sir Hugh Bayley: [\[221796\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when and for what reason the NHS walk-in centre in Monkgate, York has closed; and how many people used that centre in its last year of operation.

Sir Hugh Bayley: [\[221798\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people presented at the A&E Department at York Hospital in each month of (a) 2014 and (b) the last 10 years.

Jane Ellison:

The configuration of local health services is a matter for the local NHS. The Monkgate walk in service relocated to the emergency department at York Hospital in April 2012 as part of the development of an integrated urgent care centre staffed by multi-disciplinary

team of medical and nursing staff to treat minor illness and injury. This followed a period of engagement with patients and the public and key stakeholders including the York Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Information on presentations at the accident and emergency department at York Hospital is not available in the format requested.

■ NHS: Insurance

Andrew Gwynne: [\[221962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance the Government provides to hospitals on how to mitigate the risk of (a) incidents where costs might exceed the £1 million NHS Litigation Authority Property Expenses Scheme limit and (b) other major incidents.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[221983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what (a) actuarial analysis and (b) financial modelling was carried out before a decision was taken on self-insuring by NHS trusts.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[221995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what reasons NHS trusts are not allowed to enter into insurance arrangements with commercial insurers.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

NHS trusts were no longer permitted to buy commercial insurance relating to employers' and public liability, buildings and contents, and other miscellaneous risks (with a limited number of exemptions) from the introduction of the NHS Litigation Authority's Liabilities to Third Parties and Property Expenses Schemes on 1 April 1999.

This followed extensive research into the scale, cost and financial benefits of NHS dependency on commercial insurance, which led the Department to decide that better value for money across the National Health Service as a whole would be achieved if NHS trusts no longer insured commercially, but instead self-insured, through these risk pooling schemes, against non-clinical risks. Trusts themselves have since maintained a general prohibition on entering into insurance arrangements with commercial insurers in their individual standing financial instructions.

In terms of guidance, the Department publishes Health Building Notes which do not deal specifically with the specific kinds of incidents to which the question refers, but do emphasise that NHS estate has to be properly managed to comply with statute, the NHS Constitution, regulatory requirements, and good property management principles. If this is adhered to then the risk of damage to a NHS building should be greatly reduced.

■ NHS: Private Sector

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[222028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will introduce conditions for outsourced NHS work by the private healthcare providers to waive any right to commercial confidentiality and

abide by the obligations of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 for the production of relevant documents and safety and performance data.

Jane Ellison:

The Justice Select Committee has considered the issue of public services being delivered by private contractors and its recommendation was that it would be preferable for the Freedom of Information Act to not formally extend to these private providers. The Government agreed with the Committee's recommendation that properly enforced contractual transparency provisions provide a more practical basis to ensure transparency than the formal extension of the Freedom of Information Act.

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[222040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what financial and ethical stringency tests his Department applies to (a) private healthcare providers bidding for NHS contracts and (b) the parent companies of those providers.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

It is this Government's policy, as it was that of the previous Government, that National Health Service patients should receive services from the best providers available, regardless of sector.

It is for commissioners, both at national (NHS England) and local level (clinical commissioning groups), to decide how best to secure local services and take a decision on which are the most capable providers to deliver those services in the best interests of their patients.

Assessments of potential providers are conducted in a manner that is proportionate and flexible, whilst ensuring compliance with the regulatory and legislative frameworks governing the procurement of health related services. In selecting potential providers, the selection criteria are appropriate to the complexity of the service requirement and commissioners are obliged to evaluate and treat all bidders equally and fairly, whatever their size or constitution.

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[222057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will clarify the steps taken to ensure that private healthcare providers performing NHS contracts hold sufficient indemnity cover to meet all future medical negligence claims and associated legal costs against the NHS arising from negligent treatment by the private provider.

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[222058\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what amount of contribution private healthcare providers which are unable to arrange their own insurance make to the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts; and whether that amount is the same as the contributions required of NHS trusts.

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[222101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to ensure NHS hospitals are not sued for damages if they sub-contract or outsource surgery to a provider which then injures patients as a result of negligence.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

It is a requirement of the NHS standard contract, which is mandated by NHS England for use by commissioners for all contracts for healthcare services other than primary care, that providers have appropriate indemnity cover in place. The Department of Health took steps when it amended the Clinical Negligence Scheme regulations in April 2013 to enable independent sector healthcare providers performing NHS contracts to have in place sufficient indemnity cover to meet the cost of clinical claims arising from any negligent treatment by the independent sector provider in the course of providing those NHS services.

There were two key elements to these changes. Firstly, to allow independent sector providers to become members of the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST) if they hold a direct contract for relevant health services with a commissioning body, and/or if they subcontract with another body, who is not a member of CNST, which does hold a direct contract for relevant health services with a commissioning body. Secondly, where the organisation holding a direct contract with a commissioning body is a member of CNST, certain of the liabilities of any subcontractors it engages to provide NHS services in relation to that contract are treated and dealt with as though a liability of the member.

The April 2013 amendment regulations were designed in this way to address the issue of increasingly complex care pathways involving multiple healthcare providers, revising CNST to provide a means of covering the whole potential care pathway within the NHS and enabling main contractors to meet their responsibilities under the NHS standard contract with respect to indemnity for the liabilities of subcontractors. The intention is to provide more positive and timely outcomes for claimants and to improve the sub-contracting carried out by members.

The costs of CNST are met by membership contributions. The projected claim costs are assessed in advance each year by professional actuaries. Contributions are then calculated to meet the total forecast expenditure for that year. Individual member contribution levels are influenced by a range of factors, including the nature and volume of services provided, the number of 'whole time equivalent' clinical staff employed within each service, and claims history. For the independent sector, this last factor is not reflected in their contributions in the same way as NHS members, because the NHS Litigation Authority does not yet have sufficient information on the claims experience of independent sector providers since they have not been delivering care as members of CNST for long enough.

Information on the contributions made by all members of CNST, including independent sector members, are published annually by the NHS Litigation Authority on its website, and a copy of the data for 2013-14 is attached to this reply:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/Publications.aspx?library=currentactivity%7cfactsheets%7cfactsheet5trustandhealthauthorityclaimsdata>

Attachments:

1. Contributions by members of CNST 2013-14 [Contributions by members of CNST 2013-14.xls]

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[222100]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will require contracts between NHS hospitals and private surgery providers to include a clause preventing the NHS from being sued for libel if it publishes any report investigating damage caused by surgery carried out by the provider.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

NHS England publishes the NHS standard contract, which is used by NHS commissioners for all healthcare contracts, other than primary care. The standard contract includes requirements in relation to the approval and management of any subcontracts a provider may wish to put in place. However, NHS England does not mandate the use of a particular form of subcontract.

■ **Ovarian Cancer**

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[221905]

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

Jane Ellison:

Improving Outcomes: A Strategy for Cancer, published on 12 January 2011, backed by over £750 million, committed over £450 million over the four years up to 2014-15 to achieve earlier diagnosis of cancer, including supporting direct general practitioner (GP) access to key diagnostic tests such as non-obstetric ultrasound to support the diagnosis of ovarian cancer. In 2012, the Department published 'Direct access to diagnostic tests for cancer: best practice referral pathways for general practitioners'. The guide aims to raise awareness of the symptoms that require urgent referral to specialists and sets out where a direct referral for tests may benefit patients and lead to a faster diagnosis.

Diagnostic Imaging Dataset collected by NHS England showed that in August 2014, GPs requested almost a quarter of all tests that may have been used to diagnose or discount cancer, under direct access arrangements. Of these, the test with the highest proportion of GP referral was ultrasounds that may have been used to diagnose ovarian cancer (45% of which were requested by GPs).

The earlier diagnosis money also included some central funding for Be Clear on Cancer (BCOC) campaigns, which aim to raise awareness of the symptoms of cancer and get symptomatic patients to present earlier. Public Health England ran a regional ovarian pilot campaign which ran from 10 February to 16 March 2014 in the North West of England Television region. The campaign was aimed at women over 50, the age group most at risk of developing ovarian cancer, and their friends and family to raise

awareness of bloating as a symptom of ovarian cancer and to encourage women with this symptom to visit their GP. Full evaluation results are awaited.

The National Institute for health and Care Excellence's most recent guidelines recommend offering genetic testing to people with a 10% risk of carrying a BRCA mutation, which is lower than the 20% risk previously recommended. The draft policy proposal for BRCA testing is amongst those awaiting consultation by NHS England's Clinical Priorities Advisory Group. This will take place following the 90-day public consultation on the decision-making framework which NHS England will use to make decisions on specialised services proposals, which is now live.

Following this consultation period, the Clinical Priorities Advisory Group will review the proposal and make a recommendation to the NHS England Specialised Services Committee, who will make a final decision.

On 11 January NHS England announced a new independent cancer taskforce to develop a five-year action plan for cancer services to improve survival rates and save thousands of lives.

The taskforce has been set up to produce a new national cancer strategy for the next five years to 2020, building on NHS England's vision for improving cancer outcomes set out in the NHS Five Year Forward View. The taskforce will be set up in partnership with the cancer community and other health system leaders, and will be chaired by Dr Harpal Kumar, Chief Executive of Cancer Research UK. The new strategy will cover prevention, early and faster diagnosis, better treatment and care for all, recovery, reablement and living with and beyond cancer. The strategy will also cover research and innovation, end-of-life care, data and metrics, and workforce. The taskforce will produce a statement of intent by March 2015, and will aim to publish the new strategy in the summer.

NHS England also launched a major early-diagnosis programme, working jointly with Cancer Research UK and Macmillan Cancer Support to test new approaches to identifying cancer more quickly. These include offering patients the option to self-refer for diagnostic tests, lowering the threshold for GP referrals, and setting up multi-disciplinary diagnostic centres, so that patients can have several tests done at the same place on the same day. NHS England's aim is to evaluate these innovative initiatives across more than 60 centres around England, in order to collect evidence on approaches that could be implemented from 2016-17.

■ Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme

Andrew Percy:

[\[222493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the value of rebate payments from the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme was to (a) Scotland, (b) Wales and (c) Northern Ireland in each quarter that scheme has operated.

George Freeman:

The Government recognises that the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme (PPRS) payments that companies make under the 2014 scheme in respect of the United Kingdom need to be allocated to each of the devolved administrations in a fair way.

The aggregate payment received from pharmaceutical companies by the Department in Quarter 1 of the 2014 PPRS was £73,779,969 which was apportioned to the devolved health administrations on the basis of primary care data for licensed branded medicines relating to 2012-13, in each country. Accordingly, Scotland received £7,194,507.98, Wales received £4,011,404.61 and Northern Ireland received £2,989,371.81.

The method for apportioning payments for the remaining quarters of the PPRS will continue to be based on primary care data for spend on licensed branded medicines, as the most consistent data set available across the UK, but will be apportioned using prescribing data for the same period as the income relates. Further payments for the later quarters of the 2014 PPRS will be made once the Department is in receipt of the relevant data from the devolved administrations.

Andrew Percy:

[222494]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how his Department plans to measure the effect of the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme on access to medicines.

George Freeman:

In England, Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme (PPRS) payments are taken into account in the allocations to NHS England through the Mandate. All the payments will go back into spending on improving patients' health and care.

Growth of net sales from products covered by the PPRS in the first nine months of 2014 compared to 2013 was 5.93%. This was higher than the agreed forecast growth of 3.87% and shows that patients are benefitting from greater access to branded medicines. Most companies have enjoyed growth in sales in 2014, with over 40% of companies having double-digit growth rates.

The Department, NHS England, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry have worked together to develop the *NICE Technology Appraisals in the NHS in England, Innovation Scorecard, Experimental statistics* to provide a single source of information on access to NICE-approved medicines. The Health and Social Care Information Centre published the latest Innovation Scorecard on 20 January 2015 and it is available at:

www.hscic.gov.uk/searchcatalogue?productid=16886&topics=0%2fPrescribing&sort=Relevance&size=10&page=1#top

The report includes some examples of medicines use in comparison with NICE estimates of expected use and includes an interactive spreadsheet that allows users to compare variations in medicines usage between organisations and over time, and a mapping visualisation tool showing medicines use by NHS England area team.

Andrew Percy:

[222495]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will conduct a study to determine the effect on access to medicines of the additional allocations made to NHS England as a result of rebate payments under the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme.

George Freeman:

In England, Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme (PPRS) payments are taken into account in the allocations to NHS England through the Mandate. All the payments will go back into spending on improving patients' health and care.

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The report includes some examples of medicines use in comparison with NICE estimates of expected use and includes an interactive spreadsheet that allows users to compare variations in medicines usage between organisations and over time, and a mapping visualisation tool showing medicines use by NHS England area team.

■ Prescriptions

Richard Harrington: [\[222350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will estimate the cost measured by (a) GP appointments and time and (b) cost of product of issuing prescriptions to people who receive help with prescription costs for emollients such as toothpaste, moisturising lotion and shampoo and conditioner.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

Data are not centrally collected on the cost measured by (a) general practitioner appointments and time and (b) the cost of product of issuing prescriptions to people who have received help with prescription costs for emollients such as toothpaste, moisturising lotion and shampoo and conditioner.

■ Prisoners: Methadone

Andrew Griffiths: [\[222273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many prisoners are on methadone programmes; and how many such prisoners have been on methadone programmes for more than (a) one month, (b) two months, (c) three months, (d) six months, (e) a year, (f) two years and (g) four years.

Norman Lamb:

The National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS) records the number of interventions in prisons, but not which medicine is prescribed. The presumption is that methadone or buprenorphine will be prescribed.

Figures are not available in the form requested. The table below presents the number of opioid substitute treatment interventions ending in 2013-14 and the average length of time in days that detainees received that intervention. Some detainees will have moved from a maintenance prescription to a reduction prescription and so will appear in both sets of figures. In addition, some detainees will have started and ended an intervention in more than one prison and will appear more than once in the figures.

Unless there are clinical reasons to the contrary, prisoners serving a sentence of more than six months will be expected to work towards becoming drug free.

| OPIOID REDUCTION | AVERAGE LENGTH OF TREATMENT (DAYS) | OPIOID MAINTENANCE | AVERAGE LENGTH OF TREATMENT (DAYS) |
|------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| 10,455 | 117 | 24,088 | 107 |

Source : NDTMS 2013-14

Equivalent figures for 2012-13 are not available.

■ Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care

Diana Johnson:

[\[222102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which voluntary registers have applied for accreditation as accredited voluntary registers with the Professional Standards Authority (PSA); and which such registers are (a) awaiting a decision and (b) have been rejected by the PSA.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

Seventeen voluntary registers have been accredited by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA) since it commenced the process in February 2013, as listed below

1. Academy for Healthcare Science
2. Alliance of Private Sector Practitioners
3. Association of Child Psychotherapists
4. British Acupuncture Council
5. British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy
6. British Association of Play Therapists
7. British Association of Sport Rehabilitators and Trainers

8. British Psychoanalytic Council
9. Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council
10. COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland)
11. Federation of Holistic Therapists
12. National Counselling Society
13. National Hypnotherapy Society
14. Play Therapy UK
15. Society of Homeopaths
16. UK Council for Psychotherapy
17. UK Public Health Register

The accreditation is valid for one year and subject to review. No organisations have been rejected outright at initial application, although three have been approved with conditions. None to date have failed to be reaccredited at the annual review.

The PSA are currently considering three applications for accreditation.

■ Social Services: Ashfield

Gloria De Piero:

[\[221834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people in Ashfield constituency have received social care in each of the last 10 years.

Norman Lamb:

The Health and Social Care Information Centre do not hold data for Ashfield constituency. The table below shows the data for Nottinghamshire Council as an alternative as this council covers the Ashfield constituency.

Number of clients receiving services in Nottinghamshire provided or commissioned during the period, 2004/05 to 2013/14

| ENGLAND, 1 APRIL TO 31 MARCH | TOTAL |
|------------------------------|--------|
| 2004/05 | 24,410 |
| 2005/06 | 26,045 |
| 2006/07 | 26,900 |
| 2007/08 | 26,910 |
| 2008/09 | 28,845 |
| 2009/10 | 27,595 |

| ENGLAND, 1 APRIL TO 31 MARCH | TOTAL |
|------------------------------|--------|
| 2010/11 | 22,780 |
| 2011/12 | 18,850 |
| 2012/13 | 15,885 |
| 2013/14 | 15,835 |

Source : RAP P1

Note : Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5

■ Thalidomide

Mr Nicholas Brown: [\[221974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 9 December 2014 to Question 216805, whether he plans to make representations to the German government over compensation for British survivors of Thalidomide.

Norman Lamb:

The British Embassy in Berlin is providing assistance to the Thalidomide Trust in obtaining a meeting with the appropriate German authorities so that the Trust can make their representations. We understand the Trust is currently in correspondence with the German Government with a view to arranging such a meeting. The Foreign Office are monitoring the situation and stand ready to assist if needed.

I met with the Minister for Europe, David Lidington, on 17 December 2014. It was agreed that once the Trust has met with the German Government, we would consider again whether further representations to the German Government are needed.

■ Whittington Hospital

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[222026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the performance of the Ambulatory Care Centre at the Whittington Hosital since it opened in 2012.

Jane Ellison:

In February 2012, Whittington Health opened an adult pilot ambulatory care unit. It was co-located within the emergency department with the aim of reducing unnecessary admissions by providing senior clinical decision making and advanced diagnostics at the front door of the hospital.

Following the success of the pilot, a new £3 million dedicated ambulatory care centre opened at The Whittington Hospital in March 2014. This was officially opened by my Rt hon. Friend, Norman Lamb, the Minister of State for Care and Support on 4 December 2014.

Attendances at the unit have increased from 4,402 in 2012-13 to 6,165 in 2013-14.

The centre plays an important part in supporting timely discharge from wards. Since the unit opened the length of stay at the hospital has reduced by an average half a day for ambulatory conditions. This has increased capacity for wards to take other admissions.

We are advised that there is high patient satisfaction with the unit, with over 90% of patients surveyed rate the overall service they receive in ambulatory care as either good or very good.

HOME OFFICE

■ Asylum

Philip Davies: [\[221863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for asylum were made within (a) one week, (b) one month, (c) three months, (d) six months, (e) between six months and one year and (f) more than one year of the applicant's arrival in the UK in each of the last three years.

James Brokenshire:

In order to obtain the information requested by the Honourable Member the Home Office would need to do a manual search of all case files which would only be achievable at a disproportional cost.

■ Cephalopods

Kerry McCarthy: [\[221976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the protection of cephalopods under the provisions of Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 as amended.

Lynne Featherstone:

[Holding answer 29 January 2015]: European Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes was implemented in the United Kingdom and other Member States on 1 January 2013. This was transposed into UK legislation through the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

From 1 January 2013 cephalopods received the same protection as all other species that are regulated under the Act. Detailed advice on the application of up-to-date approaches to the accommodation and care of all cephalopods is included in Section 3, Chapter 13 of our Code of Practice for the Housing and Care of Animals Bred, Supplied

or Used for Scientific Purposes. The Code was published in December 2014 and can be found on the Gov.UK website and copies were placed in the House Library (ISBN 978-1-4741-1239-0).

■ Child Sexual Abuse Independent Panel Inquiry

Diana Johnson: [\[222105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department plans to pay (a) Ben Emmerson QC, (b) other legal representatives and (c) panel members for their work on the Child Abuse inquiry.

Lynne Featherstone:

[Holding answer 29 January 2015]: The pay of those appointed by the Home Secretary to the Independent Panel Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse is in line with other public inquiries. The normal protocol is for Inquiries to publish their own costs.

■ Cybercrime

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[221992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in what proportion of complaints of crime reported to the police there was a digital or cyber element in each of the last three years.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[221994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many instances of online (a) stalking, (b) harassment, (c) fraud and (d) identity theft were reported to the police in the most recent year for which figures are available; and how many of each category of reported instance resulted in a criminal charge.

Karen Bradley:

The Home Office does not hold the requested information. Information on the number of crimes that take place online or involve an online element is not routinely collected from all police forces.

In order to understand the scale of online offences the Home Office has introduced a voluntary 'online flag' as part of the police recorded crime data collection. This allows police forces to record online instances of crimes such as stalking and harassment. These offences could have taken place solely online, or had an online element to them.

The 'online flag' was introduced at the beginning of 2014/15, and data have been provided by a small number of forces on a voluntary basis since then. These data are currently still in development. The online flag will become mandatory for all police forces from the start of 2015/16, allowing statistics to be published once the data have been quality assured.

■ Employment Agencies

Bill Esterson: [\[222520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many staff in her Department have been employed through employment or recruitment agencies in each year since 2010-11.

Karen Bradley:

The Home Department does not centrally hold details of the number of staff employed through employment or recruitment agencies.

■ Firearms: Licensing

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown: [\[221947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions her Department has had with the British Shooting Sports Council and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation on flagging up the medical records of people who hold shotgun and firearms certificates.

Lynne Featherstone:

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 are passed to the Cabinet Office on a quarterly basis and are subsequently published on the Gov.uk website: <http://data.gov.uk/dataset/ministerial-data-home-office>

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown: [\[222010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that medical records flag up people who hold shotgun and firearms certificates and that appropriate medical conditions are rapidly communicated to the police.

Lynne Featherstone:

The Home Office has set up a working group to consider how to improve information sharing arrangements between General Practitioners and police regarding shotgun and firearm certificate holders. Those represented on the group include the police, the medical profession and shooting organisations.

At the meeting on 21 January the group discussed the possibility of flagging the medical records of people who hold shotgun and firearm certificates, and further work to explore this is being taken forward.

■ Forced Labour

Paul Blomfield: [\[221876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what training regional organised crime units have received on enforcement of labour standards as a means of preventing human trafficking for labour exploitation.

Karen Bradley:

Regional organised crime units (ROCU) are the primary interface between the National Crime Agency (NCA) and local police forces. They support the effort against serious and organised crime by providing capabilities which enhance the police response against regionally impacting activity, including Modern Slavery. Minimum standards, including mandatory training and accreditation, have been set by the College of Policing, for some of the ROCUs' core capabilities. This does not include specific training on the enforcement of labour standards; anything undertaken above the minimum requirements is at the discretion of each ROCU's leadership to provide.

As set out in the Modern Slavery Strategy, the National Policing Lead, Shaun Sawyer, is leading work to promote a requirement that all officers and staff responsible for tackling modern slavery have received appropriate training, drawing on the training packages developed by the College of Policing. In addition, a human trafficking awareness package is available to NCA officers, while human trafficking, relevant legislation and obligations feature in the training undertaken by all NCA investigators.

■ Fraud**Mr Nigel Dodds:**[\[222361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what further steps she is taking to protect UK citizens from telephone scammers.

Karen Bradley:

The Government takes all types of fraud, including those operating through telephones, extremely seriously. We consider all types of fraud to have been committed by criminals, not scammers. We are working closely with Action Fraud and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau to ensure that the public has the information they need to protect themselves. When a serious threat or a new type of fraud is identified, Action Fraud places an alert on its website with advice for individuals to protect themselves from becoming victims. Members of the public can sign up to receive these alerts by email. We are supporting local forces and agencies to deliver effective protective advice to the public on fraud, including telephone scams, in collaboration with the City of London Police.

We are also working closely with Financial Fraud Action UK and the British Bankers' Association who have issued advice to consumers on how to protect themselves from fraudsters who target people on the phone.

■ Gangmasters Licensing Authority**Paul Blomfield:**[\[221884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the need to extend the remit of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority to the (a) cleaning, (b) care, (c) hospitality, (d) construction and (e) manufacturing sectors.

Karen Bradley:

To date, no specific assessment has been made of the need to extend the remit of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority to these additional industrial sectors.

Employment agencies in sectors outside those licensed by the Gangmasters Licensing Authority are regulated by the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate, part of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. All agency workers, whichever sector they work in, are also covered by the requirements of the National Minimum Wage Act, regulated by HMRC, health and safety legislation regulated by Health and Safety Executive and general employment law, where Employment Tribunals can be used to determine disputes between employers and employees over employment rights.

The government is considering how best to add to existing protections of all workers affected by labour exploitation including the role and remit of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority. The functions of the GLA are laid out in the 2004 Gangmasters (Licensing) Act and significant changes will require amendment via primary legislation.

Paul Blomfield: [\[221900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to paragraph 4.31 of the Modern Slavery Strategy, published in December 2014, what the role the Gangmasters Licensing Authority will be in the work of the proposed Joint Border Intelligence units.

Karen Bradley:

The Gangmasters Licensing Authority is an important partner in the fight against worker exploitation and modern slavery. The Gangmasters Licensing Authority will continue to develop partnerships with enforcement bodies, including the police, National Crime Agency, Border Force, HMRC and others including through the Joint Border Intelligence Units. This will involve sharing information as well as conducting joint operations to prevent exploitative practices from occurring. The Gangmasters Licensing Authority is also working with the regulated sectors to raise awareness of exploitation and improve standards of worker treatment through the entire supply chain. This will include accredited training delivered via the academy being developed with the University of Derby to supply chain auditors, labour users, supermarket executive directors with responsibility for modern slavery and local authority chief executives.

■ Homophobia

Chris Evans: [\[222288\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to protect LGBT people from homophobic attacks.

Chris Evans: [\[222289\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to protect British Jews from anti-semitic attacks.

Chris Evans: [\[222290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to protect British Muslims from Islamophobic attacks.

Lynne Featherstone:

The UK Government takes all forms of hate crime very seriously. We deplore all attacks motivated by religion, race or sexuality. Everyone should be able to live their lives free from fear of targeted hostility, harassment or violence on the grounds of a particular characteristic.

The Government's action plan on hate crime brings together the activities of government departments that work with local agencies, voluntary organisations and an independent advisory group to meet three main objectives to challenge attitudes and behaviours, increase the reporting of hate crime, and improve the operational response to it.

Our work includes encouraging anyone who is a victim of a hate crime or subject to religion or race-related abuse or attack to have the confidence to report it to the police so that the offenders can be dealt with appropriately. As part of this, we issued guidance in 2014 to police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland on dealing with hate crimes. This which includes advice on responding to incidents and how to monitor and deal with community tensions.

We have also worked with organisations, including Show Racism the Red Card, the Anne Frank Trust and the Jewish Museum to raise awareness of prejudice with children and young people, to prevent hate crime from happening in the first place.

A progress report was published in May 2014 and provides an overview of our achievements, which include working with football authorities to help drive racism and homophobia out of football, worked with organisations such as Show Racism the Red Card, the Anne Frank Trust and the Jewish Museum to raise awareness of prejudice with children and young people and supported the work of Tell MAMA to address anti-Muslim hatred. We have also seen the first conviction(s) for offences of stirring up hatred on the grounds of sexual orientation under Part 3A of the Public Order Act 1986 (as amended). The progress report also includes case study examples which demonstrate how work is being carried out locally. The report is available in the House of Commons Library.

■ Human Trafficking**Paul Blomfield:**[\[221902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the UK Human Trafficking Centre report, A strategic assessment on the nature and scale of human trafficking in 2012, published in August 2013, and the National Crime Agency strategic assessment, The nature and scale of human trafficking in 2013, published in September 2014, how many of the (a) 402 victims of trafficking in 2012 and (b) 594 victims of trafficking in 2013 who received a positive conclusive grounds decision from the National Referral Mechanism have subsequently claimed asylum in the UK; and if she will make a statement.

Karen Bradley:

In 2012, 234 victims who received a positive conclusive grounds decision claimed asylum; and in 2013, 220 victims who received a positive conclusive grounds decision claimed asylum.

Paul Blomfield:[\[221907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the National Referral Mechanism Review, published in November 2014, if she will publish the terms of reference of the proposed National Referral Mechanism Pilots.

Karen Bradley:

The Government has accepted, in principle, all the recommendations set out in the National Referral Mechanism review report. Pilots will be established to test the core recommendations to ensure that our approach to identifying and supporting victims of modern slavery is robust and fit for purpose. Details of the pilots, including the terms of reference, will be published in due course.

■ **Internet****Mr Elfyn Llwyd:**[\[222226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of spyware downloads by residents of England and Wales in each of the last five years.

Mr Elfyn Llwyd:[\[222227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of spyware devices sold to residents of England and Wales in each of the last five years.

Karen Bradley:

The Home Office does not hold this information.

Mr Elfyn Llwyd:[\[222228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will bring forward legislative proposals to ban the sale of spyware to individuals across the internet.

Karen Bradley:

Installing spyware on a computer without the owners consent is already covered by the offences in the Computer Misuse Act 1990. Any unauthorised access to a computer however that is achieved, whether by spyware or another programme is an offence under the Computer Misuse Act. It is also an offence to make or supply an article (which includes spyware) intending it to be used to gain unauthorised access to a computer. Similarly, it is an offence to obtain an article with a view to it being supplied for use to commit such an offence. Amendments to section 3A of the Computer Misuse Act in the Serious Crime Bill will also make it an offence to obtain an article intending it to be used to commit such an offence.

Mr Elfyn Llwyd:

[\[222229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance her Department provides to police in England and Wales on investigation of a complaint that spyware is being used against an individual.

Mike Penning:

The College of Policing is responsible for issuing guidance to the police on training and investigations. At the request of the National Policing Lead for Cyber Crime (DCC Peter Goodman) the College of Policing is in the process of developing Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on cyber crime, which will be focused on cyber-dependent and cyber-enabled crime (as defined in the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy).

The Government is investing £860 million over five years through the National Cyber Security Programme to respond to the threat posed by cyber and online crime. Of this, approximately 10% is being invested in building law enforcement capabilities to tackle cyber crime. This has been used to build capability at the national, regional, and local level, including delivering training in cyber crime to officers in local police forces.

■ Marriage Certificates

Jonathan Evans:

[\[221713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress her Department has made on the review of information contained on marriage certificates; and when she plans to bring forward proposals to allow mothers' names to be recorded on marriage certificates.

James Brokenshire:

It is right that marriage certificates are updated to reflect changes in society since they were first introduced in 1837. We are working with interested parties to consider the options for doing this.

It is likely that this will involve changes to administrative processes, IT systems and legislation. When we have completed assessment of the options, we will bring forward proposals to introduce the necessary changes.

■ Proceeds of Crime

Stephen Barclay:

[\[222224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which trustees or directors of organisations subject to suspicious activity reports who have subsequently become trustees or directors of other organisations have received public funds in the last five years.

Karen Bradley:

The requirement to submit suspicious activity reports related to money laundering is set out in the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA). The information in the suspicious activity reports provided to the NCA is used for intelligence or investigative purposes. The contents of the reports are not disclosed, in order to prevent prejudicing investigations which may be taking place.

■ Slavery

Paul Blomfield: [\[221875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the terms of reference of her Department's evaluation of the effectiveness of its campaign to raise awareness of modern slavery; and if she will make a statement.

Karen Bradley:

The findings of the campaign evaluation will be published by 30th June; this will state the background, purpose and methodology of the evaluation.

Paul Blomfield: [\[221885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2014 to Question 216344, when the findings of her Department's evaluation of the effectiveness of its campaign to raise awareness of modern slavery will be published; and if she will make a statement.

Karen Bradley:

The modern slavery campaign will end on 30th March. The evaluation will be completed and the findings published by 30th June.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell: [\[222089\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross representing the House of Commons Commission, how many recruitment and employment agencies the House of Commons Commission has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

John Thurso:

The information is not available in the format requested.

The House of Commons had its own Recruitment Framework which it used to source non-specialist temporary staff from 2010/11 to 2012/13. Since 2013/14 the House has used the Crown Commercial Service's Non-Medical Non-Clinical Framework.

There were up to 30 potential suppliers on the House of Commons Recruitment Framework. There are 143 suppliers on the Crown Commercial Service's framework, although in practice the House has obtained workers from four of the listed suppliers.

In addition, the Catering Services Directorate operates its own framework which currently includes six suppliers, of which three are predominantly utilised.

Occasionally the House has been required to source temporary staff from alternative agencies when there is a lack of availability of suitable workers, and has used approximately five alternative agencies since 1 April 2013.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Africa: Overseas Aid

Jeremy Lefroy:

[\[221855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent in Africa in each year since 2005-06.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID bilateral spending on Africa is shown below. This does not include DFID spending on Africa through central contributions to multilateral partners.

| FINANCIAL YEAR | SPEND (GBP) |
|----------------|---------------|
| 2005-06 | 1,061,269,429 |
| 2006-07 | 1,030,878,670 |
| 2007-08 | 1,221,570,188 |
| 2008-09 | 1,290,464,775 |
| 2009-10 | 1,538,930,222 |
| 2010-11 | 1,686,111,144 |
| 2011-12 | 1,793,763,946 |
| 2012-13 | 1,842,759,816 |
| 2013-14 | 2,180,152,817 |

■ Brazil

Jeremy Lefroy:

[\[221851\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent in Brazil in each year since 2005-06.

Justine Greening:

Figures on Overseas Development Assistance can be viewed in the Statistics on International Development: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development/about/statistics>

The table below details bilateral spend DFID disbursed to Brazil from 2005/06 to 2013/14.

| YEAR | £ THOUSAND |
|---------|------------|
| 2005-06 | £2,387 |

| YEAR | £ THOUSAND |
|---------|------------|
| 2006-07 | £733 |
| 2007-08 | £436 |
| 2008-09 | £860 |
| 2009-10 | £927 |
| 2010-11 | £158 |
| 2011-12 | £0 |
| 2012-13 | £0 |
| 2013-14 | £0 |

■ China

Jeremy Lefroy:

[221854]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent in China in each year since 2005-06.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID closed its bilateral programme to China in 2011. Our relationship with China is now based on identifying ways in which our countries can work together to promote development and the reduction of poverty in poorer countries or on global development issues.

Figures on Overseas Development Assistance can be viewed in the Statistics on International Development: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development/about/statistics>.

The table below details bilateral spend DFID disbursed to China from 2005/06 to 2013/14.

| YEAR | £ THOUSAND |
|---------|------------|
| 2005-06 | £34,744 |
| 2006-07 | £38,589 |
| 2007-08 | £38,796 |
| 2008-09 | £40,296 |
| 2009-10 | £34,512 |
| 2010-11 | £22,871 |

| YEAR | £ THOUSAND |
|---------|------------|
| 2011-12 | -£508 |
| 2012-13 | - |
| 2013-14 | - |

■ Developing Countries: Agriculture

Ms Diane Abbott: [\[221833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that UK aid programmes protect the resilience of small-scale farmers.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

The Department for International Development (DFID) funds numerous projects around the world to build climate and economic resilience, including that of small-scale farmers. These are listed on the Development Tracker <http://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/>. Two examples of global programmes include: support to the International Fund for Agricultural Development over five years to deliver the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture (ASAP) programme, which aims to support six million smallholder farmers in the most vulnerable countries; and the recently launched the Building Resilience and Adapting to Climate Extremes and Disasters programme (BRACED) to deliver interventions to build the resilience of 5 million people in 13 countries, including in the Sahel, that are at most risk of climate extremes.

■ Developing Countries: Family Planning

Jeremy Lefroy: [\[221848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on family planning projects in each year since 2005-06.

Jeremy Lefroy: [\[221849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on health projects in each year since 2005-06.

Jeremy Lefroy: [\[221857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on water and sanitation projects in each year since 2005-06.

Jeremy Lefroy: [\[221858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on education projects in each year since 2005-06.

Jeremy Lefroy: [\[221859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on nutrition projects in each year since 2005-06.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

Details of the total expenditure on health are published in Statistics on International Development (SID) which is available in the House Library or online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development/about/statistics>. DFID's reporting of aid flows is in line with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) rules. DFID started reporting against a specific family planning code in 2008/09. Details of DFID's spending on multi-sectoral programmes which deliver nutrition results are published in <http://devinit.org/report/dfids-aid-spending-nutrition-2010-2012/>. Figures for direct bilateral spend on health, nutrition, family planning, education and water & sanitation are reproduced below:

| TOTAL DFID BILATERAL PROGRAMME (£ MILLION) | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Health | 498 | 548 | 602 | 734 | 750 | 877 | 978 | 1008 | 1239 |
| <i>of which:</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>9</i> | <i>13</i> | <i>19</i> | <i>24</i> | <i>38</i> | <i>49</i> | <i>64</i> |
| <i>Nutrition</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Family planning</i> | | | | 8 | 15 | 31 | 44 | 110 | 127 |
| Education | 323 | 385 | 364 | 455 | 398 | 563 | 628 | 517 | 791 |
| Water & Sanitation | 48 | 60 | 72 | 90 | 107 | 114 | 144 | 132 | 166 |

When DFID or other UK government departments provide core contributions in support of multilateral organisations, we do not break down by sector. However, there are a number of multilaterals organisations that are focussed on Health, Education and Water & Sanitation. Details of the contributions from DFID to each multilateral organisation can be found online.

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell: [\[222090\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many recruitment and employment agencies her Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

DFID has used the following number of recruitment and employment agencies to source staff in each year.

| | |
|------|---|
| 2010 | 5 |
| 2011 | 4 |
| 2012 | 9 |
| 2013 | 9 |
| 2014 | 9 |

■ **India**

Jeremy Lefroy:

[\[221853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent in India in each year since 2005-06.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

Figures on Overseas Development Assistance to India can be viewed in the Statistics on International Development: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development/about/statistics> .

The table below details bilateral spend DFID disbursed to India from 2005/06 to 2013/14.

| YEAR | £ THOUSAND |
|---------|------------|
| 2005-06 | £252,755 |
| 2006-07 | £233,853 |
| 2007-08 | £275,402 |
| 2008-09 | £297,028 |
| 2009-10 | £295,119 |
| 2010-11 | £278,936 |
| 2011-12 | £284,359 |
| 2012-13 | £196,405 |
| 2013-14 | £176,834 |

In 2012, DFID announced that it would end our traditional financial grant aid to India in 2015. From this year on, our partnership will be based on sharing skills and expertise,

investing in private sector projects that benefit the poor, and working together on global development issues.

■ Overseas Aid

Mary Creagh: [\[221008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what arrangements she is planning for the publication of indicators relating to her Department's strategic framework for economic development; and when she plans to publish such indicators.

Justine Greening:

Building on initial work, DFID is continuing to develop further results indicators to reflect economic development priorities and an update on progress is due by July 2015.

Jeremy Lefroy: [\[221850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on projects in conflict states in each year since 2005-06.

Jeremy Lefroy: [\[221861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on projects in fragile states in each year since 2005-06.

Mr Desmond Swayne:

The Department for International Development has spent the following amounts of official development assistance (ODA) in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) since 2005:

| YEAR | DFID BILATERAL ODA IN FRAGILE & CONFLICT AFFECTED STATES | |
|------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | (£M) | SUBSTANTIAL DEBT RELIEF TO FCAS (£M) |
| 2005 | £882 | £3,288 |
| 2006 | £2,430 | £2,147 |
| 2007 | £1,246 | |
| 2008 | £1,450 | |
| 2009 | £1,772 | |
| 2010 | £1,831 | |
| 2011 | £2,200 | |
| 2012 | £2,183 | |
| 2013 | £2,835 | |

No distinction is made between those that are fragile and those experiencing active conflict for the purposes of calculating spend. I have therefore chosen to answer these two questions together. DFID recognises 55 countries as being fragile or conflict-affected. The list is revised every two years. ODA spend is calculated on a calendar-year basis; provisional figures for 2014 UK ODA spend will be published in the spring. In addition, DFID funds multilateral organisations, global programmes and NGOs delivering programmes in FCAS.

Mary Creagh:

[\[222402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to her Department's strategic framework for economic development, published in January 2014, what proportion of the £1.8 billion allocated will be spent in (a) this financial year and (b) each of the next three financial years.

Justine Greening:

The £1.8 billion spend target is for financial year 2015/16 alone. Targets for future years have still to be agreed.

■ Sierra Leone

Jeremy Lefroy:

[\[221856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on health projects in Sierra Leone in each year since 2005-06.

Justine Greening:

The Department for International Development has spent the following amounts on bilateral health projects in Sierra Leone since 2005-06:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 2005-06 | £1.7M |
| 2006-07 | £1.8m |
| 2007-08 | £3m |
| 2008-09 | £5.5m |
| 2009-10 | £10.9m |
| Total 2005/06 - 2009/10 | £22.9m |
| 2010-11 | £22m |
| 2011-12 | £11.6m |
| 2012-13 | £15.9m |
| 2013-14 | £14.3m |
| Total 2010/11 - 2013/14 | £63.8m |

The 2010-11 figures include one-off start-up costs for the launch (in April 2010) and rollout of the Free Health Care Initiative in Sierra Leone.

These figures do not include the substantial health support delivered via multilateral bodies such as Gavi and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GF). These funds disbursed US\$38.9m (Gavi) and US\$148.5m (GF) to Sierra Leone over 2005-2014. The UK has provided significant funding to both of these organisations and most recently pledged up to £1bn to the GF over 2014-2016 period and £1bn to Gavi for 2016-20.

**DISBURSEMENTS TO SIERRA
LEONE BY FUND BY PROGRAMME**

| CALENDAR YEAR (US\$) | GAVI | GF |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 2005 | 140,300 | 6,365,300 |
| 2006 | 521,000 | 6,993,100 |
| 2007 | 2,941,800 | 4,367,700 |
| 2008 | 3,996,700 | 14,372,100 |
| 2009 | 3,359,400 | 11,224,600 |
| 2010 | 6,039,400 | 17,843,600 |
| 2011 | 3,919,900 | 24,077,500 |
| 2012 | 5,228,200 | 14,932,200 |
| 2013 | 6,475,800 | 17,309,700 |
| 2014 | 6,247,400 | 31,062,600 |
| Total 2005-2014 disbursements | US\$38.9m | US\$148.5m |

■ West Africa

Mary Creagh:

[\[222401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many applications for funding more than £5 million she has received for approval for projects in (a) total, (b) Sierra Leone, (c) Liberia, (d) Guinea and (e) Nigeria in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) the financial year to date.

Justine Greening:

DFID does not collect data in the form requested.

■ World Bank

Crispin Blunt: [\[221929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking to ensure that the World Bank's environmental and social safeguard policies take account of the rights and needs of (a) LGBT people and (b) other vulnerable groups.

Justine Greening:

The Government attaches considerable importance to the current review of the World Bank's Safeguards Framework. We have been strongly engaged throughout both with UK civil society organisations and the World Bank, most recently at UK consultation meetings on 19-20 January. At these, discussions with the Bank included a specific focus on how the safeguards will ensure proper consideration and risk management for vulnerable or disadvantaged groups such as women, the disabled and LGBT people. The Government will continue to raise these points as the review progresses.

JUSTICE

■ Bill of Rights

Jeremy Corbyn: [\[221909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will implement a victim's bill of rights.

Jeremy Corbyn: [\[221910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make it mandatory for a victim's impact statement to be presented in criminal proceedings at Crown court.

Jeremy Corbyn: [\[221915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make it mandatory for prosecutors to meet victims before the start of trials at Crown court.

Mike Penning:

This Government is committed to putting the highest emphasis on victims' needs.

We implemented a new Victims' Code in December 2013 to give victims of crime clearer entitlements and a stronger voice. The Code entitles victims to make a personal statement about how the crime has affected them and to ask to read it aloud in court if the defendant is found guilty, and for bereaved close relatives to meet the CPS prosecutor before the trial. Also, victims attending court as witnesses are entitled to meet the CPS prosecutor and ask him or her questions about the court process, where circumstances permit.

In September 2014, the Government published 'Our Commitment to Victims'. This included a commitment to enshrine the rights of victims in law by putting the key entitlements of the Victims' Code into primary legislation, including the right to make a Victim Personal Statement and to request to read it out in court. Other key entitlements from the Victims' Code which will be put into primary legislation include: early identification of priority victims and witnesses and assessment of their needs; automatic

referral to the relevant support organisations; and information for victims about their case, at every stage

■ Crime: Victims

Jeremy Corbyn: [\[221918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to implement the European Directive 2012/29/EU on victims of crime; and what assessment he has made of the implications of that Directive for the work of the police and Crown Prosecution Service.

Mike Penning:

The Government is committed to fully implementing the EU Victims' Directive by the deadline of 16 November 2015. By signing up to the Directive, we are promoting improved standards on the entitlements, support and protection available to victims of crime across the EU and to the benefit of UK citizens.

The Government produced an impact assessment when we made our opt-in decision on the draft version of the EU Victims' Directive in 2011 and assessed that some articles in the Directive could have associated costs for the police and prosecution services. Amendments to some of these provisions were secured during negotiations on the Directive.

The Government will explore the implications of the final version of the Directive when we implement it in November 2015.

■ Cybercrime

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[221999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what support services are available for victims of digital and online crime.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[222000\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what his estimate he has made of the number of people convicted of an offence involving domestic abuse who were also involved in digital or cyber-crime against the same victim in each of the last three years.

Mike Penning:

This Government is committed to ensuring that victims of crime have access to high-quality, effective and timely support to help them cope with and, as far as possible, recover from the effects of crime. Support is offered irrespective of whether the crime has been reported to the police, and includes where someone has been the victim of digital or online crime.

In September last year, the Government published "Our Commitment to Victims", which included a commitment to establish a new nationwide Victims' Information Service. This will provide the first 'one stop shop' to ensure better information and support is available and easily accessible to any victim of crime— whether that be searching for local support services or finding out more about to expect from the Criminal Justice System.

We implemented a new Victims' Code in December 2013 to give victims of crime clearer entitlements throughout the criminal justice process following their reporting of a crime to the police. This includes the entitlement to make a Victim Personal Statement (VPS), which gives victims a stronger voice as they are able to explain to the court how the crime has personally affected them. The Victims' Code also entitles victims of the most serious crime, persistently targeted victims and vulnerable and intimidated victims to enhanced services and support, such as receiving information on pre-trial therapy and counselling. The new Victims' Code also includes an improved section on complaints, and it explains who the victim should contact and what to expect if things go wrong.

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has made more money than ever before available for victims' support services in England and Wales, increasing the contribution offenders make to the costs of providing support and almost doubling the budget in previous years of circa £50m, with the majority allocated to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to ensure local provision of support for victims matches local need.

In relation to the number of people convicted of an offence involving domestic abuse who were also involved in digital or cyber-crime against the same victim in each of the last three years, data is not centrally collected and recorded upon which actual figures or an estimate could be provided.

■ Former Members of the Armed Forces and the Criminal Justice System Review

Dan Jarvis:

[222554]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the cost was of the Phillips Review on veterans and the criminal justice system.

Mike Penning:

While the majority of veterans make a very positive contribution to society, we know that for some the transition to civilian life can prove challenging and see them ending up in the criminal justice system. That is why the Justice Secretary ordered a review into the reasons why some ex-Service personnel turn to a life of crime and how we can look at their specific needs and experiences to inform decisions on rehabilitation which can help them turn their lives around.

The Stephen Phillips Review into Ex-armed Forces and the Criminal Justice System cost £17,453. The majority of this spend was to fund a member of staff. Other costs included travel to and from stakeholder events and publication costs.

Stephen Phillips QC MP, the Advisors to the review and contributing stakeholders provided their time at no cost.

■ Human Trafficking

Paul Blomfield:

[221878]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the efficacy of existing civil torts in enabling victims of human trafficking to claim damages from their traffickers.

Paul Blomfield: [\[221879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what damages were awarded to victims of trafficking in actions under existing civil torts since 2010.

Paul Blomfield: [\[221883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many victims of trafficking have brought claims against their traffickers under existing civil torts in the last five years; and how many such claims have resulted in awards for damages.

Mike Penning:

Modern slavery is an appalling crime that has no place in today's society. It is an affront not just to the dignity and humanity of the people crushed by it but to every one of us.

That's why the Government has introduced a Modern Slavery Bill, the first of its kind in Europe.

But we are clear that legislation is only part of the answer. We have also launched the Modern Slavery Strategy setting out co-ordinated action across government departments, agencies and law enforcement in the UK and internationally to tackle slavery.

We believe that the remedies available to victims of trafficking under the civil law of tort are adequate and effective. In addition to damages to compensate the victim for the harm he or she has suffered, the law also allows for aggravated or exemplary damages to be awarded depending on the circumstances of the case. We are confident that the courts will award such damages wherever it is appropriate to do so.

Figures in relation to the number of civil claims brought by victims of trafficking and damages awarded are not available.

Paul Blomfield: [\[221880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many cases of (a) trafficking for sexual exploitation, (b) trafficking for other exploitation and (c) forced labour, slavery and servitude (i) were prosecuted and (ii) resulted in convictions in 2013.

Mike Penning:

The number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts of offences under Section 71 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (relating to forced labour, slavery and servitude), Section 4 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc) Act 2004 (relating to trafficking for other exploitation) and Section 57 and 59 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 in England and Wales (relating to for sexual exploitation) from 2009 to 2013 can be viewed in the table.

Modern slavery is an appalling crime that has no place in today's society. It is an affront not just to the dignity and humanity of the people crushed by it but to every one of us.

That is why the Government has gone beyond the above legislation and introduced a Modern Slavery Bill, the first of its kind in Europe.

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

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2015-01-23/221880>

Paul Blomfield: [\[221908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to paragraph 6.3.11 of the National Referral Mechanism Review published in November 2014, if he will review the provision of legal aid to potential victims of human trafficking.

Mike Penning:

Civil legal aid is currently available to help victims of human trafficking in relation to applications for leave to enter or remain in the UK, and also for claims for damages or under employment law brought by victims of human trafficking arising in connection with their exploitation.

My officials are working with the Home Office on implementation of the Review's recommendations.

■ Legal Aid Scheme

Mike Freer: [\[221990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies on access to legal aid in family courts of the evidence given on 1 December 2011 to the Justice Committee by the President of the Family Division.

Mike Penning:

Ministers and officials regularly meet with members of the senior judiciary to discuss policy and operational matters.

The Government will respond to the report of the Justice Committee's inquiry into the impact of changes to civil legal aid under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 once it is published.

■ Parc Prison

Mrs Madeleine Moon: [\[221960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether G4S has replaced the credit union operating at Parc Prison with an in-house saving scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Selous:

A credit union can assist prisoners leaving custody to build a more settled way of life in the community and to avoid reoffending.

The credit union at HM Prison and Young Offender Institution Parc is still in operation. The establishment also has a children's savings credit union account for prisoners residing in the Family Unit.

■ Prison Service

Jenny Chapman: [\[221984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prison officers took sick leave in each prison in England and Wales in each month in 2014.

Jenny Chapman: [\[221985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many days sick leave were taken by prison officers in each prison in England and Wales in each month in 2014.

Andrew Selous:

The data requested can be found in the table attached. Figures from April 2014 to December 2014 are not enclosed as they are due to be published in July 2015 in the Management Information Addendum to the NOMS Annual Report.

Reducing levels of sickness in a sustainable way is a priority. NOMS is working hard to achieve a sustained reduction in sickness absence through targeted local initiatives in prisons, and at a national level through a range of interventions to manage absence and promote staff wellbeing. There are several support measures available to staff to assist their recovery or prevent time off due to sickness. These include access to comprehensive occupational health services and counselling.

Attachments:

1. Equivalent Working Days Lost to Sick Leave 2013-14 [Equivalent working days lost sick leave.xls]

■ Prisoners: Children

Andrew Griffiths: [\[222241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many children born to women serving a custodial sentence were taken into care in the most recent five years for which figures are available.

Simon Hughes:

Information on the number of children born to women serving a custodial sentence and taken into care is not collected by NOMS. This is of course a matter for Local Authority Social Services Departments and as such NOMS does not hold any data.

There are trained family support workers in each prison with a good understanding of childcare proceedings and their role is to facilitate communication between all parties to ensure the needs of the children and women are adequately met.

■ Prisons: Smoking

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[221967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will direct the National Offender Management Service to ban cigarette smoking on the prison estate.

Andrew Selous:

Planning for implementation of a smoke free policy continues and this will include consideration of implementing arrangements at some early adopter sites instead of pilot arrangements.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[221968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for what reason the National Offender Management Service suspended the pilot scheme to ban cigarette smoking on the prison estate.

Andrew Selous:

Planning for implementation of a smoke free policy continues and this will include consideration of implementing arrangements at some early adopter sites instead of pilot arrangements.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[221970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions his Department has had with the Prison Officers Association on the proposal to ban cigarette smoking on the prison estate.

Andrew Selous:

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) provides regular updates to the Prison Officers Association and other staff associations on plans to implement a smoke free policy in prisons as part of the agreed Whitley council arrangements. POA officials have also met separately with NOMS officials to discuss the plans and these meetings will continue.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[222013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to resume the pilot arrangements for banning cigarette smoking on the prison estate.

Andrew Selous:

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has confirmed its intention to move to a smoke free policy for prisons. No date has yet been confirmed for implementation of a smoke free policy.

■ Trials

Jeremy Corbyn: [\[221917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will give transcripts of trials to the families of murder victims.

Mike Penning:

The Ministry of Justice provides families of homicide victims with a copy of the judge's sentencing remarks in any case of murder, manslaughter or offences of causing death on the road.

Upon request, Her Majesty Courts and Tribunal Service will consider providing transcript of other key parts of the trial.

NORTHERN IRELAND■ **Employment Agencies**

Lucy Powell: [\[222092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many recruitment and employment agencies her Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

Figures for the periods 2010/11 and 2012/13 can only be provided at disproportionate cost. As regards 2013/14 and 2014/15 the numbers are as follows:

2013/14 – 5

2014/15 – 3

■ **Trade Promotion**

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[222411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with reference to her contribution of 27 January 2015, Official Report, column 746, on Second Reading of the Corporation Tax (Northern Ireland) Bill, what plans she has for co-ordination with the Prime Minister and other Cabinet colleagues of a determined effort to sell the benefits of Northern Ireland to the world.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

Promoting Northern Ireland as a great place to invest was an aspect of the economic pact set out in June 2013. Since hosting the G8 summit in Northern Ireland the Government has worked in a number of ways to continue to promote Northern Ireland to the world. These include the Investment Conference in October 2013 which my Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister attended, the Investment Seminar for High Commissioners and Ambassadors which I co-hosted, and the first ever UK-Ireland joint trade mission. The Government will continue to seek out opportunities to market Northern Ireland on the global stage.

SCOTLAND**■ Employment Agencies**

Lucy Powell:

[222094]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many recruitment and employment agencies his Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

David Mundell:

The Scotland Office has used two recruitment agencies each year since 2010-2011.

Bill Esterson:

[222524]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many staff in his Department have been employed through employment or recruitment agencies in each year since 2010-11.

David Mundell:

As the number of temporary agency staff employed in each of the years is less than 5 in each year, detailed information is not provided for privacy reasons.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION**■ Electoral Register**

Chris Ruane:

[221715]

To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what guidance the Electoral Commission provides to local authority electoral registration offices and local authority canvassers when they are distributing and collecting completed individual elector registration forms on the doorstep.

Mr Gary Streeter:

The Electoral Commission has published guidance for Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), and materials for them to use to train canvassers. The guidance states that EROs need to consider how the distribution and collection of completed forms will be undertaken, as part of their engagement strategy and implementation plan for Individual Electoral Registration (IER). You can view the guidance on the Commission's website, www.electoralcommission.org.uk.

Registration forms contain sensitive personal information (including National Insurance numbers and dates of birth), so canvassers will need to ensure that the forms are kept secure at all times. All canvassers therefore need to receive appropriate data protection training, and be trained to keep any personal information they may collect from electors safe from unauthorised access, accidental loss or destruction.

The Commission and the Cabinet Office have also given guidance to EROs on what they can do to minimise the risks to electors' personal data. For example, where canvassers are collecting forms on the doorstep, they should consider using lockable cases or satchels for transporting documents.

Chris Ruane: [\[221716\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what estimate the Electoral Commission has made of the number of local authorities whose canvassers are declining to collect completed individual electoral registration forms on the doorstep.

Mr Gary Streeter:

The Electoral Commission does not record information on local authorities whose canvassers are not collecting completed forms on the doorstep. The Commission guidance does, however, make clear how Electoral Registration Officers should approach collecting registration forms on the doorstep.

Registration forms contain sensitive personal information (including National Insurance numbers and dates of birth), so canvassers will need to ensure that the forms are kept secure at all times. A number of EROs have chosen to equip their canvassers with tablets or smartphones to allow electors to submit applications directly through the www.gov.uk/register-to-vote website.

Additionally, whenever a form is left with an elector there is a legal requirement for them to be provided with a freepost return envelope. This means that, in order to minimise the risks to electors' data, the application can be posted either by the applicant or the canvasser.

Helen Goodman: [\[221832\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, what advice is offered to people on how to find their national insurance number or to be provided with one when they apply to vote.

Mr Gary Streeter:

An individual's National Insurance number can be located on official paperwork, such as their National Insurance card, payslips, or letters from the Department of Work and Pensions or HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

It can also be found via the HMRC enquiry service, which is available online, over the telephone and via post in both English and Welsh.

Information on where to locate your National Insurance number is available on-screen during the relevant points of the online voter registration process.

This advice, along with more detailed information, is available on the Electoral Commission's website, as part of the resources aimed at local authorities, for Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) to use in response to public queries.

■ Electoral Register: Young People

Chris Ruane: [\[221714\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, how many 17-year-old attainees were registered in December (a)

2013 and (b) 2014 in (i) the UK, (ii) each region and constituent part of the UK and (iii) each local authority area.

Mr Gary Streeter:

Data on the number of registered attainers in December 2013 in the UK, by region and local authority area, is available from the Office for National Statistics' website.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/pop-estimate/electoral-statistics-for-uk/2013/index.html>

The Office for National Statistics will publish data on the number of attainers registered in December 2014 in February 2015.

Data is not held on the age of registered attainers and some may have been 16 years old at the point of registration.

Chris Ruane:

[221717]

To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, how many young people were included on the electoral register in December (a) 2013 and (b) 2014 in (i) the UK, (ii) each region and constituent part of the UK and (iii) each local authority area.

Mr Gary Streeter:

The Electoral Commission does not hold data on the age profile of registered electors.

The Electoral Commission has previously estimated the proportion of people correctly registered by age. The most recent estimates can be found in its report *The quality of the 2014 electoral registers in Great Britain*, which is available on its website here:

http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/169889/Completeness-and-accuracy-of-the-2014-electoral-registers-in-Great-Britain.pdf.

TRANSPORT

■ Aviation: Safety

Jim Shannon:

[222111]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that Gibraltar is not excluded from the EU air safety system.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The EU air safety system is established under Regulation 216/2008. Gibraltar is within the scope of this Regulation and there are no proposals to change this. . I remain resolute that Gibraltar Airport must be included in all EU aviation legislation and we are lobbying on the importance of this to the UK in Brussels and EU capitals.

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[222177]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will hold discussions with the Civil Aviation Authority on requiring airlines operating in UK airspace to have wind shear detection and alert systems fitted to commercial aircraft.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

International civil aviation is governed by the Convention on International Civil Aviation. Under the Convention, the International Civil Aviation Organisation is responsible for establishing the minimum safety standards for international aviation. Subject to compliance with those international standards, the State in which the aircraft is registered is responsible for determining what equipment it should carry. Within the EU, aircraft equipment requirements are introduced through EU legislation adopted on the advice of the European Aviation Safety Agency. There are currently no plans to introduce EU legislation to require the carriage of wind shear detection and alert systems on aircraft registered in EU Member States. We believe that this position is reasonable because the Civil Aviation Authority is not aware of any safety case which would justify the introduction of such a requirement.

■ Bus Services: Disability

Gordon Henderson: [\[221895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the consequence for his policies of the decision in the Appeal Court in the case of Doug Paulley v First Bus Group.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government believes that disabled people should have the same access to transport services and opportunities to travel as other members of society. I have noted the Court of Appeal's recent judgment in respect of Mr Doug Paulley and First Bus Group and will continue to follow this ongoing legal action closely.

There are currently no plans to amend domestic legislation or to alter the current arrangements relating to the accessibility of buses on local or scheduled services.

■ Cross Country Railway Line

Richard Graham: [\[221963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects the (a) negotiations and (b) consultation on the Cross Country franchise direct award to begin.

Claire Perry:

Our current franchising programme envisages a directly awarded franchise will be awarded to Cross Country when the current franchise expires in October 2016.

Discussions regarding this will commence later this year and we will engage fully with all relevant stakeholder groups as well as passenger groups as part of these discussions.

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell: [\[222095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many recruitment and employment agencies his Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Claire Perry:

The table below provides the number of employment agencies used to source temporary staff (employment agencies are not used to recruit permanent staff) for the Department since 2010 -11. The figures include new contracts and extensions to existing contracts sourced via the Crown Commercial Services Framework.

| FINANCIAL YEAR | NUMBER OF SUPPLIERS USED |
|--|--------------------------|
| 2011 - 2012 | 19 |
| 2012 – 2013 | 30 |
| 2013 – 2014 | 22 |
| 2014 – 2015 (Transition year from Crown Commercial Services to Contingent LabourOne) | 25 |

■ **First Great Western**

John McDonnell:

[\[221981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the terms of the rail franchise directly awarded to First Great Western in October 2014 retain the role of guard on all trains for the duration of the contract.

Claire Perry:

The current rail franchise which has been directly awarded to First Great Western started on 13 October 2013. It makes no provision about the role of the guard. The refreshed Franchising Schedule published on 10 October 2014 said that a further directly awarded franchise of 3½ years was anticipated to be awarded to First Great Western after the end of the current franchise on 19 September 2015. The Department for Transport is currently in discussion with First Great Western about the terms of this second directly awarded franchise.

John McDonnell:

[\[221982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the food for the at-seat catering service provided under the rail franchise directly awarded to First Great Western in October 2014 will be prepared by staff on-board the trains.

John McDonnell:

[\[221986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the at-seat catering service provided under the directly awarded franchise on the Great Western Main Line will be in addition to a buffet car or café-bar on the train.

Claire Perry:

The current rail franchise which has been directly awarded to First Great Western started on 13 October 2013. It did not specify details of on-train catering services, which train operators are best placed to manage. The refreshed Franchising Schedule published on

10 October 2014 said that a further directly awarded franchise of 3½ years was anticipated to be awarded to First Great Western after the end of the current franchise on 19 September 2015. The Department for Transport is currently in discussion with First Great Western about the terms of this second directly awarded franchise.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Michael Fabricant: [\[221943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what funds will be made available for protection against terrorist attacks on High Speed 2.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

In designing HS2, HS2 Ltd is aiming to be exemplary in addressing security issues and, as designs develop, it will be in discussions with Departmental transport security officials to ensure that it complies with their requirements. At this stage of the project's design, within the overall costs, there is not a separate funding line specifically for security.

■ Liverpool-Manchester Railway Line

Mrs Louise Ellman: [\[222235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 13 January 2015 to Question 220242, on what date he plans for all Class 319 electric trains to start running on the Liverpool to Manchester Victoria via Newton-le-Willows route.

Claire Perry:

The first Class 319 electric trains are due to enter passenger service on the Chat Moss line via Newton-le-Willows, once the electrification work is completed by Network Rail and approved for use by the Office of Rail Regulation. The full fleet of 14 trains is planned to be in passenger service from the December 2015 timetable.

Mrs Louise Ellman: [\[222236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 13 January 2015 to Question 220242, what discussions he has had with Network Rail about the time taken to complete electrification of the Liverpool to Manchester Victoria via Newton-le-Willows route, and the effect of the delay to this project compared to the original time estimate on rolling stock provision in the north.

Claire Perry:

As part of this Government's commitment to the over £1 billion Northern Hub upgrade and North of England electrification programme, the Secretary of State and his officials have had regular discussions with Network Rail about the delivery of electrification of the Liverpool to Manchester Victoria via Newton-le-Willows route, originally planned for December 2014. Network Rail has assured the department that the electrification will be completed in early 2015 and electric rolling stock will start running on the route as soon as the works are completed and authorised for passenger use.

Mrs Louise Ellman:

[222237]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 13 January 2015 to Question 220242, what discussions he has had with Northern Rail on the availability of fully trained drivers for the 14 Class 319 electric trains on the Liverpool to Manchester Victoria via Newton-le-Willows route by the time that the refurbished trains are ready for service.

Claire Perry:

The Class 319 electric trains have been delivered to Northern Rail within the contractual timescales and Northern Rail is currently undertaking driver training and train refurbishment. We will continue to monitor the work Northern are carrying out to ensure that the drivers will be available when the trains enter service.

Mrs Louise Ellman:

[222238]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 13 January 2015 to Question 220242, by what date he plans for all of the 14 Class 319 electric trains to be refurbished and ready to enter service on the Liverpool to Manchester Victoria via Newton-le-Willows route.

Claire Perry:

It is planned that all 14 of the Class 319 electric trains will be providing passenger services on routes in the North-West during 2015. Eight electric trains are contracted to run in passenger service from the May 2015 timetable. We expect that the 2015 contracted dates for these trains entering service will be met.

■ Manchester-Burnley Railway Line

Lilian Greenwood:

[222280]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects regular passenger services to start operating via the Todmorden Curve.

Claire Perry:

Network Rail is due to complete the signalling on the new section of track in the next few weeks. As this is a local project sponsored and specified by Lancashire County Council and Burnley Borough Council, it is for them to reach formal agreement with Northern Rail on what date in 2015 these train services will commence.

■ Pedestrian Crossings

Richard Burden:

[222160]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the criteria are by which he will assess whether the new Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions have improved safety, accessibility and amenity for pedestrians crossing the road.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

There are no such criteria. Assessing the safety, accessibility and amenity for pedestrians crossing the road is beyond the scope of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD). Such assessments remain a matter for traffic authorities for

individual locations. The purpose of TSRGD is to prescribe traffic signs that can be used on the highway.

■ Railways: Electrification

Lilian Greenwood: [\[222242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2015 to Question 219009, if he will specify the projects comprising the 850 committed route miles of electrified railways referred to in the Answer and the mileage of such railways for each project.

Claire Perry:

The railway projects are:

Great Western 223 route miles

North West 116 route miles

Electric Spine including East West Rail 155 route miles

Midland Main Line 170 route miles

West Midlands 15 route miles

Transpennine 73 route miles

Welsh Valleys 126 route miles

Gospel Oak – Barking – Thames Docks 15 route miles

These are rounded estimates of route miles and exclude the four route miles of electrified railway between Barnt Green and Bromsgrove authorised in the previous Government's July 2007 rail investment strategy (HLOS).

■ Railways: Greater Manchester

Lilian Greenwood: [\[222499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department plans to reach a decision on Network Rail's application for a Transport and Works Act Order in connection with the Ordsall Chord project.

Claire Perry:

Network Rail's application for a Transport and Works Act Order in connection with the Ordsall Chord project is in the process of being considered by the Department, in accordance with Transport and Works Act procedures. A decision will be announced in due course.

Information about procedures for obtaining Transport and Works Act Orders can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-and-works-act-orders-a-brief-guide-2006>

■ Railways: North of England

Lisa Nandy:

[\[222176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department has paid to consultants in preparation for reletting the Northern Rail and TransPennine Express franchises; and what the name of each consultant so paid was.

Claire Perry:

The Department for Transport has paid in preparation for the Northern and TransPennine Express (TPE) Franchise Competitions the following consultants up to December 2014.

TPE FRANCHISE£ (INCLUDING VAT)NATURE OF
ADVICEEVERSHEDS157,081.04LEGALHALCROW
(TRL)986,050.21TECHNICALURS49,451.36MODELLINGERNST &
YOUNG219,133.88FINANCIALTOTAL1,411,716.49NORTHERN FRANCHISE£
(INCLUDING VAT)NATURE OF ADVICEHALCROW
(TRL)1,176,226.03TECHNICALPARSONS BRINCKERHOFF22,867.20BID
EVALUATIONBEVAN
BRITTAN142,126.63LEGALPWC289,104.00FINANCIALTOTAL1,630,323.86

This is consistent with the Department's acceptance of the recommendations in the Brown and Laidlaw reports that external advisers be appointed for each competition.

Lisa Nandy:

[\[222346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect on job numbers of the introduction of driver-only operating on the Northern Rail and Transpennine Express franchises.

Claire Perry:

In developing the specification to be included in the Invitation to Tender for the Northern and Transpennine Express franchises the Department has to consider the possible effect of a number of difference scenarios and approaches in a wide range of specification areas. One of these is the possibility of drivers taking increased responsibilities, including for opening and closing the doors. This has already been the norm on parts of the railways for thirty years.

In considering whether to specify such an option we would not be requiring the removal of on-board staff. We recognise the importance that passenger place on the presence of on-train staff and want to make sure that where appropriate all of our operators provide these benefits through an effective staff presence that meets passengers' needs.

Lisa Nandy: [\[222347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on whether Rail North support proposals for the introduction of driver-only operating on the Northern Rail and TransPennine Express franchises.

Claire Perry:

We are working closely with Rail North on all aspects of the specifications for the Northern and TransPennine franchises; this includes considering the option of specifying that, where appropriate, drivers take on increased responsibility including the job of opening and closing the train doors, as has been the norm on many other parts of the railway for 30 years.

In considering such an option we would not be requiring the removal of on-board staff. We recognise the importance that passengers place on the presence of on-train staff and want to make sure that where appropriate all of our operators provide these benefits through an effective staff presence that meets passengers' needs.

The specifications for the franchise are in the process of being finalised and will be published in due course.

Helen Jones: [\[222388\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will (a) carry out and (b) publish an equality impact assessment of the introduction of driver-only operation on the Transpennine Express and Northern Rail franchises.

Claire Perry:

Our specifications for the Northern and TransPennine franchises are being developed in accordance with our public sector obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The specifications will be published shortly.

Helen Jones: [\[222389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect on passenger safety of the introduction of driver-only operation on the Transpennine Express and Northern Rail franchises; and if he will make a statement.

Claire Perry:

Drivers have had increased responsibilities, including for opening and closing train doors on significant parts of the rail network for up to 30 years with no negative impact on passenger safety.

Primary responsibility for safety of train operation rests with the operator, and all franchisees have to obtain necessary licensing as a condition precedent for franchise start. Before introducing a change in operating methods, train operators must assess the risks and ensure that adequate mitigation measures are in place.

In considering whether to specify such an option we would not be requiring the removal of on-board staff. We recognise the importance that passengers place on the presence of on-train staff and want to make sure that where appropriate all of our operators provide these benefits through an effective staff presence that meets passengers' needs.

■ Reprography

Chris Leslie:

[222099]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 26 January 2015 to Question 221267, what the reasons were for each instance of reprographic expenditure totalling more than £10,000 in 2013-14.

Claire Perry:

The reasons for each instance of reprographic expenditure totalling more than £10,000 in 2013-14 are listed in the table below; however note that the account codes used for reprographic costs by some agencies include a range of expenditure types beyond strictly reprographic costs.

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

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2015-01-26/222099>

■ Severn River Crossing

Chris Evans:

[222332]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions his Department has had with the Wales Office regarding the Severn Bridge.

Mr John Hayes:

The Department has responded to the Welsh Office with respect to the Silk Commission Recommendations regarding the Severn Crossing. These will be published by the Government in due course.

■ Train Operating Companies: Corporation Tax

Mr Ian Davidson:

[222278]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which franchised train operator paid the highest amount of corporation tax in each financial year from 2009-10 to 2013-14.

Claire Perry:

The Department does not hold the actual payment data for each franchised operator. However, the statutory accounts for each franchised operator can be used to provide a proxy for this payment with reference to the "Tax on profit on ordinary activities" in each Income statement and making the assumption that the tax is paid in that year.

On this basis the franchised train operator which paid the highest amount of corporation tax in each financial year from 2009-10 to 2013-14 is as follows

2009/10 West Coast Trains Limited

2010/11 Stagecoach South Western Trains Limited

2011/12 First/Keolis Transpennine Limited

2012//13 Stagecoach South Western Trains Limited

2013/14 Northern Rail Limited

Mr Ian Davidson: [\[222279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which franchised train operator has paid the highest level of corporation tax in the financial year 2014-15 to date.

Claire Perry:

The Department does not hold the actual payment data for each franchised operator. However the statutory accounts for each franchised operator can be used to provide a proxy for this payment with reference to the "Tax on profit on ordinary activities" in each Income statement and making the assumption that the tax is paid in that year.

On this basis, so far we do not have a complete picture for the financial year 2014-15, as we have received only one set of statutory accounts for a financial year ending in this period.

TREASURY

■ Construction: Tax Allowances

Guto Bebb: [\[222349\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to stop agencies using umbrella companies to manage the payroll function of companies within the construction industry.

Mr David Gauke:

Umbrella companies have been a part of the UK labour market for many years and, when operated responsibly, provide a useful conduit through which payments, including tax, can be made. As such, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) are not taking steps to stop agencies using umbrella companies to manage the payroll function of companies within the construction industry.

However the Government is concerned at the growing use of overarching contracts of employment by employment intermediaries such as umbrella companies, which allow some temporary workers to benefit from tax relief for home-to-work travel expenses that is not generally available to other workers. The government published a discussion document on 16 December 2014 inviting representations from interested parties to inform potential future action

■ Equality

Gloria De Piero: [\[220342\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many equality impact assessments his Department completed in each year since 2006.

Andrea Leadsom:

In the areas of its policy responsibilities, the Treasury has ensured that equality impacts are taken into account, in line with both its legal obligations and its commitment to promoting equality.

On 20 October 2010 and 26 June 2013 the Treasury published overviews of the impact of the 2010 Spending Review and the 2013 Spending Round respectively, on groups protected by equalities legislation. The Government has also driven improvements in tax policy making. The Government now publishes a Tax Information and Impact Note for all individual tax policy changes. These explicitly include an assessment of the equalities impact of each individual measure.

■ EU Institutions: Audit**Mr Douglas Carswell:**[\[221938\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with his European counterparts on measures to reduce error in the accounts of the EU to a point at which they will not be qualified by the European Court of Auditors.

Mr David Gauke:

Financial management of the EU budget remains a serious concern for this Government. Council discussions are currently taking place on this important issue ahead of the vote on discharge of the 2013 EU budget.

The Government continues to work with like-minded Member States to send a clear signal that financial management must improve and to call on the Commission and the European Court of Auditors to set out a strategy that will allow EU budget expenditure to be granted an unqualified Statement of Assurance.

■ Financial Ombudsman Service**Andrew Bridgen:**[\[222284\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the rate of staff turnover was at the Financial Ombudsman Service in the years (a) 2000, (b) 2009, (c) 2010, (d) 2011, (e) 2012, (f) 2013 and (g) 2014.

Andrea Leadsom:

This is a matter for the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) who are operationally independent from Government.

This question has been passed on to the FOS. The FOS will reply directly to the honourable member by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

■ Fiscal Policy**Daniel Kawczynski:**[\[221838\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what progress he has made on his fiscal consolidation plans.

Andrea Leadsom:

As a result of the clear, credible and specific consolidation plans the Government set out in 2010, significant progress has been made in reversing the unprecedented increase in borrowing between 2007-08 and 2009-10. Public sector net borrowing has fallen by more than a third since 2009-10 and is forecast to have fallen by half as a share of GDP by the end of 2014-15.

Public spending control is central to the Government's commitment to reduce the deficit. By the end of the 2013-14 financial year, £67 billion of spending reductions had already been implemented; by the end of the current financial year, the Government will have delivered £82 billion of the £99 billion of spending reductions planned by 2015-16

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■ National Savings Bonds: Pensioners**Mr Frank Field:**[\[222136\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what criteria he used to determine eligibility for the Pensioner Bonds scheme; and for what reason the qualifying age was set at 65 years.

Andrea Leadsom:

Low interest rates have played an important part in stimulating the recovery over the past few years. But there are those – especially pensioners – who rely on a reasonable rate of interest on their savings as a key source of income in their retirement. Therefore these bonds are designed to support them by providing a good return. 65 years was chosen as the requisite age for the Bonds because at this age in 2015 both men and women will be in receipt of a state pension.

Pamela Nash:[\[222506\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what criteria were used to determine eligibility for the 65-plus Guaranteed Growth Bonds; and for what reason the qualifying age was set at 65 years.

Andrea Leadsom:

Low interest rates have played an important part in stimulating the recovery over the past few years. But there are those – especially pensioners – who rely on a reasonable rate of interest on their savings as a key source of income in their retirement. Therefore these bonds are designed to support them by providing a good return. 65 years was chosen as the requisite age for the Bonds because at this age in 2015 both men and women will be in receipt of a state pension.

■ Oil: Prices**Sir Oliver Heald:**[\[222161\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of falling oil prices on the ability of businesses to pay salary increases.

Danny Alexander:

Falling oil prices will provide a further boost to the UK's GDP, which in 2014 grew faster than any other major advanced economy. Cheaper oil and low inflation will support living standards across the country for hardworking families and reduce business costs. Wages are rising faster than inflation, and the OBR expect that trend to continue.

■ **Overseas Residence: Taxation****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[222440\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much (a) has been and (b) is expected to be raised by the annual charge for non-domiciled individuals who elect to pay tax on the remittance basis and who have lived in the UK for (i) seven of the last nine years, (ii) 12 of the last 14 years and (iii) 17 of the last 20 years in (A) 2012-13, (B) 2013-14, (C) 2014-15, (D) 2015-16 and (E) 2016-17.

Mr David Gauke:

The Remittance Basis Charge is for resident non-domiciled individuals who elect to be taxed on the remittance basis. The charge is set at £30,000 for those individuals who had been resident in the UK for at least 7 of the last 9 years and longer.

From the start of the 2012-13 tax year, a new £50,000 charge was also introduced for those individuals who had been resident in the UK for at least 12 of the last 14 years and longer.

The amount of revenue raised by the annual Remittance Basis Charge for non-domiciled individuals in each tax year since 2008-09, rounded to the nearest million, is as follows:

| TAX YEAR | CHARGE PAID | REVENUE RAISED |
|----------|---|----------------|
| 2008-09 | £30,000 | £162m |
| 2009-10 | £30,000 | £157m |
| 2010-11 | £30,000 | £165m |
| 2011-12 | £30,000 | £167m |
| 2012-13 | £30,000 or £50,000 (depending on length of residency) | £226m |

The amount of revenue raised by the annual Remittance Basis Charge for non-domiciled individuals in the 2012-13 tax year, broken down by the time they have spent in the UK and rounded to the nearest million, is as follows:

| YEARS RESIDENT | CHARGE PAID | AMOUNT RAISED |
|-------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 7 of the last 9 | £30,000 | £43m |
| 12 of the last 14 | £50,000 | £183m |

| YEARS RESIDENT | CHARGE PAID | AMOUNT RAISED |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| | Total | £226m |

The figures for the 2013-14 tax year onwards are not yet available.

The expected exchequer impact of the changes to the Remittance Basis Charge announced at Autumn Statement 2014 is set out on page 41 of the policy costings document, available on GOV.UK at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/384071/AS2014_policy_costings_final.pdf

The final exchequer impact is affected by behavioural responses to the policy, as explained in the policy costings document.

■ Public Appointments

John Woodcock: [\[213036\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, on how many occasions his Department has made appointments by exception since 2010; and who was appointed for each such post.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Civil Service Commission publish details of appointments made by exception and approved by them in their annual reports and on their website. These reports are also available in the Library of the House.

■ Self-employed: Tax Avoidance

Pamela Nash: [\[220788\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the tax yield was from IR35 legislation in (a) the UK, (b) Scotland, (c) England, (d) Wales and (e) Northern Ireland in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr David Gauke:

Yield from IR35 compliance interventions up to 2013/14 for the UK is shown in the table below. Regional data is not produced by HM Revenue and Customs.

Year Yield

2009/10 £155K

2010/11 £219K

2011/12 £1.2M

2012/13 £1.1M

2013/14 £430K

In addition to the tax voluntarily paid through IR35, and the compliance revenue the cost to the Exchequer of not having the IR35 legislation would be around £520 million a year.

■ Slavery

Paul Blomfield: [\[221881\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the Action Plan on Modern Slavery, to be prepared by HM Revenue and Customs' new Modern Slavery Strategic Lead, will be published.

Mr David Gauke:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has appointed a Modern Slavery Strategic Lead and is fully involved in delivering the cross-Government strategy to tackle Modern Slavery. As part of this, HMRC is working to improve the coordination of HMRC operations where modern slavery is suspected to be taking place and to ensure effective liaison with other Government agencies.

■ Tax Avoidance

Guto Bebb: [\[222274\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to Chapter 2.147 of the Autumn Statement 2014 (a) who is handling the review on umbrella companies, (b) who is being consulted and (c) what progress has been made with the consultation to date.

Guto Bebb: [\[222348\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what progress his Department is making on preventing companies from deducting both employer and employee National Insurance contributions from their employees' pay packets.

Mr David Gauke:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and HM Treasury are handling the review on the use of overarching contracts of employment by employment intermediaries, including umbrella companies, in the temporary labour market. Officials have met with over 70 interested organisations from a number of sectors. The discussion paper closes on 10 February 2015.

WALES

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell: [\[222097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how many recruitment and employment agencies his Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Alun Cairns:

The number of agencies used by year is shown below:

| 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |

WORK AND PENSIONS■ **Attendance Allowance**

Dr Julian Huppert: [\[222151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that people who qualify for attendance allowance are made aware of the scheme and of their eligibility for it.

Mr Mark Harper:

The department is committed to encouraging older people to take up the benefits they are entitled to and goes to considerable lengths to publicise benefits. Information is available from the department's offices; advice agencies, including local authorities; and leaflets are available from various locations, including post offices and doctors' surgeries. Information about all benefits and how these may be claimed is readily available on the GOV.UK website, or through the DWP Information Line.

Additionally, the department's National Partnerships Team works with customer representative organisations, both nationally and locally, to provide a wide range of advice and support for older people. Over 300 of these partner organisations operate as an Alternative Office, taking and verifying Attendance Allowance claims on behalf of the Secretary of State. And for those unable to access services through other channels, a visiting service is available to help with information and claims.

■ **Disability Living Allowance**

Mr Ian Davidson: [\[222500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department has a target clearance time for a disability living allowance mandatory reconsideration.

Mr Mark Harper:

No, we do not have a target clearance time.

■ **Disability Living Allowance: Young People**

Jack Lopresti: [\[222269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress he has made on ensuring his Department processes applications for disability living allowance from young people with diabetes consistently.

Mr Mark Harper:

In October 2009 DWP launched detailed guidance on childhood diabetes to support staff and improve consistency of decision making in this condition. This guidance was peer reviewed by expert clinicians prior to publication and is available online. DWP has been working with Diabetes UK and an external expert to update this guidance. Departmental case managers take all information supplied into account when

considering the duration of care and mobility needs and base any decision on the particular circumstances of the young person with diabetes.

■ Employment Agencies

Lucy Powell:

[\[222098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many recruitment and employment agencies his Department has used to source staff in each year since 2010-11.

Esther McVey:

The number of recruitment and employment agencies used to source staff in each year since 2010-11 are as follows:

| YEAR | NUMBER OF AGENCIES |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2010-2011 | 15 |
| 2011-2012 | 12 |
| 2012-2013 | 3 |
| 2013-2014 | 3 |
| 2014- January 2015 | 9 |

■ Employment Schemes: Mental Illness

Stephen Timms:

[\[222217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral Answer of 26 January 2015, Official Report, column 547, on mental health (employment opportunities), what each innovative approach to employment support for those with mental health problems is; where each pilot is taking place; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Mark Harper:

Based on the recommendations put forward in the Psychological Wellbeing and Work report, last year we took forward three small scale feasibility pilots to explore the most promising and evidence-based approaches to supporting claimants with mental health problems.

The pilots were:

- 1) Individual Placement and Support (IPS) in Durham & Tees Valley; Surrey & Sussex; Midland Shires; and Black Country Jobcentre Plus districts
- 2) Group work based on peer support in Thames Valley and Gloucestershire & West of England Jobcentre Plus districts; and
- 3) Telephone based employment and psychological support in North East Yorkshire & Humber; and South Yorkshire Jobcentre Plus districts

We will update the House in due course.

■ Funerals

Mr Roger Godsiff: [221826]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2015 to Question 219706, what criteria he has used to (a) specify the costs which are necessary for a simple, respectful, low-cost funeral and (b) determine the level of those costs.

Steve Webb:

The Social Fund Funeral Expenses Payment provides help towards the cost of funerals for eligible claimants. The amount allowable covers in full the necessary costs, for a burial or cremation. The scheme also provides a significant contribution of up to £700 towards other costs.

Full details about the scheme can be found on the gov.uk website at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/373209/dmgch39.pdf paragraph 39261 onwards.

Mr Roger Godsiff: [221828]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of people who are unable to afford a simple, respectful low-cost funeral due to the declining value in real terms year-on-year of Social Fund funeral payments.

Steve Webb:

My department does not collect data to monitor the types of funerals people choose.

We are conscious of the rise in burial and cremation fees which is why the Social Fund Funeral Expenses scheme covers in full specified necessary costs, such as the necessary costs of buying a new burial plot for the deceased or the cost of any necessary doctor's certificates for example; plus a significant contribution towards other costs of up to £700. As such, the Government has protected these payments.

The Social Fund Funeral Payment scheme continues to provide help towards a funeral and is not intended to meet all costs that could be associated with the day. The overall average award for 2003/4 was £1019 and in 2013/14 it was £1347. Because we still pay in full the necessary costs the average award is now 32% higher.

■ Job Creation: Yorkshire and the Humber

Stephen Timms: [222218]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the oral Answer of 26 January 2015, Official Report, column 550, on job creation (Yorkshire), what the evidential basis is for the statement that of the jobs created in Shipley and Yorkshire, 80 per cent are full-time and 75 per cent are managerial and professional.

Esther McVey:

Using data from the Annual Population Survey, comparing the average level of employment in the year to September 2014 with average level in the year to June 2010,

full-time employment accounted for nearly 80 per cent of total employment growth in Yorkshire and managerial, professional and associate professional jobs accounted for 75 per cent of the growth in employment.

■ Jobcentre Plus

Stephen Timms: [\[222449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in how many Jobcentres is a mental health champion employed; and how many mental health champions Jobcentre Plus employs in total.

Esther McVey:

All our Work Coaches are trained to support customers with mental health conditions and are aware of the specialist help available within their area. They also support those individuals with complex needs to overcome any barriers which may be preventing them from returning to the workplace.

Jobcentre Plus has a national allocation of 35 Mental Health Co-ordinators. Further to this provision, our Work Psychologists support our Work Coaches in engaging with customers with mental health conditions.

■ National Insurance

Helen Goodman: [\[221829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish the letter sent to people when they receive their national insurance number.

Esther McVey:

A copy of the letter sent to people by DWP when they have been allocated their National Insurance number via the adult allocation process will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

Helen Goodman: [\[221830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he plans to take in the next three months to advertise how people can (a) get a national insurance number if they do not have one and (b) find out their national insurance number if they do not know it.

Esther McVey:

Information is readily available at gov.uk advising people:

(a) how to get a National Insurance number if they do not have one

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number>

(b) find out their National Insurance number if they do not know it

<https://www.gov.uk/lost-national-insurance-number>

Helen Goodman: [\[221864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether people are informed when they are sent their national insurance number that they will need it in order to register to vote.

Esther McVey:

The letter issued by DWP advising individuals of their National Insurance number focuses on the primary use of the National Insurance number i.e. for the payment of tax, national insurance contributions and to claim benefit.

The letter directs individuals to gov.uk where information relating to the organisations that need to use the national insurance number is provided. This includes Electoral Registration Officers for Voter Registration.

<https://www.gov.uk/national-insurance/your-national-insurance-number>

■ Personal Income

Rushanara Ali: [\[222630\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the median income in (a) Tower Hamlets, (b) London and (c) the UK in each of the last five years.

Esther McVey:

Estimates of median incomes are published in the National Statistics Households Below Average Income (HBAI) series.

Estimates of the median income are not available at a constituency level. This is because the survey sample sizes are too small to support the production of robust estimates at this geography.

Estimates of median income at a regional and national level over time on a three-year average basis are available from the latest Households Below Average Income publication in table 2.5ts which can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-hbai-199495-to-201213>

■ Personal Independence Payment

Mr Russell Brown: [\[222405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what adjustments his Department has made to the number of people reassessed for personal independence payment to reflect the current backlog of claims.

Mr Mark Harper:

Following our controlled approach, a further 29 postcode areas have gone live with reassessment. We are currently progressing detailed planning and assurance activity to identify postcode areas to be included in further phases of rollout.

Mr Russell Brown:[\[222406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have undergone a reassessment for personal independence payment before the end of their award period.

Mr Mark Harper:

The official statistics published in December show that to the end of October 2014, 29,900 claimants have had a reassessment and received their Personal Independence Payment decision. DLA remains in payment while the claimant goes through the process to claim Personal Independence Payment.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-independence-payment-statistics>

■ Poverty: Greater London**Rushanara Ali:**[\[222629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in (a) Bethnal Green and Bow constituency and (b) London have been classified as living in absolute poverty in each of the last five years.

Esther McVey:

Estimates of the number and proportion of people in low income are published in the National Statistics Households Below Average Income (HBAI) series.

The number of individuals in absolute poverty is not available at a constituency level. This is because the survey sample sizes are too small to support the production of robust estimates at this geography.

Estimates of the total number of individuals living in absolute poverty at a regional level over time on a three-year average basis are available from the latest Households Below Average Income publication in table 3.20ts which can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-hbai-199495-to-201213>

There are a number of different ways to define and measure poverty. Relative poverty is the most widely recognised measure of poverty and looks at those living below 60% of contemporary median equivalised income. Since 2009/10, the number of people in relative poverty has fallen by 600,000 in the UK on a BHC (Before Housing Costs) basis.

■ Roads: Safety

John Hemming: [\[221975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many explosions of manhole covers there have been since 2000; in how many such cases people were injured; how many explosions have occurred twice in the same location; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Mark Harper:

HSE collect statistics on injuries through the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations but not on explosions of manhole covers. Since 2000 there was one injury reported where the incident involved an explosion lifting a manhole cover.

HSE are working with utility providers to understand how and why incidents like this occur.

■ Social Rented Housing: Landlords

Stephen Timms: [\[222357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent progress his Department has made in sharing data with registered social landlords.

Steve Webb:

The Social Security (Information-sharing in relation to Welfare Services etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (S.I.2015/46) were laid on 23 January 2015 and come into force on 13 February 2015.

Commencing on 16 February 2015, registered social landlords, local authorities and arms length management organisations will be notified when one of their tenants makes an application for Universal Credit, or when a person already receiving Universal Credit becomes a tenant of theirs.

The data shared will be limited to that required by the landlord to identify the tenant and enable them to confirm that Universal Credit has been claimed. This will enable the landlord, at the earliest possible opportunity, to decide whether they wish to offer, or refer the claimant to, additional welfare support.

■ Social Security Benefits

Mr Russell Brown: [\[222404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the cost was of reassessing people with progressive conditions for (a) personal independence payment and (b) employment and support allowance in 2014.

Mr Mark Harper:

We do not hold this information. Assessment and reassessment for Personal Independence Payment and Employment and Support Allowance is based on an individual's circumstances and how their condition affects them, not the condition itself.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disqualification

Mr Frank Field:

[222148]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much benefit expenditure was withdrawn through sanctions in each month since May 2010; how many claimants have had benefits withdrawn through sanctions in each of those months; and what the average amount withdrawn through sanctions from a claimant was in each of those months.

Esther McVey:

As previously replied and reiterated in the Debate on the matter, the Department doesn't make an estimate of the amount of benefit that would have been withheld as a result of benefit sanctions.

■ Telecommunications: Disability

Kate Green:

[221836]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 9 September 2014 to Question 207976, whether his Department's review of its provision of alternative formats for information provision for blind and partially sighted people has been completed; and if he will make the report of the review available to the disabled people who contributed to it, stakeholder organisations and Members of Parliament.

Esther McVey:

This Department has conducted a review of information provision for blind and partially sighted people in consultation with a range of stakeholders including partner organisations, charities working with customer groups and benefit claimants.

We are expecting to publish the review in Spring 2015.

■ Unemployment Benefits

Pamela Nash:

[222277]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the level of expenditure on unemployment-related benefits to people aged (a) 18 to 24 and (b) 24 to 29 in (i) the UK, (ii) Scotland (iii) England, (iv) Wales and (v) Northern Ireland in (A) 2007, (B) 2008 and (C) 2009.

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

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2015-01-27/222277>

■ Universal Credit

Mr Frank Field: [\[222162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much funding has been allocated to universal credit since June 2010.

Mr Mark Harper:

Information about the funding allocated to Universal Credit is contained within the document: Universal Credit at Work, published by DWP in October 2014

■ Whooping Cough: Vaccination

Mr Russell Brown: [\[222407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many pertussis vaccine damage claims were made in each year since 2003; and how many were successful in each year.

Mr Mark Harper:

Information regarding claims and awards in respect of each particular disease/vaccine is unavailable.

■ Work Programme

Pamela Nash: [\[222255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many outcome payments have been made to contractors involved in the Work Programme in (a) the UK, (b) Scotland, (c) England and (d) Wales in each of the last five years.

Esther McVey:

As of September 2014, the Work Programme has helped 368,000 long term unemployed people into lasting work.

Information on the number of Job Outcome payments made to Work Programme providers by region and contract 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 Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland. Details can be found at:

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/stats_and_research.htm

Stephen Timms: [\[222261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much has been spent on Work Programme job outcome fees on (a) Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income Related (IR), Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) with three to six months prognosis, (b)

ESA (IR) WRAG with 12 months or greater prognosis, (c) ESA (IR) ex-Incapacity Benefit (IB) with three to six months prognosis, (d) ESA (IR) ex-IB WRAG with 12 months prognosis, (e) Voluntary ESA (IR) ex-IB Support Group, (f) Voluntary ESA and (g) ex-IB Support Group claimant groups, in each month since June 2011.

Esther McVey:

The information is not available in the format requested.

Stephen Timms:

[222262]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much has been spent on Work Programme attachment fees on (a) Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income Related (IR), Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) with three to six months prognosis, (b) ESA (IR) WRAG with 12 months or greater prognosis, (c) ESA (IR) ex-Incapacity Benefit (IB) with three to six months prognosis, (d) ESA (IR) ex-IB WRAG with 12 months prognosis, (e) Voluntary ESA (IR) ex-IB Support Group, (f) Voluntary ESA and (g) ex-IB Support Group, in each month since June 2011 claimant groups.

Esther McVey:

The information is not available in the format requested.

Pamela Nash:

[222318]

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 (i) Airdrie and Shotts constituency, (ii) North Lanarkshire, (iii) Scotland and (iv) the UK, in each month since October 2012.

Esther McVey:

Those eligible for the Work Programme are referred to it and therefore eligibility is reflected by referral numbers.

Information on those referred to the Work Programme, by parliamentary constituency, local authority and region 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 Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland and is available at:

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/stats_and_research.htm

Pamela Nash:

[222337]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in (a) the UK, (b) Scotland, (c) England and (d) Wales were referred to the Work Programme and went on to get a job lasting three to six months in each year since June 2011.

Pamela Nash:

[222338]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many 18 to 24 year olds claiming (a) jobseeker's allowance and (b) employment and support allowance who were referred to

the Work Programme in (i) the UK, (ii) Scotland, (iii) England and (iv) Wales went into a job lasting three to six months in each month since June 2011.

Esther McVey:

As of September 2014, the Work Programme has helped 368,000 long term unemployed people into lasting work. Many more people have started work but not reached the six month point yet. Industry published figures for the same period, show almost 640,000 have found work.

Information showing the number of Work Programme referrals and Job Outcomes and this can be found at:

<http://tabulation-tool.dwp.gov.uk/WorkProg/tabtool.html>

Guidance for users can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-tabulation-tool-guidance>

Information for Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland can be found at:

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/stats_and_research.htm

Pamela Nash:

[222339]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have completed the Work Programme to date; and how many of those participants in the Work Programme in (a) Airdrie and Shotts constituency, (b) the UK, (c) Scotland, (d) England and (e) Wales stopped claiming either jobseeker's allowance or employment and support allowance in each month since June 2013.

Esther McVey:

The number of people who have completed the Work Programme is published and can be found at:

<http://tabulation-tool.dwp.gov.uk/WorkProg/tabtool.html>

The information requested for those who stopped claiming either jobseeker's allowance or employment and support allowance in each month since June 2013 is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Information for Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Department for Social Development. Northern Ireland statistics can be found at:

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/stats_and_research.htm

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

■ Travel

Lucy Powell:

[\[218466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how much his Department has spent on (a) taxis, (b) first class train tickets and (c) business class air travel in each of the last five years.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 18 December 2014. The correct answer should have been:

Jo Swinson:

In each of the last five financial years the following amounts have been spent by the Department (BIS and UK Trade and Investment) on first class train tickets and business class air travel. Figures for the total amount spent on taxis prior to 2012-13 cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost as these costs were included in individual travel and expense claims and not centrally collated.

| FINANCIAL YEAR | RAIL - 1ST CLASS | 1ST CLASS AIR - BUSINESS CLASS | BUSINESS CLASS TAXIS |
|----------------|------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 2009-2010 | £761,381.87 | £2,061,066.16 | £n/a |
| 2010-2011 | £179,884.52 | £1,177,664.09 | £n/a |
| 2011-2012 | £47,316.35 | £1,379,266.78 | £n/a |
| 2012-2013 | £18,974.65 | £1,282,766.02 | £92,301 |
| 2013-2014 | £21,277.50 | £1,725,998.87 | £79,701 |

Note: The use of first class rail travel is restricted for those with health issues and exceptional business need. In both cases prior approval is required in line with the Department's travel policy. The use of business class flights is restricted to long haul and the figures above will include some costs relating to multi leg journeys made up of economy and business class elements; these cannot be separated without incurring disproportionate costs.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

JUSTICE

■ Criminal Justice Update

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Chris Grayling):
[\[HCWS242\]](#)

I am delighted to announce that I have now signed a commencement order that brought into force the remaining uncommenced provisions of the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 (ORA) on 1 February 2015. This marks another significant step in implementing the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms which will reduce the stubbornly high rate of reoffending which has been far too high for far too long.

For the first-time we will be giving virtually all offenders a proper chance at rehabilitation. The most significant change the ORA makes is to extend statutory supervision to the 45,000 offenders a year who are released from short prison sentences of less than 12 months, the majority of whom currently receive no statutory supervision after completing a custodial sentence. This group of offenders have the highest reoffending rates of any group: almost 60% of adult offenders released from short prison sentences in the year to March 2013 went on to reoffend within the next 12 months.

The changes the ORA makes mean that any offender whose offence was committed on or after 1 February, and who is sentenced to a custodial term of more than 1 day, will in the future receive at least 12 months of supervision and support after release.

The ORA also makes a number of changes to the sentencing and release framework set out in the Criminal Justice Act 2003, including expanded drug testing powers for offenders released from custody and the creation of a new Rehabilitation Activity Requirement that can be imposed on offenders serving sentences in the community.

Along with the provisions of the ORA coming in to force, on 1 February the new providers have also taken ownership of, and begun running, the 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies which will manage low and medium risk offenders.

In addition, I have published revised National Standards for the Management of Offenders and national training guidelines in line with the requirements of the Offender Management Act 2007. The standards and guidelines apply to all providers of probation services engaged in the management of offenders and delivering the sentence of the court.

The standards set out the minimum requirements for the effective management of offenders subject to community and suspended sentence orders, supervision on licence and/or the new post sentence supervision period. I have placed a copy of these standards in the House Libraries.

A Competent Workforce to Transform Rehabilitation provides a set of guidelines for the qualifications, training and experience of officers involved in delivering probation services and is available on line.

Attachments:

1. National Standards for the Management of Offenders [National Standards for the Management of Offenders in England and Wales.pdf]

■ Probation**The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Chris Grayling):**
[\[HCWS243\]](#)

I wish to inform the House that Mr Paul McDowell has tendered his resignation from his post as Chief Inspector of Probation.

As I discussed with the Justice Select Committee on 2nd December and covered in subsequent correspondence with the Committee Chair, an issue arose about a potential perceived conflict of interest for Mr McDowell given his wife's employment with Sodexo, and their role as a provider of probation services. I have considered carefully all of the potential mechanisms and systems that could be introduced and used to manage any actual or perceived conflict of interest. However Mr McDowell has decided that, in the circumstances, he will resign.

Throughout this process Mr McDowell has acted with utter transparency and professionalism. Indeed I must acknowledge Mr McDowell's assured leadership and the grounded independence of his findings in relation to the Inspectorate and the work he has done since his appointment.

I regret that circumstances have changed and are now such that we have reached this position. At time of his appointment Mr McDowell's position was fully reasonable and the appropriate pre-appointment processes in place at that time were properly followed. The Justice Select Committee will be involved in the appointment of a permanent successor in the usual way.

TRANSPORT**■ Light Dues 2015 - 16****Minister of State for Transport (Mr John Hayes):**[\[HCWS241\]](#)

On 26 July 2010, the Government announced its intention to take determined action in support of the UK shipping industry by addressing the increasing cost of the marine aids to navigation service and providing long-term stability for light dues payers so they could plan budgets effectively [*Official Report, Columns 75-76WS*].

Following the penny reduction in the light dues rate to 40p per net registered tonne in April 2014, I am pleased to announce that the rate will be cut by a further penny, to 39p, on 1 April 2015.

Since 2010, considerable progress has been made on three fronts. First, the three General Lighthouse Authorities for the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland have exceeded their RPI-X efficiency targets, through working assets harder, adopting new technologies, and procuring services together to reduce net costs.

Second, their pension liabilities have been addressed with the transfer of the General Lighthouse Authorities' pension schemes to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme on 1 April 2014 [*Official Report, 6 March 2014, Columns 64-65WS*]. Third, as I announced on 16 October 2014, the work of the Commissioners of Irish Lights in the Republic of Ireland will be met fully from Irish sources as from 1 April 2015 [*Official Report, Columns 48-49WS*]. Both of these measures further reduce costs and remove sources of volatility from the General Lighthouse Fund.

The formation in 2010 of a Joint Strategic Board to co-ordinate and direct work "to achieve maximum efficiencies and improvements in the delivery of aids to navigation" has proved invaluable to these successes and I have asked the Board to identify the scope for further gains that can be secured over the next five years.

In partnership with the General Lighthouse Authorities and the shipping industry, the Government has successfully resolved the problems that faced the General Lighthouse Fund in 2010. This has opened the way to sustainable reductions in UK light dues. This further reduction, to support the shipping industry, means that there has been a 19% real terms reduction in light dues since 2010.