



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 16 March 2015 and the information is correct at the time of publication (02:13 P.M., 17 March 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**BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS**■ **Adult Education: Hyndburn**

Graham Jones: [\[227015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the 2015-16 adult social skills budget for Hyndburn is; and what the percentage change from last year's budget is.

Nick Boles:

The funding available for Adult Skills in 2015/16 is outlined in the Skills Funding Letter. The letter sets out the Government's priorities for the budget and it is for providers to decide how they use their adult skills funding to reflect those priorities and meet the needs of learners and employers in their local area.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-funding-letter-april-2015-to-march-2016>

■ **Advertising**

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[226592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what his Department's advertising and communications expenditure was in each month since September 2014; and what that expenditure is forecast to be in March 2015.

Jo Swinson:

The Department has been responsible for running some major campaigns over the course of this financial year. These include promoting the take up and increasing awareness of apprenticeships via the Get in, Go Far campaign and increasing awareness of rights for flexible working and shared parental leave. We have also encouraged businesses to grow and take advantage of support that is available through the Business is GREAT Britain and Do More Online campaigns and also encouraging the take up of Growth Vouchers. The expenditure for each of the months requested that have been classified as advertising and publicity is as follows:

September 2014 - £2,290,875

October 2014 - £1,813,933

November 2014 - £5,846,570

December 2014 - £1,729,298

January 2015 - £1,729,351

February 2015 - £8,080,370

March 2015 (spend to March 11th) - £856,003

■ Armed Forces: Apprentices

Alex Cunningham:

[226815]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will take steps to require armed forces apprenticeships to adhere to the quality criteria outlined by The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Implementation Plan, produced by his Department.

Nick Boles:

All new apprenticeships standards and related assessment plans must meet the requirements set out in the guidance for Trailblazers and undergo a rigorous approval process.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-of-apprenticeships-in-england-guidance-for-trailblazers>

We are improving the quality of apprenticeships through the development of new standards focused on the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to achieve full competence in a particular occupation, and more rigorous end-point assessment against these requirements.

The Armed Forces and the MoD are heavily involved in the development of such standards via our Trailblazer programme, including the development of the Serviceperson, Systems Engineering Masters level and Maritime Mechanical Fitter standards which were approved and published on 12 March.

■ Arms Trade: Exports

Sir John Stanley:

[226813]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the value of arms exports from the UK was in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Matthew Hancock:

The latest UK Defence export figures were published as official statistics on 8 July 2014. A link to the full dataset is below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-defence-and-security-export-figures-2013>

An extract from the figures is below showing the value of UK Defence Exports (Based on orders) over the last 5 years.

YEAR	£BN
2009	7.3
2010	5.8
2011	5.4

YEAR	£BN
2012	8.8
2013	9.8
Total	37.1

■ Business: Advisory Services

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[227103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many business that have applied for Growth Vouchers have not been successful in that application to date.

Matthew Hancock:

As at 8 March, there were 26,903 applications to the Growth Vouchers programme. Of the 16,903 businesses who have gone on to complete the assessment of their needs, 12,687 have been allocated a voucher and 4,216 have not.

■ Copyright: Education

Mike Weatherley: [\[226818\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what progress he has made on the creation of a copyright education programme.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) has a programme of intellectual property (IP) education, covering all forms of IP including copyright. This IPO provides teaching resources covering all ages of education, from early years through to university. All elements of this work are developed in partnership with industry as well as IP professionals.

This year the IPO will update its crackingideas.com website to develop it into a portal for all education resources. The portal will target teachers and university tutors, providing them with a variety of resources that link into curriculum subjects to bring IP to life and make it easy to introduce IP issues including copyright into the classroom. It will bring together the various products of the IPO as well as linking to other material developed by partners. A cross section of representatives from the creative industries are providing input to the development of resources and the IPO has already commissioned focus group research with teachers to ensure that all resources are effective. The portal will complement other IPO initiatives to raise understanding of copyright, including Music Inc, a downloadable game about the music industry and the impact of piracy.

Mike Weatherley:

[\[226819\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what progress he has made on an agreement with the BBC on the creation of a copyright education programme.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The department has not formalised an agreement with the BBC regarding its editorial content on intellectual property. However, the BBC has done a great deal of work in this area. In particular, the BBC has just launched a new website, Copyright Aware, highlighting and explaining the subject of copyright. The site includes a variety of resources and aims to encourage consumers and creators to deal more consciously and responsibly with creative works, recognising the effort and skill that has gone into producing them.

■ Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme

Mr Chuka Umunna:

[\[227105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what his most recent assessment is of default rates under the Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme; and with what frequency his Department makes such an assessment.

Matthew Hancock:

The Enterprise Finance Guarantee (EFG) scheme is administered by the British Business Bank (BBB), which was set up by the Secretary of State to manage such programmes professionally. The BBB closely monitors the performance of the scheme on a quarterly basis. The scheme default rate, which was 11.5% as at 31st December 2014 on the original drawn loan balance, does not reflect the overall cost to Government as not all defaults lead to a claim being made against the guarantee.

The EFG is a valuable programme that, since launch, has supported additional lending to small and medium sized businesses by enabling over 23,000 loans with a total value of some £2.4bn (as at 31 December 2014) and has a significant wider economic benefit.

■ Intellectual Property

Mike Weatherley:

[\[226821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps he has taken to support small and medium-sized digital businesses to encourage them to create resources to educate people about intellectual property rights.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) produces a wide variety of resources to educate SMEs about the use of intellectual property (IP). The suite of online tools 'IP for business' includes an information booklet, a short free online learning tool, a series of IP health checks that allow businesses to assess IP

related opportunities and risks for their own company, and a paid for master class providing more in depth IP knowledge. These tools will help businesses in all sectors, including digital businesses. The IPO also attends events for small businesses, providing information and signposting to advice on IP issues. In addition, the IPO provides support to business advisors, including training and networking events, to improve their understanding of IP and how it can apply to the businesses they advise.

The Intellectual Property Office also works with partner organisations to promote IP understanding and encourage the sharing of information, including any educational resources, amongst businesses.

Mike Weatherley: [\[227249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what progress has been made on giving intellectual property rights holders an opportunity to discuss with search engine providers how to maximise the prioritisation of sites with legitimate content.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Since October 2014, my noble Friend the Minister for Intellectual Property Baroness Neville-Rolfe has chaired 4 roundtable meetings between representatives of the creative industries and leading UK search engines.

The meetings have been focused on discussing steps that can be taken to reduce the number of consumers led to copyright infringing websites through search results.

Work continues, but during this period the group has seen a substantial improvement in the way some of the most infringing sites are dealt with in search rankings.

Mike Weatherley: [\[227252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will take steps to increase co-ordination and accountability for intellectual property policy by establishing a cross-industry partnership between the Intellectual Property Office and the Creative Industries Council.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Creative Industry Council is co-chaired by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and Nicola Mendelsohn (Vice President Europe, Middle East and Africa, Facebook). As an agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Intellectual Property Office develops intellectual property policy to support innovation and growth, and is already fully engaged in the work of the Creative Industries Council, including the intellectual property workstream.

■ Intellectual Property: Crime

Mike Weatherley: [\[227254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, with reference to the discussion paper, Follow the Money: financial options to assist in the battle against online IP piracy, published by the hon. Member for Hove in June 2014, what steps the Government has taken to (a) ensure that initiatives to tackle intellectual property offences by cutting advertising revenue streams have an international focus and (b) promote further collaboration between the Intellectual Property Office and equivalent bodies in other countries.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Government has formed an Advertising Working Group, chaired by the Intellectual Property Office (IPO), which includes representation from international brand holders, online advertisers and law enforcement. Its remit encompasses advertising revenue streams that originate from all territories. The Police IP Crime Unit's Infringing Website List contains websites owned and hosted internationally and ensures that advertisers adopt a global approach to reduce advertising on websites accused of hosting and facilitating the use of copyright infringing material.

The IPO works closely with equivalent bodies such as the EU Observatory, the Commission and national IP Offices, as well as international law enforcers such as Europol and Interpol, to share our experiences and highlight best practice to help counter the international threat from online IP piracy.

■ Intellectual Property: Education

Mike Weatherley: [\[226732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what progress his Department has made on the creation of a new Intellectual Property Education Co-ordinator role.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

There is not a single Intellectual Property Education Coordinator role. The Intellectual Property Office acts as a co-ordinator for Intellectual Property (IP) Education work and has a team dedicated to IP education and awareness raising. This team is working closely with industry and across government to raise understanding of and respect for all forms of intellectual property.

■ LighterLife UK

Nick de Bois: [\[227127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what representations he has received on LighterLife UK's business practices; and if he will make a statement.

Jo Swinson:

My Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, has received no representations on LighterLife UK's business practices.

Nick de Bois: [\[227128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what representations he has received from LighterLife UK franchisees on that company's business practices.

Jo Swinson:

My Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills has received no representations from LighterLife UK franchise on that company's business practices.

■ Police Intellectual Property Crime Unit

Mike Weatherley: [\[226734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what progress his Department has made on (a) providing further resources for and (b) expanding the Police Intellectual Property Crime Unit.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

In November 2014 the Government announced a further £3m of funding for the Police Intellectual Property Crime Unit (PIPCU), securing its future until 2017. This investment will ensure the City of London Police continue to focus on the important area of online crime.

PIPCU's steering board regularly review its progress against key performance measures. Their role is to review its operational effectiveness and to consider areas of expansion if required.

■ Policy

Paul Flynn: [\[226768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what policies contained in the 2010 Coalition Agreement and falling under his Department's responsibilities have not yet been implemented; and what the reasons are for each such policy's non-implementation.

Matthew Hancock:

I refer the hon. Member to Departmental Business Plans which record all commitments, timescales for completion and progress against them. The Business Plans are fully transparent and are available at:

<http://transparency.number10.gov.uk>

■ Vocational Training

Stephen Timms: [\[227263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how much his Department spent on the traineeships programme in each month from August 2013 to October 2014.

Nick Boles:

The amount spent on traineeships for those aged 19 and over in the 2013/14 academic year was not recorded separately to the Adult Skills Budget. Information on spend for the 2014/15 academic year is not yet available.

The estimated amount of funding provided for these traineeships in 2013/14 is £6.4m. This is based on the number of traineeships delivered by providers and is not necessarily what has been paid.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Electronic Government

Chi Onwurah: [\[227063\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many of the Government Digital Service's 25 exemplar services are now live; and how many of those services he expects to be live by the end of March 2015.

Mr Francis Maude:

Information about the transformation of these government services can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/transformation> where it is regularly updated.

■ Job Creation

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[227080\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what comparative assessment he has made of the number of jobs created in the UK and in other European countries since 2010.

Mr Rob Wilson:

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

Attachments:

1. Excel Sheet for Member – Jobs Created [PQ 90 Euroemp.xls]
2. ONS Letter to Member – Jobs Created [PQ 227080 ONS 90.pdf]

■ Jobseeker's Allowance: Young People

Dr Matthew Offord: [227032]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment his Department has made of the changes in the level of youth claimant count between 2010 and 2015.

Mr Rob Wilson:

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

Attachments:

1. Excel Sheet for Member – Youth Claimant [PQ091_Amended.xls]
2. ONS Letter to Member – Youth Claimant [PQ 227032 ONS 91.pdf]

■ Mark Jenner

Steve Rotheram: [226977]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the decision to send Mark Jenner of the Special Demonstration Squad into a covert long-term surveillance operation in the 1990s was approved by (a) officials and (b) Ministers of his Department.

Mr Francis Maude:

I refer the hon. Member to the Written Ministerial Statement by the Home Secretary on 12 March 2015 at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2015-03-12/HCWS381/>

■ New Businesses: South East

Jonathan Lord: [227286]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many new business start-ups there have been in (a) Woking constituency, (b) Surrey and (c) the South East since May 2010.

Jonathan Lord: [227287]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many new business start-ups by women there were 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 – New Business Start ups [PQ 227286 227287 ONS 97 98.pdf]

■ Occupational Pensions

Andrew Stephenson: [\[227251\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what proportion of employees in (a) the North West and (b) England were not a member of a workplace pension scheme in each of the last two 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 – Workplace Pension Scheme [PQ 227251 ONS 96.pdf]

■ Prescription Drugs: Lancashire

Andrew Stephenson: [\[227236\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many deaths from prescription drug overdoses there were in (a) Pendle constituency and (b) Lancashire in each of the last two 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 – Death from Drug Overdose [PQ 227236 ONS 92.pdf]

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Change of Use: Greater London

Mark Field: [\[226569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether he plans to extend the current exemptions in place for the office to residential change of use provisions in (a) Westminster and (b) other parts of central London; and if he will make a statement.

Brandon Lewis:

Permitted development rights for change of use from offices to residential were introduced for a period of three years from 30 May 2013 to 30 May 2016. These rights are contributing to a more efficient use of our existing building stock, and are providing badly needed new homes such as studios and one-bedroom flats for young people. Exemptions to this permitted development right were granted in exceptional circumstances, where local authorities could demonstrate a negative economic impact.

We are considering responses to the Technical consultation on planning which included a proposal to extend the permitted development right for change of use from offices to residential.

We recognise the strategic value of office space to the broader London and national economy in the current exempted zones.

■ Domestic Violence

Dan Jarvis: [\[227064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that victims of domestic violence are able to seek immediate refuge away from their home.

Kris Hopkins:

The Government is committed to supporting vulnerable victims of domestic abuse and we recognise the key role refuges play in keeping victims of domestic abuse and their children safe. This is why we have in place clear duties to ensure vulnerable victims of domestic abuse who have fled their homes are provided with accommodation.

The Government has provided £10 million to 148 areas across England to help maintain a resilient national network of refuges to ensure victims domestic abuse get the help and support they need. This funding will improve the level and quality of support in existing refuges as well as increasing the number of bed spaces across England.

This is complemented by new statutory guidance on homelessness and domestic abuse that sets out the level of support that victims can expect to receive in refuges. It makes clear that refuges should offer support to all victims and not just those living locally.

There is a range of support for victims of domestic abuse. Some victims will be accommodated in refuges, but Sanctuary Schemes and mainstream local authority accommodation may be an option for others. Since 2010 Sanctuary Schemes have prevented over 20,000 households from becoming homeless. They provide professionally installed security measures, with appropriate support, to allow those experiencing domestic violence to remain in their own accommodation where it is safe for them to do so, where it is their choice and when the perpetrator no longer lives there.

We are continuing to fund Women's Aid to run UKRefugesOnline, a UK wide database of domestic abuse services, for 2015-16 so that those looking to find a safe place and the appropriate support can do so as quickly as possible.

We have also invested over £500 million to tackle and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping since 2010 and a proportion of this will be used to support victims of domestic abuse. This funding is in addition to the £6.5 billion that the Government has provided in housing related support over this spending

review period to help the most vulnerable people, including victims of domestic abuse.

■ **Energy: Conservation**

Sir Andrew Stunell: [\[227257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what measures he has put in place to reduce energy consumption in Government buildings (a) above and (b) below 500 square metres in area since May 2010.

Sir Andrew Stunell: [\[227258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what measures that reduce energy consumption in Government buildings (a) above and (b) below 500 square metres in area he plans to remove; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Andrew Stunell: [\[227259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make an assessment of the potential behavioural effects on managers and users of Government buildings of the repeal of regulations on display energy certificates; and if he will make a statement.

Stephen Williams:

My officials are liaising with their colleagues across government to attempt to assess the behavioural effects of the Display Energy Certificate regime. Included with my Department's consultation on the future of the Display Energy Certificate regime, was a call for evidence, seeking from across the public sector information relating to the use and usefulness of Display Energy Certificates. We will assess the information provided through the discussions across Government, and in response to the call for evidence, to form a view of the behavioural effects of the current regime and of possible changes to it.

The possible changes set out in the consultation included a range of options, from doing nothing; through making some changes to reduce the amount of gold-plating in the current Display Energy Certificate regime; to replacing the requirement to obtain and display a Display Energy Certificate with one to obtain and display an Energy Performance Certificate, adding for public buildings the requirement to obtain an Energy Performance Certificate to the requirement to display them where they have been obtained that already exists for commercial buildings over 500m². We will consider the responses to the consultation before forming a view as to which of the options it contained should be implemented. This will be set out in the government response to the consultation, which will be published in due course.

There is no requirement in the Display Energy Certificate regime to implement any recommendations made, although it may be prudent for cost-effective recommendations to be implemented where possible.

All Government departments have targets set under the Greening Government commitments, progress towards which must be regularly reported to the Home Affairs (Greening Government Commitments) sub-Committee.

Furthermore, the State of the Estate report, which covers the civil estate, is published annually by the Cabinet Office and reports progress against targets for energy performance. The State of the Estate Report 2013 reported that cross-government greenhouse gas emissions were, on average, 14% less in 2012/13 than in 2009/10. This represents a slight improvement on the 12% achieved the previous year and that all departments reported improvements against the 2009/10 baseline. Reduced energy consumption across the government estate is estimated to have saved the taxpayer £44 million since 2009/10.

■ EU Grants and Loans

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[226590\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 25 February 2015 to Question 224800, and with reference to Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon's letter of 17 February 2015 to local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) and local partners, what steps he plans to take to ensure that LEPs and local partners will continue to have decisive input into funding decisions; who within each managing authority will make final funding decisions; what criteria will be used to make such decisions and when that information will be communicated to stakeholders; and what powers the Programme Monitoring Committee will have to enable it to effectively oversee local funding decisions in England when decisions are no longer to be taken by LEPs and other local partners.

Kris Hopkins:

[Holding answer 11 March 2015]: The Operational Programme governing the 2014-20 European Regional Development Fund in England will set out the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships and local partners. The Government is clear that local plan priorities will shape funding decisions, with local partners strongly engaged in the first calls due later this month and in the assessment of applications. We will review Local Enterprise Partnerships' and partners' role in the programme in the next 12 months and use that time to work with them to develop proposals for greater local responsibility. The Department will be publishing selection criteria alongside the first calls for projects. The role of the Programme Monitoring Committee is set out in European Regulations and do not provide for the Programme Monitoring Committee to have a role in project selection.

The programme has to operate within the rigid and bureaucratic rules set by the European Commission.

■ Fire Services: Pensions

Mr Peter Bone:

[\[227101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to require fire authorities to provide a full pension to fire fighters between the ages of 55 and 60 if they fail a fitness test due to no fault of their own and cannot be employed in another role within the fire service.

Penny Mordaunt:

It is not possible to introduce fitness regulations as part of the pension regulations in the absence of an agreed and universally applied national firefighter fitness standard in England. The statutory principles that we put in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England came into force on 12 January. To underpin these, the National Employers have sought further discussion with the Fire Brigades Union in respect of additional guidance relating to the position already agreed in principle within the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services. This discussion will be about the role fire authorities will take in supporting operational employees in maintaining their fitness. In addition, the National Employers are looking to discuss with the unions, guidance on the application of the factors set out in pension regulations for fire authority consideration in relation to Authority Initiated Early Retirement. Both approaches are expected to provide reassurance to operational employees that fire authorities will continue to treat their employees in a fair and consistent manner.

We will review the implementation of the National Framework principles in three years time and consider then whether further action is needed. In the meantime no firefighter will have to work beyond their current expected retirement date until 2022 at the earliest. Our expectation is that a firefighter of 55 or over who finds themselves in the situation of losing their fitness through no fault of their own, is subsequently unable to regain their fitness, and for whom there are no redeployment opportunities, should be offered an unreduced pension.

Bridget Phillipson:

[\[908071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what progress his Department has made on resolving the dispute over firefighters' pensions.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Firefighters Pension Scheme 2015 will come into force on 1 April 2015.

The National Employers have agreed to work with the Fire Brigades Union to ensure that the fitness principles detailed in the Fire and Rescue National Framework, are incorporated into local policies. The dispute should now come to an end.

■ Homelessness

David Simpson:

[\[226851\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what support his Department provides to local charitable organisations that deal with homelessness.

Kris Hopkins:

We have invested more than £500 million in local authority and voluntary services to tackle homelessness and support vulnerable people. Our investment, backed by one of the strongest safety legislative nets in the world, ensures that no family should ever be without a roof over their heads.

Our work with homelessness voluntary sector organisations includes:

- The £20 million Homelessness Transition Fund, supporting 175 voluntary sector projects for single homeless people. The Fund also supported the national roll out of No Second Night Out to ensure that rough sleepers are found quickly and helped off the streets. This investment means that 67% of rough sleepers in 20 key rough sleeping areas outside of London do not face more than one night on the streets.
- Investing £13 million in Crisis' Access to the Private Rented Sector programme. Since it began in 2010, 153 voluntary sector led projects have helped 9,320 vulnerable people into accommodation with over 90% maintaining tenancies for at least six months.
- Ensuring that staff working on the homelessness frontline have the tools and skills they need to support vulnerable people. Our £10 million investment into the National Homelessness Advice Service has trained over 23,000 local authority, voluntary sector and Citizens Advice Bureau staff and has dealt with over 40,000 telephone cases.
- Supporting St Mungo's Broadway and Homeless Link to deliver StreetLink, the pioneering telephone line, app and website which allows members of the public to help connect rough sleepers to local services and help them off the streets quicker. Since December 2012, there have been 24,495 referrals for local authorities to investigate.
- Working with the Greater London Assembly, we have invested £5 million in the world's first homelessness social impact bond to deliver better outcomes for 831 of London's most frequent rough sleepers. More recently, we have expanded this model investing £15 million in seven voluntary sector led social impact bonds through the Fair Chance Fund. The seven projects will support 1,600 vulnerable young people into accommodation, training and employment.

Mrs Louise Ellman:

[227359]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many (a) statutory and (b) non-statutory homeless people there are in (i) England and (ii) Liverpool.

Kris Hopkins:

The figures are published in (i) Live Table 770 and (ii) Detailed local authority level homelessness figures: July to September 2014, both of which are available to download from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness> as well as Table 1 available to download from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2014>

This Government is committed to preventing and tackling homelessness. We have increased homelessness prevention spending, making over £500 million available since 2010 to local authorities and the voluntary sector to help the most vulnerable in society.

Homelessness remains lower than in 27 of the last 30 years. It is around half the average level it was under the last Labour Government.

■ Housing: Construction

David Simpson:

[226742]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what recent progress his Department has made on the Get Britain Building housing scheme.

Brandon Lewis:

I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 25 February, Question 217184.

■ Land Drainage

Martin Horwood:

[227261]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to his Written Statement of 18 December 2014, HCWS 161, what estimate his Department has made of the cost of new responsibilities on local authorities relating to sustainable drainage systems.

Dan Rogerson:

I have been asked to reply.

Defra has been determining the appropriate level of funding for the new burden incurred by Lead Local Flood Authorities in providing technical advice on surface water drainage in planning applications for major developments. We will be sending letters to these local authorities shortly.

Martin Horwood: [\[227262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to his Written Statement of 18 December 2014, HCWS 161, what guidance his Department has issued to local authorities on levels of fees relating to their responsibilities for sustainable drainage systems.

Brandon Lewis:

Planning applications which include proposals for sustainable drainage systems are subject to normal planning application fees. Guidance on fees for planning applications is published within the on-line planning guidance.

■ Lobbying

Lisa Nandy: [\[226713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Written Statement of 23 February 2015, HCWS292, on protecting public money, what discussions he has had with the Minister for the Cabinet Office on implementation of his policies on government lobbying government, lobbying by sock puppets, lobbying by local enterprise partnerships and lobbying by local authorities.

Kris Hopkins:

Ministers regularly meet Cabinet Office colleagues to discuss a range of issues.

More broadly, I observe that the hon. Member has recently disagreed with the proposals in the Written Ministerial Statement, opposing the new measures which seek to ensure probity on how taxpayers' money is spent.

I would simply note that nothing in that Written Statement prevents the voluntary sector campaigning using their own funds. It is reasonable however to ask that taxpayers' money for specified projects is not diverted away from the commissioned frontline services or activity laid out in that grant agreement.

Prior to the inclusion of the new clause on lobbying, long-standing grant agreements already specified types of expenditure which were inappropriate, including entertainment, gifts to individuals and activities of a political nature. All grants are audited to ensure that they only pay for eligible expenditure. I would be interested to know if the hon. Member also opposes these existing checks and balances on the use of taxpayers' money.

Moreover, documents published during the March 2010 Budget noted that Arms Length Bodies "must not use public funds to employ external public affairs or other consultants to lobby Parliament or Government with the principle aim of altering government policy or to obtain increased funding" (HM Treasury, *Reforming Arm's Length Bodies*, 24 March 2010, p. 15; although the small print of a footnote watered down the substantive policy). Whilst I appreciate that HM Opposition may take a different stance now, even the

fag end of the last Labour Government conceded the principle that there was inappropriate taxpayer-funded lobbying in the public sector.

■ Local Development Frameworks

Mr Henry Bellingham: [\[908063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to ensure that all councils adopt local development frameworks; and if he will make a statement.

Brandon Lewis:

Eighty per cent of councils have a published Plan compared with one in six with an adopted Core Strategy in May 2010. Up to date Local Plans are the best way of determining what development is appropriate and where. I have recently written to many councils emphasising the importance of up to date plans

■ Non-domestic Rates

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[227316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much was paid in business rates (a) nationwide, (b) in the West Midlands and (c) in Coventry in each of the last five years.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[227317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the average amount paid in business rates by each business was (a) nationwide, (b) in the West Midlands and (c) in Coventry in each of the last five years.

Kris Hopkins:

Table 1 and Table 2 (attached) present the data for the total and average amount of business rates between 2010-11 and 2015-16 paid in England and Coventry City Council respectively.

My Department does not produce regional statistics. The local government finance system does not operate on a regional basis, and Government Office Regions have been abolished.

The figures show that overall, business rates have fallen by 1.3% in real terms across England over the period and fallen by 7.7% in real terms in Coventry.

Attachments:

1. Tables 1 & 2 – Business Rates [227316, 227317 Cunningham.docx]

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[227318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, when he last reviewed whether business rates are set at an appropriate level.

Kris Hopkins:

We keep the business rates system under constant review and for the second consecutive year we have reduced the inflation increase in bills to 2%.

That measure is part of an extra £650 million of support for 2015-16 bills announced at the 2014 Autumn, bringing the total support of 2013 and 2014 Autumn Statement polices to £1.4 billion. This help also includes:

- doubling small business rate relief for a further year. In England, this means an estimated 400,000 properties will pay no rates at all, while a further 200,000 properties will benefit from tapered relief;
- increasing the temporary discount for shops, pubs and restaurants with rateable values below £50,000 from £1,000 to £1,500 for 2015-16, benefitting an estimated 200,000 properties in England; and
- extending the existing transitional relief scheme for two years for properties with a rateable value up to and including £50,000.

These measures are in addition to previous Autumn Statement measures that continue into 2015-16, including:

- a 50 per cent discount for 18 months to new occupants of vacant shops;
- allowing businesses to keep their small business rate relief for a year where they take on an additional property;
- business rates relief for empty new builds; and
- allowing businesses to pay their business rate bills over 12 months, in order to assist with their cash flow.

Central Government also now funds 50% of any local discount granted.

Today the Government also launched the review of business rates aimed at keeping the system fair, efficient and effective. The Review will report by Budget 2016.

Jesse Norman:[\[908064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of small firms and shops likely to benefit from the planned reduction in business rates in (a) Herefordshire and (b) England in 2015-16.

Penny Mordaunt:

My rt. hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced at the 2014 Autumn Statement an extra £650 million of support for 2015-16 bills, bringing the total support of 2013 and 2014 Autumn Statement polices to £1.4 billion. This help includes:

- doubling small business rate relief for a further year. In England, this means an estimated 400,000 properties will pay no rates at all, while a further 200,000 properties will benefit from tapered relief;

- a 2% cap on the increase of the small business rates multiplier. This is a continuation of the 2% cap introduced in 2014-15 as part of Autumn Statement 2013 measures;
- increasing the temporary discount for shops, pubs and restaurants with rateable values below £50,000 from £1,000 to £1,500 for 2015-16, benefitting an estimated 200,000 properties in England; and
- extending the existing transitional relief scheme for two years for properties with a rateable value up to and including £50,000.

These measures are in addition to previous Autumn Statement measures that continue into 2015-16, including:

- a 50 per cent discount for 18 months to new occupants of vacant shops;
- allowing businesses to keep their small business rate relief for a year where they take on an additional property;
- business rates relief for empty new builds; and
- allowing businesses to pay their business rate bills over 12 months, in order to assist with their cash flow.

Central Government also now funds 50% of any local discount granted.

Table 1 (attached) shows the estimated number of properties in 2015-16 within the Herefordshire Council boundary that will benefit from business rates measures extended in this year's autumn statement. Table 2 (attached) presents this information for England as a whole.

Attachments:

1. Table 1 – Business Rates [908064 Norman.docx]

■ Offences against Children

Steve McCabe:

[\[222183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 5 January 2015 to Question 219231, how the spending on child abuse and neglect within the Formula Grant is decided upon.

Kris Hopkins:

Local authorities draw their funding in the main from government grant, locally-retained business rates and council tax. Spending decisions are determined by individual local authorities, with a substantive council budget being voted on each year by Full Council.

Councils are under statutory duties to safeguard, protect and improve the well-being of children and young people. The Department for Education has set out in statutory guidance the Government's expectations around how these duties will be delivered.

■ Planning

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that planning decisions take into full consideration the UK's air quality obligations under EU law.

Brandon Lewis:

The Government recognises that clean air is vital for people's good health and this concern is reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Environmental Audit Committee reported on 8 December 2014 on Action on Air Quality (HC 212) and in its response the Government set out the central role of Local Plans, prepared by local councils working with their local communities, in ensuring that new development is appropriate for its location. The Framework is clear that local planning policies should sustain compliance with and contribute to EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas.

■ Policy

Paul Flynn: [\[226769\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what policies contained in the 2010 Coalition Agreement and falling under his Department's responsibilities have not yet been implemented; and what the reasons are for each such policy's non-implementation.

Kris Hopkins:

My Department has delivered on all commitments in the Coalition Agreement within our Departmental responsibilities, with one exception.

Opposition peers in the House of Lords obstructed the provisions in the Localism Bill to give new rights to local residents to hold local referendums.

I hope this policy is something that can be taken forward in a future Parliament. The Conservative Party position in the recent command paper, *Implications of devolution for England* (Cm 8969) re-affirmed support for this policy, which would strengthen local democracy and local accountability.

■ Roads: Lighting

Sir Bob Russell: [\[227277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department issues on consultation with the Ministry of Defence to local authorities with Ministry of Defence facilities or land within their street lighting provision which plan to turn off street lighting for periods during the night.

Kris Hopkins:

My Department has not issued any guidance to local authorities in consultation with the Ministry of Defence about street lighting. It is up to locally

elected councillors to make decisions on street lighting reflecting local circumstances and views.

Although there is no prescriptive Whitehall guidance on street lighting, the Government publication, *Manual for Streets* (2007), while out of date in certain areas (e.g. on parking and density), contains some useful guidance on getting the balance right when providing street lighting, taking into account the different issues around safety, street clutter and light pollution. It can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/maual-for-streets.

■ Sefton Borough Council

John Pugh: [\[226911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the difference is between the amount that will be received from central Government by Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council under the (a) provisional and (b) final 2015-16 local authority settlement.

Kris Hopkins:

The final local government finance settlement for Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council for 2015-16, which was announced on 3 February 2015, included an additional £485,000 compared to the provisional settlement. This was Sefton's share of the additional £74 million provided to upper tier local authorities. This is to assist with continuing pressures on health and social care and in providing local welfare.

■ Starter Home Initiative

Mr Nick Raynsford: [R] [\[226642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Written Statement of 2 March 2015, HCWS 324, on starter homes, if he will estimate the number of homes that will be built in each local authority area under the proposed national exception site planning policy.

Brandon Lewis:

The policy enables applications to be considered at a local level. We have not produced precise estimates for each individual local authority.

■ Village Halls: Planning Permission

Miss Anne McIntosh: [\[908068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what his policy is on the planning permission required for the sale and development of village halls; and if he will make a statement.

Brandon Lewis:

National policy makes clear that planning should promote the retention of community facilities, including meeting places such as village halls. As well as

empowering villages to create neighbourhood plans, we have introduced the Community Right to Bid to help protect Assets of Community Value such as village halls.

■ Wind Power

Julie Elliott: [\[227172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many applications for repowering existing onshore wind farms were (a) received and (b) recovered by the Secretary of State in each of the last five years.

Kris Hopkins:

The Department does not hold information on planning applications received for repowering onshore wind farms. Neither does it record information on appeals recovered for this case type.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Betting

Clive Efford: [\[227068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to use money from dormant betting accounts and unclaimed winnings held by betting operators to invest in sport; and if he will make a statement.

Clive Efford: [\[227069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many times, with what organisations and on what dates officials or Ministers of his Department have discussed the use of money from dormant betting accounts and unclaimed winnings held by betting operators for investment in sport since the publication of the Use of Dormant Betting Accounts Report in December 2010; and if he will make a statement.

Mrs Helen Grant:

The Government has stated previously that it would wait until it had delivered legislative changes for remote gambling before considering the recommendations of this report. Changes to remote gambling - under the Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Act 2014 - came into force on 1st November 2014. The Government will consider all of the recommendations in the report once the legislative changes under the Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Act 2014 have bedded in.

■ Betting Shops

Clive Efford: [\[227367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Written Statement of 30 April 2014, Official Report, columns 53-4WS, on betting

shops and gambling, when he expects local authorities to be given additional powers to restrict the clustering of betting shops; and if he will make a statement.

Clive Efford: [\[227368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will bring forward proposals to give local authorities additional powers to restrict the clustering of betting shops in their communities and to restrict the number of fixed odds betting terminals; and if he will make a statement.

Mrs Helen Grant:

The government consulted in summer 2014 on a range of planning measures to support our high streets, including bringing in a requirement for a planning application to be made to the local planning authority for any proposed change of use to a betting shop. An announcement on the outcome of this consultation and the next steps will be made in due course.

Clive Efford: [\[227369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to prevent betting operators receiving licences for two betting shops which share the same premises; what discussions he has had on this issue with (a) representatives of local licensing authorities, (b) the betting industry and (c) the Gambling Commission; and if he will make a statement.

Mrs Helen Grant:

The law already stipulates that no more than one betting premises licence may be in effect for any premises at the same time. Local licensing authorities need to ensure that when they grant premises licences, they do so only for genuinely separate premises. The Gambling Commission's statutory guidance to licensing authorities gives clear advice to licensing authorities on how to carry out this function.

Details of ministerial meetings are published quarterly on the gov.uk website and are available at

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?keywords=&%20publication_filter_option=transparency-data&topics%5B%5D%20=all&departments%5B%5D=department-for-culture-media-sport&official_document_status=all&world_locations%5B%5D%20=all&from_date=&to_date

■ Broadband: Blaydon

Mr David Anderson: [\[226912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate his Department has made of when average download speeds in the whole of Blaydon constituency will reach 14.7 mbps.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

House of Commons Library analysis (<http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN06643.pdf>) of Ofcom postcode data related to June 2014 suggested the average download speed across the Blaydon constituency was then about 18.7 Mbit/s.

The Government's Broadband programme is helping to increase availability of superfast broadband by over 40,000 premises in the Borough of Blaydon to 96%, which could lead to further increase in average speeds.

■ Broadband: East Lothian

Fiona O'Donnell: [[226904](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will discuss with ministers of the Scottish Government ways to make faster progress on providing broadband to rural communities in East Lothian constituency.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The UK Government is supporting the delivery of superfast broadband by the Scottish Government through the superfast broadband programme. It is providing over £121 million in funding, which should make superfast broadband available to over 720,000 additional premises in Scotland.

Broadband Delivery UK has regular meetings with the Scottish Government and provides extensive commercial and project support to assist delivery of the Government's broadband objectives through the projects in Scotland.

■ Digital Technology: EU Action

Mike Weatherley: [[226735](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to develop policy on digital single economies.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

In January the Government published its vision for a European Digital Economy. The UK has called on the EU to create an open, flexible digital single market with a regulatory framework that reflects the dynamic nature of the digital economy. The DCMS is now working to develop detailed proposals on specific elements of an anticipated Digital Single Market package, including on telecommunications, audio-visual services and copyright.

■ Football

Clive Efford: [[227370](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when he expects the expert working group on supporter ownership and engagement in football to publish its findings; and if he will make a statement.

Mrs Helen Grant:

I expect to receive a summary of the Expert Group's initial recommendations before the end of this Parliament, with a full report planned to be published in November.

■ **Gaming Machines**

Mr Jim Murphy:

[227053]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effects of the Gaming Machine (Circumstances of Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (S.I., 2015, No. 121) on (a) gambling addiction levels, (b) the total amount of money staked and (c) the profits of bookmakers and fixed odds betting terminal providers.

Mrs Helen Grant:

The Gaming Machine (Circumstances of Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (S.I., 2015 No. 121) were laid alongside an Impact Assessment carried out by DCMS

(http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukia/2015/69/pdfs/ukia_20150069_en.pdf). In assessing the potential impact, the Impact Assessment took into account problem gambling levels as measured by Health Surveys for England and Scotland, the potential impact on staking behaviour and the profits of bookmakers.

Mr Jim Murphy:

[227054]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the effect of fixed odds betting terminals on levels of gambling addiction.

Mrs Helen Grant:

The problem gambling rate among adults in England and Wales, as assessed by the Health Surveys which are published by the NHS information centre, is estimated to be less than 1%, which is lower than in comparable jurisdictions such as the USA, South Africa or Australia. Successive British Gambling Prevalence Survey results - 1999, 2007 and 2010 - as well as the more recent Health Survey results in 2012, which cover the period from when FOBTs were introduced to present, demonstrate that levels of problem gambling have been static over this period.

The Government is not complacent about levels of problem gambling. We consider the future of the regulation of FOBTs to be unresolved and will continue to be led by the evidence to devise effective measures to bear down hard on gambling-related harm wherever it is found.

Mr Jim Murphy: [227055]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when he last met representatives of the gambling industries to discuss the regulation of fixed odds betting terminals; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Jim Murphy: [227056]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when he last met representatives of Gamblers Anonymous to discuss the regulation of fixed odds betting terminals; and if he will make a statement.

Mrs Helen Grant:

Details of ministerial meetings are published quarterly on the gov.uk website and are available at

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?keywords=&%20publication_filter_option=transparency-data&topics%5B%5D%20=all&departments%5B%5D=department-for-culture-media-sport&official_document_status=all&world_locations%5B%5D%20=all&from_date=&to_date

■ Horse Racing: Betting

Clive Efford: [227070]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, by what date he plans to implement the Horse Racing Betting Levy for online gambling; and if he will make a statement.

Mrs Helen Grant:

This Government wants to ensure that offshore-based online gambling operators pay their fair share to the funding of horseracing. We have identified two options for achieving this: reforming the existing Horserace Betting Levy or replacing the Levy with a Horserace Betting Right and have published three consultations, the third of which closed on 12 March. We are currently analysing the responses. Implementing either option will require legislation.

■ Lotteries

Clive Efford: [227066]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether he plans to introduce a cap on the amount private lotteries can raise for charities under the Legislative Reform (Exempt Lotteries) Order 2015; and if he will make a statement.

Clive Efford: [\[227067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what representations he has received on the changes proposed in the Legislative Reform (Exempt Lotteries) Order 2015; and if he will make a statement.

Mrs Helen Grant:

The Government has no plans to introduce a cap on the amount private lotteries can raise for charities. The existing protections in the Gambling Act 2005, including no external advertising and limitation to single sites only, will continue to apply.

There were 16 responses to the Legislative Reform (Exempt Lotteries) Order 2015 consultation. These, together with the Government's response to the consultation, can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-incidenta-non-commercial-private-society-work-and-residents-lotteries>

■ Policy

Paul Flynn: [\[226770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what policies contained in the 2010 Coalition Agreement and falling under his Department's responsibilities have not yet been implemented; and what the reasons are for each such policy's non-implementation.

Mrs Helen Grant:

I refer the Hon Gentlemen to Departmental Business Plans which record all commitments, timescales for completion and progress against them. The Business Plans are fully transparent, and the DCMS Business Plan is available at <http://transparency.number10.gov.uk/business-plan/17>

■ Sports: Drugs

David Simpson: [\[226744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps the Government is taking to detect and tackle doping in British sport.

Mrs Helen Grant:

UK Anti Doping continues to provide a prevention through education programmes, intelligence-led athlete testing across more than 40 Olympic, Paralympic and professional sports, investigations and exclusive results management authority for the determination of Anti-Doping Rule Violations.

The tougher sanctions set out in the recently revised World Anti-Doping Code will act as a deterrent to those that believe doping in sport to be an option.

DEFENCE

■ Advertising

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[226596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's advertising and communications expenditure was in each month since September 2014; and what that expenditure is forecast to be in March 2015.

Anna Soubry:

Expenditure on a monthly basis is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ Armed Forces: Cadets

David T. C. Davies: [\[227142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many people were in the (a) Army, (b) Royal Navy and (c) Air cadet forces in the most recent period for which figures are available.

Mr Julian Brazier:

The following table sets out the strength of the four Cadet forces sponsored by the Ministry of Defence as at 1 April 2014, the latest date available:

	CADETS	ADULT VOLUNTEERS	TOTAL
Army Cadet Force	41,040	9,440	50,480
Sea Cadet Corps	13,630	5,920	19,550
Air Training Corps	33,590	10,430	44,020
Combined Cadet Force	42,950	2,810	45,760

The Ministry of Defence publishes annual statistics on UK reserve forces and cadet strengths. The latest release, entitled "TSP7 - UK Reserve Forces and Cadets" was published on 29 May 2014, and includes data as at 1 April 2014. It can be found at the following address:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-reserve-forces-and-cadets-strengths-2014>

Detailed analysis of the strength and composition of the Cadet Forces can be found in Tables 8 to 11 of TSP7, including figures going back to 2004.

■ Armed Forces: Northern Ireland

Dr William McCrea: [\[227094\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many military personnel are based in Northern Ireland.

Anna Soubry:

As at 1 January 2015 there were 2,210 UK Regular Armed Forces personnel based in Northern Ireland. A full breakdown, including by Service and by local authority area, is available in the Ministry of Defence's Quarterly Location Statistics. The latest release, published on 19 February 2015, includes data as at 1 January 2015 and can be found at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/405232/QLS_January_2015.pdf

■ Armed Forces: Qualifications

Alex Cunningham: [\[226714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many requests were made by military personnel to study for GCSE exams in 2014; and how many such requests were granted.

Anna Soubry:

The Department offers Service personnel the opportunity to study for International (General Certificate of Secondary Education) (IGCSE) examinations as opposed to GCSE examinations, since these are better suited to the work and life of Service personnel. The IGCSE does not involve coursework, instead candidates sit an extra paper. The IGCSE qualification is recognised world-wide.

In 2014, there were 1,763 applications from Armed Forces personnel for the IGCSE examinations. All applications were granted, although this does not mean that every candidate sat the exam.

These figures represent only those applicants who planned to have IGCSEs through Cambridge International Examinations.

■ Army: Recruitment

Mr Jeffrey M. Donaldson: [\[225513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what savings to the public purse have been made to date from the award of the contract for Army recruiting to Capita; and how many Army personnel have been reassigned to recruiting during that period.

Mr Julian Brazier:

[Holding answer 5 March 2015]: As the previous Defence Secretary, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond)

stated on 14 January 2014 (Official Report, column 723), the partnering contract with Capita to deliver Army recruiting is expected to save about £300 million a year.

In the same statement he also told the House that just under 1,000 military personnel were engaged in support of recruiting activity on the ground. Now that this initial surge in activity has passed, small numbers of personnel remain on call to deliver support to local unit recruiting initiatives as and when required, but are not specifically assigned to recruiting activities. No additional Army personnel have been assigned to the National Recruiting Centre at Upavon.

Army personnel have always been involved in recruiting at Brigade and Unit level and both regular and reserve personnel continue to play a key role in attracting and nurturing recruits into the Army; indeed, it is long recognised that the best recruiters and exponents of what the Army does are those currently serving. Some of these roles are new (mostly manned on Additional Duties Commitments contracts), as we have adjusted the recruiting process over the past year, and others focus on traditional recruiting activity. It would be disproportionately expensive to calculate the number of such posts.

■ Defence

Jim Shannon: [\[226892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his policy is on the future of the defence budget.

Michael Fallon:

The core Defence budget for 2014-15 is £34 billion. The expected budget for 2015-16 is also £34 billion.

Decisions for 2016-17 and beyond will be a matter for the next Spending Review. However, the Ministry of Defence is planning on an annual 1% real terms increase in spending on defence equipment in this period.

■ Hercules Aircraft

Angus Robertson: [\[226668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the drawdown of C-130J fleet will begin; and how many C-130J aircraft will be kept for Special Forces operations.

Mr Julian Brazier:

The drawdown of the C-130J fleet will begin when there are sufficient A400M Atlas in service to ensure the correct balance of capability and affordability within the Tactical Air Mobility Fleet. It is the policy of the Government not to comment on Special Forces matters.

Angus Robertson: [\[226669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether a study of the centre-wing box of the C-130J fleet is in progress.

Mr Julian Brazier:

A joint UK-Australian study of the centre-wing box of the Hercules C-130J is in progress.

■ HMS Victory

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[226869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reasons he decided to withdraw his Department's approval for the Maritime Heritage Foundation to manage the wreck site of HMS Victory 1744; if he will publish a detailed rationale for that decision; and if he will make a statement.

Anna Soubry:

[Holding answer 12 March 2015]: Approval for the Maritime Heritage Foundation to manage the wreck site of HMS Victory 1744 has not been removed.

■ Iraq

Mr Tom Watson: [R] [\[222465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if his Department will introduce a compensation scheme for civilian casualties in Iraq.

Mr Mark Francois:

[Holding answer 4 February 2015]: When targeting ISIL terrorists we do all we can to minimise the risk of causing casualties among the civilian population. Overall, the air campaign in Iraq is being conducted with precision and we do not believe that there have been any civilian casualties arising from UK actions. We are currently in discussion with our coalition partners with a view to agreeing a mechanism for tracking, reporting, investigating and responding to allegations of civilian casualties. Responses to individual allegations will vary according to circumstances.

Mr Tom Watson: [R] [\[227077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 15 January 2015 to Question 219723 and to his oral contribution of 23 February 2015, Official Report, column 11, on ISIL, if he will ensure that his Department's online record is updated to include data on each strike referred to in that contribution; and if he will provide information on the (a) date, (b) location and (c) aircraft deployed to carry out each strike.

Mr Mark Francois:

As I stated in my written answer of 2 March 2015 in response to question 219723, our policy on the disclosure of information regarding air strikes by

Royal Air Force aircraft engaged on Operation Shader is that the overriding principle is to seek to place information on each strike in the public domain in a prompt and timely manner. To this end, the Ministry of Defence regularly updates appropriate details of strikes against ISIL-related targets, including the specific aircraft type, on the 'gov.uk' website. The site also contains monthly summaries since the start of the operation.

■ Military Bases: Security

Alex Cunningham: [\[226715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether it is his policy to post armed forces personnel below the age of 18 on armed guard duty at military establishments.

Anna Soubry:

Service personnel must be past their 17th birthday and appropriately trained before being employed on armed guarding duties. Where Service personnel (whether trainees, irrespective of their age, or those in productive service under the age of 18) are used as armed guards, an assessment of the risk involved is always undertaken.

Recruits in Phase 1 training are never used as armed guards.

■ Nimrod Aircraft

Angus Robertson: [\[226827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much British Aerospace was paid for work on the Nimrod MRA4 project in the financial year 2011-12; and what the total programme cost was in that year.

Mr Julian Brazier:

British Aerospace received no payments for work on the Nimrod MRA4 project in the financial year 2011-12. Programme costs in the financial year 2011-12 totalled some £0.6 million.

■ Patrick Finucane Review

Mark Durkan: [\[226886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the de Silva Report of the Patrick Finucane Review, published in December 2012, whether any Home Office guidance on the recruitment of agents was followed by his Department for the recruitment of Brian Nelson as an agent.

Mr Mark Francois:

Sir Desmond de Silva's report indicates (page 90) that there was no relevant Home Office guidance in force at the time.

Mark Durkan: [\[226888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to page 99 of the de Silva Report of the Patrick Finucane Review, published in December 2012, whether his Department had a role in (a) recruiting and (b) deploying Brian Nelson as an informant; and what the seniority of the officials from his Department involved was.

Mr Mark Francois:

There is no evidence to suggest that any official from the Ministry of Defence - as opposed to members of the Army - was aware at the time of Mr Nelson's recruitment as an Army informant, nor would this have been expected.

Mark Durkan: [\[226889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the de Silva Report of the Patrick Finucane Review, published in December 2012, what information his Department holds on where Brian Nelson served his criminal sentence.

Mr Mark Francois:

While the locations at which Mr Nelson served his sentence are not within the responsibilities of the Ministry of Defence, the Department's records indicate that he served the sentence he received in 1973 at HMP Maze, and that for his conviction in 1990 he served the first part of his sentence at Crumlin Road Prison, Belfast before transferring to HMP Usk in South Wales.

■ Policy

Paul Flynn: [\[226771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what policies contained in the 2010 Coalition Agreement and falling under his Department's responsibilities have not yet been implemented; and what the reasons are for each such policy's non-implementation.

Michael Fallon:

[Holding answer 16 March 2015]: My Department's Business Plans record all commitments, timescales for completion and progress against them. The Business plans are available at the following link:
www.transparency.number10.gov.uk.

■ Procurement

Angus Robertson: [\[226825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will estimate (a) how much will be spent on the next generation estate contract for regional prime Scotland and Northern Ireland in each of the next four years and (b) how much of that amount will be spent with sub-contractors based in Scotland in each of those years; and what steps he has taken to ensure that local businesses benefit from those contracts.

Angus Robertson: [\[226826\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many construction companies based in Scotland have been awarded work under the next generation estate contract for regional prime Scotland and Northern Ireland; and what estimate he has made of the value of that work.

Anna Soubry:

The amount that will be spent on the next generation estate contracts in Scotland and Northern Ireland in each of the next four financial years (FY) is shown below:

FY 2014-15	£19.6 MILLION
FY 2015-16	£17 million
FY 2016-17	£17.3 million
FY 2017-18	£17.7 million
FY 2018-19	£18.1 million

The information in relation to the amount spent on subcontractors in Scotland, the steps to ensure local businesses benefit from the contracts or the number of construction companies based in Scotland to have been awarded work is not held in the format requested.

■ Trade Unions

Alex Cunningham: [\[226717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether armed forces personnel have a right to have their interests collectively represented to the chain of command by a trades union.

Anna Soubry:

Throughout the Armed Forces' history, personnel have not been permitted to participate in industrial action or in any form of political activity.

Armed Forces personnel are free to join trade and professional associations. They may also join other organisations representing their interests such as the Forces Pension Society, the British Armed Forces Federation, the single Service Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender fora, and the Armed Forces Muslim Association.

The chain of command is responsible for representing the interests of those under command, and all Service personnel have a statutory right to complain on any matter relating to their service. Broader interests are represented through the independent Armed Forces Pay Review Body and the three Single Service Families' Federations.

■ Ukraine

Jim Shannon:

[\[226757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what military assistance the UK plans to give to the Ukrainian army.

Mr Mark Francois:

I refer the hon. Member to the statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State (Michael Fallon) on 25 February 2015 (Official Report, Column 321) and to the Written Ministerial Statement on 6 March 2015 (Official Report, Column 83WS).

Attachments:

1. Hansard Extract [Service Personnel Ukraine 25 February 2015.doc]
2. Hansard Extract [Support to Ukraine HOC 226757.doc]

EDUCATION

■ Advertising

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[226597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her Department's advertising and communications expenditure was in each month since September 2014; and what that expenditure is forecast to be in March 2015.

Mr Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education has very significantly reduced the cost of its communications since 2010. The Department coordinates communications activities to ensure they are focused and effective, using low-cost campaigns wherever possible.

The total spend on agency creative development and evaluation between Sept 2014 and March 2015 will be £385,000. The total spend for media advertising is £1,649,949.

Due to the delivery of commissions from PR agencies, we are unable to provide a monthly breakdown of costs for the total communications budget. We can however provide monthly breakdowns for spend for media advertising campaigns. This is set out the table below.

MONTH 2014-15	MEDIA SPEND START £*
Sept **	619,045.70
Oct	nil
Nov	224,650
Dec	238,590

MONTH 2014-15	MEDIA SPEND START £*
Jan	43,838.59
Feb	329,994.65
March	238,830

* Due to the nature of receipting by external contractors, we have provided information for expenditure per month according to the marketing materials' first appearance.

** The first tranche of the childcare campaign commenced w/c 25 August and ran throughout September

■ Classroom Assistants: Training

David Simpson: [\[226824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what compulsory training is provided to auxiliary staff in schools to assist them in dealing with students suffering severe mental anxiety.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

There is no compulsory training for school staff. Head teachers are best placed to make decisions about what professional development is required by school staff in order to meet the needs of their pupils. A report in 2014 by the independent Think Tank CentreForum found that, out of 750 schools surveyed, 91% had access to training and professional development opportunities on mental health issues.

In June 2014, in order to help school staff identify and support children and young people with mental health issues, the Department for Education issued advice for schools and staff on pupils' mental health and behaviour: www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2. This provides information, guidance and practical tools on how to build resilience and support good mental health. This guidance highlights that schools can use MindEd www.minded.org.uk, an online resource funded by the Department of Health that provides information and training on mental health issues for all adults who work with children and young people.

However, most school staff are not mental health professionals and need to have timely access to appropriate specialist support when necessary. We have been working with the Department of Health and NHS England's Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce on how to improve child and adolescent mental health services, and develop the way services work with schools. The taskforce is due to report later this month.

Many schools provide pupils with access to counselling services. With the support of experts across the sector, the Department for Education is developing advice on what makes for good quality counselling services in primary and secondary schools. This will be published in March 2015.

■ Dyslexia

Henry Smith:

[226686]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that schools have the financial and other resources necessary to support children identified as needing targeted or specialist interventions for dyslexia.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The 0-25 Special Educational Needs Code of Practice makes clear that schools must use their best endeavours to identify and address the needs of all pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities, including those with dyslexia. All maintained schools and Academies must designate a qualified teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision (SENCO).

Schools are provided with resources to support those with additional needs including those with SEN and disabilities. Funding for schools is largely determined by local authorities, through the local funding formula, and for pupils who need high levels of SEN support, through top-up funding for those pupils. Schools have an amount identified within their overall budget, called the notional SEN budget, but it is up to schools to determine how much they spend from their whole budget to provide high quality and appropriate support for all pupils who need extra help.

In addition, the Department for Education has provided £1.5 million to the Dyslexia SpLD Trust (www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk) to support schools, professionals and local authorities to improve the support available for pupils with dyslexia, drawing on the evidence of effective programmes, and to build their skills.

The Department is also funding the British Dyslexia Association to pilot the provision of targeted literacy support, volunteer mentors and teacher training in more than 25 schools. This aims to improve the literacy levels of 800 pupils at high risk of experiencing literacy difficulties and dyslexia.

We have enabled teachers to develop their practice in supporting children with SEN and disabilities through our National Scholarship Fund, which allows teachers to apply for funding to undertake postgraduate level qualifications in specific impairments. Many of those apply to undertake masters-level training in dyslexia. 648 awards were offered to teachers and SEN Support staff this year.

Henry Smith: [226688]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that children and young people with dyslexia receive special access arrangements so that they are not disadvantaged in examinations.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), regulates the issue of access arrangements to examinations.

Conditions G6 and G7 in Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition require exam boards to have access arrangements in place and to publish details.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publishes the access arrangements on behalf of the exam boards (<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>).

■ Faith Schools

Andrew Rosindell: [226930]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that faith schools do not divide local communities.

Mr David Laws:

All schools, including faith schools, have a legal duty to promote community cohesion. All schools are expected to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

■ Financial Services: Education

Justin Tomlinson: [226918]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of how many schools are teaching financial education as part of the curriculum.

Mr Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education does not routinely collect data about the number of schools teaching financial education as part of the curriculum.

From September 2014, teaching about financial education became a compulsory part of citizenship for 11 to 16 year olds, where pupils learn about the importance of budgeting, sound management of money, credit and debt, as well as understanding many different financial services and products.

We have also strengthened the national curriculum for mathematics to give pupils aged 5 to 16 the necessary mathematical skills they need to make important financial decisions about mortgages and loan repayments.

■ Food Technology

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[\[226579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect on the educational and social progress of a child being unable to pay for ingredients and equipment for food technology lessons.

Mr Nick Gibb:

Schools play a key role in educating all children about the importance and benefits of eating well and staying healthy. This is why we have strengthened the requirements on schools to teach children about food, nutrition and healthy eating and how to cook a repertoire of dishes from an early age. In the new national curriculum, learning about food is a key component for every child and food preparation and nutrition lessons are compulsory up to the age of 14. We expect schools to find ways to enable all pupils to participate in food preparation and nutrition lessons regardless of their socio-economic background.

Organisations such as the Design and Technology Association (DATA) have promoted the practice of procuring food preparation and nutrition ingredients as part of school catering buying as a means of ensuring all children are able to participate fully in food preparation and nutrition lessons.

■ Free School Meals

Mr Ben Bradshaw:

[\[227062\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what forecasts her Department has made of the number of parents who will be eligible to claim free school meals under universal credit in (a) 2015, (b) 2016 and (c) 2017.

Mr David Laws:

It is not possible at this stage to report the number of parents who will meet the necessary criteria to be eligible to claim free school meals for their children in future years.

Mr Ben Bradshaw:

[\[227111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what forecast she has made of the number of parents who will be eligible to claim free school meals for their children in April 2016.

Mr David Laws:

It is not possible at this stage to report the number of parents who will meet the necessary criteria to be eligible to claim free school meals for their children in 2016.

■ Free School Meals: Birmingham

Richard Burden: [\[227136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 2 March 2015 to Question 225826, which 12 schools within Birmingham local authority area applied for additional funding for universal infant free school meals; and in which constituencies those schools are located.

Mr David Laws:

Birmingham City Council submitted bids for schools within the following parliamentary constituencies during the local authority universal infant free school meal capital bidding round: Edgbaston, Erdington, Hodge Hill, Perry Barr, Northfield, Selly Oak, and Yardley.

The Department for Education has not yet published the names of schools which applied for but were not allocated funding. The department plans to publish this information in July 2015.

■ GCE A-level

Paul Uppal: [\[227129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will take steps to ensure that funding is available for schools to enable them to maintain the variety of A-levels they offer.

Mr David Laws:

For the academic year 2015/16, the Department for Education has maintained the base rate of funding for 16- to 19-year-olds in schools and colleges at £4,000 for full-time 16- and 17-year-olds, and £3,300 for 18-year-olds. This is sufficient to fund a study programme of 600 hours, which is enough for students to take three A levels and one AS level, plus around 150 hours of enrichment or tutorial activity across each two-year course. It is for schools to determine what they offer their students, taking into account the needs and aspirations of their students as well as the overall budget available to the school.

Paul Uppal: [\[227130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that funding is available to schools to enable pupils to continue at A-level subjects they took at GCSE.

Mr David Laws:

Funding for 16- to 19-year-olds is sufficient for students to take three A levels and one AS level, plus around 150 hours of enrichment or tutorial activity across each two-year course. It is up to individuals to choose which subjects they wish to take at A level and not all students will choose to continue to study the same subjects they took at GCSE. It is for schools to determine what

they offer their students, taking into account the needs and aspirations of their students as well as the overall budget available to the school.

■ Policy

Paul Flynn: [\[226772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what policies contained in the 2010 Coalition Agreement and falling under her Department's responsibilities have not yet been implemented; and what the reasons are for each such policy's non-implementation.

Mr Nick Gibb:

All the commitments made in the 2010 Coalition Agreement that relate to the current remit of the Department for Education have been implemented or are currently being implemented.

■ School Meals

David Simpson: [\[226743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to increase the information on display in schools on the nutritional standards of school meals.

Mr David Laws:

We introduced new School Food Standards in England from 1 January 2015 and these have been communicated widely, including in schools. School governing bodies and caterers are responsible for the promotion of their school food services at a local level and able to decide what is best.

■ Schools: Asbestos

Mr David Winnick: [\[226901\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when her Department plans to publish its review of asbestos management in schools; and what the reasons are for the time taken to publish that review.

Mr David Laws:

The draft report review was published on 12 March. Copies of the review have been placed in the House library and the review is also available on the GOV.UK website.

This is a complex area and one on which the available evidence base has some notable constraints. Gathering relevant evidence has been our priority and this has increased the time involved in consulting with experts and stakeholders.

■ Schools: Uniforms

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [226675]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will (a) review guidance on school uniforms and (b) bring forward legislative proposals to make such guidance statutory.

Mr David Laws:

The Department for Education's best practice guidance on school uniform was revised in September 2013. This revised guidance places greater emphasis on securing the best value for money in the supply of school uniforms. It is scheduled for review in summer 2015.

The guidance is published online at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-uniform

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [226676]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that school uniforms in all state-funded schools are affordable.

Mr David Laws:

The Department for Education has issued guidance for all schools on the need to consider the cost and availability of the uniform.

The guidance emphasises the importance of ensuring that uniform is widely available and affordable for parents. It sets out that governing bodies should be able to demonstrate that they have obtained the best value for money from suppliers, and that any savings negotiated with suppliers should be passed on to parents wherever possible. It also makes clear that compulsory branded items should be kept to a minimum, and that schools should avoid frequent changes to the uniform.

Local authorities and academies have discretion within their budgets to provide school clothing grants or offer other help with the cost of school clothing in cases of financial hardship.

The school uniform guidance is published online at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-uniform

■ Social Services: Lancashire

Graham Jones: [226947]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many people used children and young people's social care services in each district authority in Lancashire in the last period for which figures are available.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The available information is given in the table below:

Referrals to children's social care, children in need and children looked after in Lancashire local authority in the year ending 31 March 2014.

	NUMBER
Referrals ^{1,2} to children's social care throughout the year	19,460
Children in need ¹ as of 31 March 2014	9,035
Children looked after as of 31 March 2014	1,590

Source: Children in Need census, SSDA903

1. Lancashire used two reporting systems to produce their Children in Need return in 2014 so we highlighted in the publication that we had some concerns over the quality of the data.

2. If a child has more than one referral in the year then each will be counted.

This data is only available at local authority and national level. Figures on referrals and children in need are published annually within the 'Characteristics of children in need' statistical first release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need-2013-to-2014>

Figures on the number of children looked after are published annually within the 'Children looked after in England, including adoption' statistical first release: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption--2>

Graham Jones:

[227016]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the total level of (a) income and (b) expenditure is for children and young people's social care in each district authority in Lancashire.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The available information for Lancashire local authority is shown in the table below. Figures at district authority level within Lancashire are not available.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATISTICS ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES FOR LANCASHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITY (1)

Year: 2013-14

Total expenditure (£000)	Income (£000)	Net current expenditure (£000)
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INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATISTICS ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES FOR LANCASHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITY (1)

Sure Start children's centres and early years	28,077	775	27,302
Children looked after	71,390	48	71,342
Other children's and families services	0	0	0
Safeguarding children and young people's services	25,978	267	25,711
Family support services	29,370	69	29,300
Services for young people	13,868	52	13,816
Youth justice	6,561	2,783	3,779
Capital Expenditure from Revenue (CERA) (Children's and young people's services)	0	0	0
TOTAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES EXPENDITURE (including CERA)	175,245	3,995	171,250
TOTAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES EXPENDITURE (excluding CERA)	175,245	3,995	171,250

1. An explanation of each expenditure category within the Section 251 outturn can be found in the guidance documentation at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-251-outturn-2013-to-2014-guidance-for-local-authorities>

Totals may not be the sum of the constituent parts due to rounding.

■ Special Educational Needs

Henry Smith: [\[226684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to reassure parents that schools are following the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

Henry Smith: [\[226685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that schools implement the provisions of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice.

Mr Edward Timpson:

Our reforms create an expectation that schools will provide transparent information about what they are doing to support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and engage with parents to shape the support their child receives.

All schools are required to publish an SEN Information Report. This should explain the implementation of their SEN policy. It should be easily accessible by young people and parents and should use clear, straightforward language. This information must be linked to the Local Offer published by local authorities.

Schools must have regard to the SEND Code of Practice and must use their best endeavours to identify and address the needs of all pupils with SEND. Ofsted have a central role in holding schools to account for the support that is provided. The school inspection framework places an emphasis on how schools meet the needs of pupils with SEND, the quality of teaching and the progress made by those pupils.

We are funding voluntary and community sector organisations to support schools to implement the Code of Practice. This includes the development of the SEND Gateway, a "one stop shop" for all schools to access high quality information, resources and training funded by Government and developed by voluntary and community organisations. This can be accessed online at: www.sendgateway.org.uk. In addition, we are funding the Achievement for All programme to provide leadership support to schools to embed the reforms.

Ensuring parents have information about the new system and access to advice and support is a priority for the Government. All local authorities, by law, must provide children and young people with SEN or disabilities, and their parents, with information and advice.

■ Teachers: Training

Henry Smith:

[\[226687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how her Department monitors how many teachers receive dyslexia awareness training as part of their continual professional development.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The Department for Education does not hold figures for the number of teachers receiving dyslexia awareness training. It is for schools to ensure they have an appropriately trained workforce to meet the needs of children with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities.

The Department is enabling teachers to develop their ability to support children with SEN and disabilities through its National Scholarship Fund. This provides funding for staff to undertake postgraduate-level qualifications in specific impairments, including Masters-level training in Dyslexia. Since 2011, over 1,800 members of staff in schools have received support through the National Scholarship Fund.

The Department is also funding a range of voluntary and community organisations to support school teachers and local authorities to improve the support available to dyslexic pupils. This includes the Primary Literacy Project, aimed at improving the literacy levels of pupils most at risk of literacy difficulties and dyslexia. 736 teachers and teaching assistants have attended school training sessions over the two years of the project. The British Dyslexia Association training department also delivered around 380 courses to approximately 6,500 teachers during 2014.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

■ Fracking: Yorkshire and the Humber

Sir Hugh Bayley:

[\[227313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many (a) applications have been received for licences and (b) licences have been issued for fracking in (i) York, (ii) North Yorkshire and (iii) Yorkshire and the Humber since May 2010.

Matthew Hancock:

A Petroleum Exploration and Development Licence (PEDL) is a pre-requisite before any oil and gas operations, including fracking, can take place. No new PEDLs have been issued since 2008. DECC cannot comment on applications made in the current, 14th, Onshore Oil & Gas Licensing Round, the results of which we expect to announce later this year.

All operations require planning permission, access agreement with relevant landowner(s), Environment Agency permits, HSE scrutiny, and DECC consent

before they can commence. Within an existing PEDL, an application which included plans to frac in North Yorkshire was consented to by DECC in 2012 but, due to changes to the operator's plans, the activity was not carried out.

■ Hinkley Point C Power Station

Paul Flynn: [\[227052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 9 March 2015 to Question 226097, for what specific reasons information is not available on the (a) cost of the Government submission to the European Commission in support of its application for State Aid approval for the Hinkley Point C power plant, (b) proportion of the costs that was spent on legal fees and (c) title of each support document submitted by the Government with that application.

Matthew Hancock:

Information is not available on the overall cost of external advice to support the Government's application for State aid approval for Hinkley Point C as we do not hold a full breakdown of costs which separates out the total amount for State aid advice from the costs of other external advice associated with the project. There would be a disproportionate cost involved in providing this information.

With regards to (c), all of the relevant information regarding the UK Government's submissions to the European Commission is available in the Commission's Closing Decision on the Hinkley Point C State aid case, which was published on 22nd January 2015:

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/251157/251157_1615983_2292_4.pdf.

■ Natural Gas: Russia

Paul Flynn: [\[226729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what recent discussions he has had with his German counterpart on the implications for energy security of use of imports of Russian gas; and what proportion of energy demand in (a) the UK and (b) Germany was filled by imported gas from Russia on the latest date for which information is available.

Matthew Hancock:

Neither my rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State nor I have had recent discussions with Vice Chancellor Gabriel on the implications for energy security of the use of imports of Russian gas. We do, however, continue to monitor this issue closely, and to work hard for the reforms required to improve overall energy security in Europe through the EU Energy Union. This has been a regular agenda item at the Energy Council which all EU Member States participate in. These reforms include improving interconnection between

energy markets across Europe to provide Member States with more diverse supply sources and increase resilience.

We estimate that direct gas imports from Russia account for 11% of German energy demand. The United Kingdom does not physically import any gas directly from Russia. A small amount of Russian gas may be imported through our interconnector pipelines with the Netherlands and Belgium, but this is likely to be around 1% of the United Kingdom's demand. Similarly, Germany has gas transit links with Poland, Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland and others. We cannot definitively determine the final destination of all Russian gas due to the interconnectedness of the pipelines within the European gas market.

■ Renewable Energy

Mr Peter Lilley:

[227176]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, with reference to his Department's publication *Estimated impacts of energy and climate change policy on energy prices and bills*, published in November 2014, what provision has been made in that document for likely costs of (a) additional generating capacity related to the intermittency of renewables, (b) additional transmission lines to link wind and other renewable generators to centres of consumption and (c) other measures to strengthen the grid to deal with intermittency.

Matthew Hancock:

DECC's modelling of the electricity sector takes into account the expected contribution of intermittent renewables to meeting peak demand when assessing how much capacity must be procured under the Capacity Mechanism to maintain system security. The costs of the Capacity Mechanism are included in the aforementioned published analysis.

As also set out in the report, estimated network bill impacts are based on network operators' revenue allowances under Ofgem's price controls for electricity distribution (RIIO-ED1) and electricity transmission (RIIO-T1), and on offshore revenue projections estimated by National Grid's TNUoS model that was built for DECC's Electricity Market Reform Delivery Plan.[1] Projections used in DECC's report are adjusted to reflect DECC modelling of capacity uptake.

The RIIO-T1 Final Determinations [2] show that for electricity transmission, the main driver for expenditure is increasingly to connect new generation (about two thirds of the planned investment to 2021). Not all of this will be associated with low-carbon generation and, in the absence of low-carbon generation, there would be costs to connect further conventional generation instead.

[1]https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/267614/Annex_D_-_National_Grid_EMR_Report.pdf.

[2] <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/ofgem-publications/53599/1riiot1fpoverviewdec12.pdf>.

■ Sellafield

Paul Flynn:

[226730]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, with reference to paragraph 2.22 of the Report by the National Audit Office, Progress on the Sellafield site: an update, published in March 2015, when he was first informed that Nuclear Management Partners had failed to appoint a director of security for Sellafield; and what steps he subsequently took to ensure that the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Sellafield Limited put such a security director in place.

Matthew Hancock:

Sellafield has had a Chief Security Officer, reporting directly to the Managing Director, in post at all times. The NAO report refers to the Director of Security, Emergency Management and Resilience Programmes (SERP), which is a new post specifically created to manage delivery of the portfolio of security, emergency management and resilience related programmes.

Staffing decisions at the Site Licence Companies are the responsibility of the Board of the SLC. As was appropriate the NDA and DECC were kept informed throughout the process. The new Director started in post on 5 January 2015.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Dairy Farming

Dr William McCrea:

[227116]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to assist the dairy industry; and what discussions she has had with the devolved administrations on that matter.

George Eustice:

The dairy sector is a vital part of the food and farming sector. Long term prospects are good but current prices are causing some of our farmers to struggle. Government is doing all it can to help during this difficult period. We are working with HMRC to allow farmers to access "Time to Pay" arrangements, urging banks to treat dairy farmers sympathetically, and giving the Groceries Code Adjudicator powers to fine retailers if necessary.

We want a competitive and resilient dairy industry that can take advantage of opportunities. We are helping the dairy industry to take advantage of opportunities such as opening new export markets and pushing for better country of origin labelling for British dairy products.

The Secretary of State chairs regular meetings with the Devolved Administrations (DAs) on issues of mutual interest. Defra officials maintain regular contact with their counterparts in the DAs on a range of dairy issues.

I discussed the current position in the dairy industry with colleagues from Devolved Administrations at an Agrifish Council of Ministers in Brussels on 16 March.

■ Dangerous Dogs

Henry Smith:

[\[226683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many prohibited types of dogs have been exempted to named keepers in each month in each year since 2012; and if she will make a statement.

George Eustice:

The number of prohibited dogs exempted to named keepers are detailed in the table below.

Numbers of exempted dogs transferred to keepers for each month from January 2012 to February 2015

	2012	2013	2014	2015
January	0	5	1	1
February	1	3	0	2
March	2	2	0	N/A
April	0	1	1	N/A
May	2	3	1	N/A
June	4	2	3	N/A
July	4	3	6	N/A
August	3	1	2	N/A
September	0	1	2	N/A
October	4	0	0	N/A
November	4	1	1	N/A
December	2	1	3	N/A
Total	26	23	20	3

■ Fisheries

Dr William McCrea: [\[227119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to protect seas and fish stock quotas for (a) Northern Ireland and (b) other UK fishermen.

George Eustice:

The UK secured a legally binding commitment to manage fish stocks at Maximum Sustainable Yield, and end the discarding of fish in the reformed Common Fisheries Policy. Defra is working closely with the Northern Ireland Executive on its implementation.

We are consulting on proposals for 23 Marine Conservation Zones, extending the wide range of protected areas and other measures already in place to manage our seas.

Protection of Northern Irish inshore waters is a devolved matter.

■ Floods: Insurance

Dr William McCrea: [\[227117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with insurance companies on affordable insurance cover after incidents of flooding.

Dan Rogerson:

At visits to Somerset in December 2014, and Canvey Island in February, I met householders and the insurance industry to discuss recent experiences.

Government and the insurance industry are working closely together to deliver Flood Re, which will ensure access to affordable flood insurance for people at highest risk of flooding.

■ Game: Gun Sports

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[227167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 26 February 2015 to Question 224551, for what reasons no information is available on the number of pheasants and partridges imported into the UK for the purposes of game shooting.

George Eustice:

To comply with EU requirements, partridges and pheasants imported into the UK have to be accompanied by an EU health certificate. There is a specific health certificate for game birds intended for restocking. Information on imported consignments of live birds is held on the European Commission's TRACES system. However, we only have limited options to interrogate this information. Although we have statistics on the total number of pheasants

and partridges that have been imported in to the UK, it is not possible to determine how many birds were imported using the re-stocking health certificate.

	Pheasants (Phasianus)		Partridges (Perdix)	
	European Union	Third Countries	European Union	Third Countries
2010	367,322	0	19,146	0
2011	4,287,561	0	268,159	0
2012	3,654,485	0	162,036	0
2013	5,057,045	12,600	223,541	0
2014	6,333,914	21,840	272,675	0

Imported pheasants and partridges may also be included in mixed consignments of poultry. However, we only hold information on the overall number of birds in the consignment.

■ Meerkats

Mark Pritchard:

[\[226761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what measures her Department has in place to monitor the welfare of meerkats imported into the UK.

George Eustice:

Meerkats imported into the UK are covered by EU legislation that requires them to come from an approved premises which has met health and welfare standards. They also undergo a clinical examination ahead of the movement and are required to travel with a signed health certificate assuring this examination has taken place and that the movement complies with Regulation 1/2005/EC on the Welfare of Animals in Transport. As carnivores, they may be required to enter rabies quarantine for four months at an approved quarantine facility. For imports from third countries, animals directly entering the UK must do so through a Border Inspection Post where official veterinarians will check for welfare issues and ensure the animals have the correct certification.

Once in this country, meerkats are subject to the same protection as other captive animals. Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 it is an offence to cause any unnecessary suffering to an animal. It is also an offence, under the 2006 Act, to fail to provide for the welfare needs of an animal. There is additional protection for animals, including meerkats, held in establishments licensed under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981. Such establishments are licensed by local authorities and subject to inspection. If anyone has any concerns about the welfare of a meerkat they should report the matter to the relevant local authority which has powers to investigate such complaints, or to the RSPCA which will also investigate.

■ Poultry**Jim Shannon:**[\[226894\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate she has made of the contribution of the poultry sector to the UK economy; and what discussions she has had with her counterpart in the Northern Ireland Executive on steps to support that industry in Northern Ireland.

George Eustice:

Our poultry industry is vital to the UK economy and is one of the most successful across Europe, supporting around 73,000 jobs and contributing £3.3bn annually to the UK GDP.

We are committed to supporting the industry through, for instance, investing £160m in the UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies. This is delivering innovations from the laboratory to the farm and includes investment in two projects in the poultry sector. We are also continuing to work with industry on access to foreign markets. There was significant growth in our non-EU exports of poultry in 2014 and we have seen an increase of 16% in total poultry meat exports since 2010. This is a strong vindication of the government-industry partnership approach in place.

My Rt. Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, and I work with Ministers in the Devolved Administrations on a range of issues, including opening access for exports from Northern Ireland.

■ Poultry Meat: Imports

Mike Crockart: [\[226672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the Government's position is in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership negotiations on the import from the US of chemically-treated poultry.

George Eustice:

All food imported from the US must adhere to EU rules and TTIP will not change that. Any changes to food safety measures in the European Union must be subject to a robust scientific risk assessment and agreed by EU Member States and the European Parliament.

■ Rodents: Pest Control

Mark Pritchard: [\[226674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will bring forward legislative proposals to ban the use of glue traps for the killing of mice and rats.

George Eustice:

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 prohibits causing unnecessary suffering to animals under the control of man. Once trapped, any animal should be killed or otherwise dealt with humanely. Traps must be inspected regularly and trapped animals dealt with appropriately in order to comply with the 2006 Act.

In 2010, Defra asked the Law Commission to review wildlife legislation, with a view to putting together a modern, consistent and simple to understand regulatory framework. A final report and draft Bill is due to be delivered early this summer.

■ School Milk

Mr Michael McCann: [\[227333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions officials in her Department have had with stakeholders on development of a national strategy for implementation of the European School Milk Scheme.

Mr Michael McCann: [\[227334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans her Department has to consult stakeholders on the development of a national strategy for implementation of the European School Milk Scheme.

George Eustice:

The development of a national strategy to implement the existing, long-established EU School Milk Scheme is not expected to involve substantive changes of policy or of practice. On this basis, a formal consultation is not envisaged. However, Defra officials are engaging with a range of stakeholders in the interests of transparency and to set out our approach. The EU Commission has proposed a more substantial overhaul of the scheme which, if agreed, would take effect from 2016 onwards. The Department intends to consult on this wider process although no timescale has yet been established.

■ Surveys**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**[\[226965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of (a) disabled and (b) all other staff in her Department responded that they were treated fairly at work in the most recent Civil Service People Survey.

Dan Rogerson:

The Civil Service People Survey asks the question "Do you have any long-standing physical or mental health condition, illness, impairment or disability?" The survey does not include a question that specifically identifies disability status.

In the 2014 People Survey, 70% of core Defra respondents declaring a long-standing physical or mental health condition, illness, impairment or disability responded that they were treated fairly at work.

84% of core Defra respondents declaring that they did not have a long-standing physical or mental health condition, illness, impairment or disability responded that they were treated fairly at work.

■ Water: Pollution**Andrew Stephenson:**[\[227198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when she expects to publish the strategy to tackle urban diffuse water pollution referred to in her Department's Summary of responses to the consultation on Tackling water pollution from the urban environment.

Dan Rogerson:

The responses we received through our consultation on proposals for tackling diffuse water pollution from urban sources were extremely positive. Over 90% of respondents agreed with our strategic aims. We are using this information to develop an action plan for publication later in 2015.

Andrew Stephenson: [\[227200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her strategy is for tackling urban diffuse water pollution.

Dan Rogerson:

The Government's role in tackling water pollution from the urban environment is centred on improving our understanding of the problem and the possible solutions, and then, in line with the evidence, both facilitating action by others and taking action ourselves where appropriate.

In line with this approach we are committing £2m grant funding in the next financial year for local projects that tackle urban diffuse water pollution.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Advertising

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[226600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what his Department's advertising and communications expenditure was in each month since September 2014; and what that expenditure is forecast to be in March 2015.

Mr David Lidington:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) budgets are devolved to London departments and overseas Posts.

The FCO does not have a dedicated advertising budget, and so it would not be possible to aggregate any spending without incurring disproportionate cost. Similarly, there is no central Departmental budget for communications and so to establish this figure would incur disproportionate cost. The central Communication Directorate budget outturns for the period requested are as follows:

September 2014: 119,151 October: 179,324 November: 154,348 December: 177,033 January 2015: 364,872 February: 243,531

Forecast figures are subject to constant change. However, the final outturn for March will be given in the FCO's Departmental Report.

The FCO has reduced costs in its Communications Directorate by 62% between 2009-2010 and 2014-2015.

■ Arms Trade

Alex Cunningham: [\[226718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what his policy is on the export of military equipment to countries where children are known to be or may potentially be recruited for military purposes or otherwise used in hostilities.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The United Kingdom operates one of the most rigorous and transparent arms export control regimes in the world, and is committed to promoting robust and effective national and international arms export control regimes. We do not approve exports where there is a clear risk that the export could be used in any way which would contravene any of the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria (known as the Consolidated Criteria). Risks around human rights violations and conflict are a key part of our assessment. The Government will not issue an export licence if there is a clear risk that the proposed export might be used for internal repression or to provoke or prolong armed conflicts or aggravate existing tensions or conflicts in the country of final destination.

■ **Colombia****Martin Horwood:**[\[227010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Government has raised with the Colombian government the further threats to the life of Irreal Aguilar Solano; and what steps the Colombian government has informed the Government it is taking.

Mr Hugo Swire:

Our Ambassador in Bogota raised the case of Irrael Aguilar Solano on 3 February 2015 during a meeting with the Presidential High Adviser for Human Rights, Guillermo Rivera. Mr Rivera informed the Ambassador that they will engage with the Colombian Authorities to ensure that full protection measures are afforded.

More than 1300 Human Rights Defenders have received protection measures from the Colombian Government, 300 of them at the highest level. The Presidential High Adviser for Human Rights also informed our Ambassador that as a result of the improvement in protection measures, deaths of Human Rights Defenders are decreasing.

■ **Iran****Mrs Louise Ellman:**[\[227014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he last raised the issue of human rights of the Baha'i community with his counterparts in Iran.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK has repeatedly expressed concern at the treatment of the Baha'i community in Iran. I met a representative of the Baha'i community on 10 February to discuss the community's concerns. The UK's non-resident Chargé d'Affaires to Iran discussed the matter with the Iranian authorities during his last visit to Iran on 17 February.

■ Iraq

Mr Gareth Thomas: [\[227355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the efforts of the Iraqi government to engage constructively with the Sunni community; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Political unity in Iraq is critical to military efforts to defeat ISIL. The Government continues to support political initiatives by Prime Minister Abadi that promote inclusive politics and national reconciliation, of which engagement with the Sunni community is a key part. Sunni political blocs are represented in the Iraqi government and have also been appointed to prominent positions within the Iraqi Security Forces as part of wider reforms. Prime Minister Abadi has taken a number of important steps to address Sunni concerns including ordering the cessation of artillery bombardments of Sunni towns where fighting against ISIL continues and the release of certain Sunni prisoners that had been held without trial following previous counter terrorism operations.

We are pleased that Sunni MPs ended their boycott of parliament on 2 March, however, further progress must be made, including agreement on the formation of a National Guard and legislative reform.

■ Islamic State: Boko Haram

Mr Gareth Thomas: [\[227354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the extent of links between ISIS and Boko Haram; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

ISIL are seeking to influence other groups beyond the Middle East. Recent communications from Boko Haram appear to contain similar elements to those found in ISIL videos. On 7 March, Boko Haram released an audio statement by leader Abubakar Shekau pledging allegiance to ISIL which was subsequently accepted by ISIL on 12 March. Although concerning, this is not a particularly significant development. We assess that the alignment of the groups is for propaganda purposes and we have seen no evidence of operational links between the groups. We continue to keep the situation under review.

■ LGBT People

Tim Farron: [\[226902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the level of persecution of LGBTI people in (a) Macedonia, (b) Slovakia, (c) Malaysia, (d) Egypt and (e) Bahrain.

Mr David Lidington:

Human rights are universal and should apply equally to all people. We work to uphold the rights and freedoms of LGB&T people in all circumstances.

We agree with the EU's assessment that the overall framework for the protection of fundamental rights is in place in Macedonia but that much more needs to be done on its implementation. Efforts are needed to increase awareness of and respect for diversity within Macedonian society and to counteract intolerance perpetrated through the media.

We assess that Slovakia is largely a tolerant society on LGB&T issues and that the level of persecution is not significant.

LGB&T issues remain sensitive in Malaysia and we are aware of some court cases against individuals. Our High Commission in Malaysia meets representatives of NGO and human rights groups to hear their concerns including LGB&T groups. Representatives from the High Commission also observed a landmark LGB&T case last year.

Our Embassy in Cairo monitors LGB&T issues in Egypt closely. We are concerned at recent reports of increased targeting of LGB&T individuals, who are being arrested and charged with debauchery and public indecency.

Bahraini law does not criminalise same sex-activity between consenting persons who are at least 21 years of age, although sodomy is illegal. Although Bahrain is a liberal state compared with many other countries in the region many Bahrainis hold conservative social views. There are some reported cases of individuals punished for same-sexual activity but in practice, we assess that arrests for homosexual behaviour are relatively rare.

■ Maldives**Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:**[\[226639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his counterpart in the Maldives on the trial of former President Mohammed Nasheed.

Mr Hugo Swire:

We have a number of serious concerns about increasing political tensions in the Maldives and the arrest of former President Nasheed, who has now been sentenced to 13 years imprisonment for forceful abduction. As I said in my statement of 13 March, despite calls from the international community for due process to be followed, we are concerned that the former President's trial has not been conducted in a transparent and impartial manner nor in accordance with due legal process.

I made my concerns very clear when I discussed this issue with the Foreign Minister of the Maldives, Dunya Maumoon, on 6 March. As I also said in my statement of 13 March, should Mr Nasheed decide to appeal, we will watch

that process closely and hope that Mr Nasheed will be properly and transparently accorded the rights that every citizen of the Maldives is entitled to.

■ Nigeria

Jim Shannon: [\[226895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Nigerian counterpart on the protection of Christians and their right to worship in that country.

James Duddridge:

The Nigerian constitution, and other laws and policies in Nigeria, provide legal protection for religious freedom in the country. The two main religions in Nigeria, Christianity and Islam, have a history of tolerance and coexistence. Boko Haram are attempting to challenge Nigeria's secular state and democratic constitution by attacking all Nigerians who do not follow their extremist and intolerant views. Their activities, which do not command widespread support, have caused immense suffering in both Muslim and Christian communities. We regularly discuss the impact of Boko Haram with the Nigerian Government, and with Nigerian religious leaders. The UK is committed to helping Nigeria combat these extremists and stop their heinous activities against the civilian population.

■ Office of the Quartet Representative

Norman Baker: [\[227057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness against his objectives of Tony Blair in his role as Quartet Special Representative in the Middle East.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK works closely with Tony Blair as the Quartet's Special Representative in our joint efforts to support the peace process. Tony Blair visited Gaza last month to meet Palestinian Gaza-based Ministers and local business and community leaders. I met Tony Blair on 9 March to discuss how to make progress on Gaza and the Middle East Peace Process.

The Quartet has an important role to play in bringing Israelis and Palestinians together as we urgently seek to move the peace process forward.

Norman Baker: [\[227059\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he last met Tony Blair to discuss his work as Quartet Special Representative in the Middle East.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I met Tony Blair on 9 March to discuss the Middle East Peace Process. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) last spoke to Tony Blair on 7 August 2014, where they discussed the Gaza conflict.

■ Policy

Paul Flynn:

[\[226775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what policies contained in the 2010 Coalition Agreement and falling under his Department's responsibilities have not yet been implemented; and what the reasons are for each such policy's non-implementation.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have worked to implement all of the policies listed in the 2010 Coalition Agreement. These have been translated into Departmental Business Plan commitments and updated annually. Progress against the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's commitments is recorded on the Government's Transparency website: <http://transparency.number10.gov.uk/business-plan/9>.

■ Sudan

Mr Gareth Thomas:

[\[227353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether Ministers in his Department have made representations to the government of Sudan on reports of human rights abuses in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states; and if he will make a statement.

James Duddridge:

We remain deeply concerned by the human rights situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile ("The Two Areas"). Baroness Anelay's statement of 13 February underlined that attacks on the civilian populations were entirely unacceptable and our Ambassador in Khartoum continues to raise this issue with the Government of Sudan on behalf of HMG.

HEALTH

■ Advertising

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[226601\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what his Department's advertising and communications expenditure was in each month since September 2014; and what that expenditure is forecast to be in March 2015.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

Information of spend by the Department on both its total advertising costs and communications expenditure is as noted in the attached tables.

Attachments:

1. DH advertising costs & communications expenditure [Department of Health information of spend.docx]

■ **Cancer**

Grahame M. Morris:

[\[226738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to support the National Cancer Peer Review programme in 2015; and how much funding his Department plans to provide to that programme in 2015-16.

Jane Ellison:

The Chief Executive of NHS England has confirmed that the National Peer Review Programme for Cancer will continue. NHS England is in the process allocating funding for all of its programme funded activity. The funding for the National Peer Review Programme has now been confirmed and the level of funding will enable the programme to continue.

Mike Weatherley:

[\[226817\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he has taken to increase public awareness of symptoms of cancer.

Jane Ellison:

Since early 2011 the Department of Health (Public Health England from 1 April 2013) has been running Be Clear on Cancer campaigns. These are designed to:

- raise the public's awareness of specific cancer symptoms;
- encourage people with those symptoms to go to the doctor; and
- diagnose cancer at an earlier stage, and therefore make it more treatable, and thereby improve cancer survival rates.

Campaigns that have run nationally include bowel, lung, kidney and bladder (under the common symptom of "blood in pee"), oesophago-gastric, and breast cancer in older women.

Public Health England works closely with the Department and NHS England to ensure that health care professionals are also targeted with campaign information to encourage earlier diagnoses and referrals.

■ Cancer: Drugs**Andrew Percy:**[\[227374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme in ensuring the availability of the most effective treatments for cancer patients.

George Freeman:

The 2014 Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme (PPRS) helps patients to have access to effective medicines that their doctors think are right for them, while keeping the branded health service medicines bill within affordable limits. Drugs provided under the Cancer Drugs Fund are included with the PPRS Payment Mechanism.

The PPRS helps the National Health Service to improve patient access to innovative medicines commensurate with the outcomes they offer patients. Sales of new products are exempt from payments though still included in the overall limit on growth and the payments made by industry as a whole. This recognises and rewards innovation. There are also a number of agreed measures in the Scheme to improve access to National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recommended medicines in England, including the effective use of system levers by NHS England.

Andrew Percy:[\[227375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what account was taken of the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme during his Department's recent review of the financial sustainability of the Cancer Drugs Fund.

George Freeman:

When NHS England carried out their recent review of drugs included in the Cancer Drugs Fund (CDF) they were aware of the estimates of Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme (PPRS) Payments taken into account in setting the NHS England budget for 2014-15 and 2015-16. The principles and procedures followed by NHS England in operating the CDF are set out in their Standard Operating Procedures for the Fund at:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/cdf/>

Drugs provided by the CDF are included within the PPRS cap.

The allocations to NHS England for 2014-15 and 2015-16 were set in advance of each relevant financial year, taking into account the anticipated PPRS Payments in each year, as set out on the Government's website at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/385782/2014_pprs_revised_forecasts_profile_payment_percentages.pdf

■ Carers: Pensions

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck: [\[226615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect on the affordability of care of the requirement for people with carers to pay pension contributions for those carers.

Norman Lamb:

Direct Payments are defined as payments in lieu of a service that would normally be provided, so if someone needs care and employs a care worker or personal assistant to do so, the direct payment should cover all the costs involved, including any mandatory pension payments.

The Care Act statutory guidance sets out clearly that when an individual chooses to employ staff, they should be made aware of their legal responsibilities as an employer, which includes issues such as the statutory pension rights of the employee.

Automatic enrolment into workplace pensions is being rolled out to small and micro employers over the next three years. It places a statutory duty on employers to automatically enrol eligible workers into a workplace pension and make at least a minimum contribution. Eligible workers are those who are aged at least 22 and under state pension age and have earnings over £10,000 per year (£192 per week). Workers earning over £5,772 per year (£112 per week) have the right to opt in to a workplace pension and receive an employer contribution.

Minimum employer contributions are currently 1% on a band of earnings between £5,772 and £41,865. An individual earning £193 per week would need to be automatically enrolled and the minimum employer contribution would be £0.81 per week.

■ Cholesterol

Andrew Percy: [\[227371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of when the ambition in his Department's Cardiovascular Disease Outcomes Strategy, published in March 2013, to bring the total diagnoses of familial hypercholesterolaemia to 50 per cent, will be met.

Andrew Percy: [\[227372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when his Department plans to publish an update on its progress on the ambitions and actions in its Cardiovascular Disease Outcomes Strategy, published in March 2013.

Jane Ellison:

It is for NHS England, working with Public Health England (PHE) and other stakeholders, to implement the actions set out in the Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Outcomes Strategy.

NHS England hosts a CVD outcomes collaborative which brings together the relevant National Clinical Directors, the main relevant national charities, NHS Improving Quality, the National CVD Intelligence Network, PHE and the Department. This collaborative continues to coordinate delivery of the work which was initiated in the CVD Outcomes Strategy. NHS England advises it has no current plans to publish a formal update on progress in implementing the strategy.

The strategy recommended that the National Clinical Director for Heart Disease should work with stakeholders to develop and spread good practice in relation to familial hypercholesterolemia (FH) and a number of strategic clinical networks are now prioritising FH detection. In addition, NHS England is considering with stakeholders how a FH database could be established. However, increasing FH diagnosis rates to 50% was not a recommendation in the strategy.

■ Clinical Commissioning Groups**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[226624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department and NHS England are taking to support clinical commissioning groups in the gathering of data to allow them to source evidence for the commissioning needs of smaller population groups.

Jane Ellison:

As set out in the NHS Outcomes Framework 2015/16, the Department plans to identify key health inequalities measures, based on NHS Outcomes Framework indicators, following the Department's stakeholder engagement exercise over the summer of 2015. These will be integral to assessing NHS England's progress using the NHS Outcomes Framework. It will be for NHS England to decide how this will be reflected in their Clinical Commissioning Group Outcomes Indicator Set.

A copy of the NHS Outcomes Framework 2015/16 is attached.

Attachments:

1. NHS Outcomes Framework 2015/16 [NHS_Outcomes_Framework.pdf]

■ General Practitioners

Mike Weatherley: [\[226816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will bring forward proposals to give GPs greater access to hospital diagnostic tests and specialist tests.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

Arrangements are already in place locally to enable general practitioners to have direct access to appropriate tests to support the primary investigation of disease in all areas of diagnostic tests.

A significant proportion of the work undertaken by pathology laboratories and imaging services is associated with direct access from primary care.

Dan Jarvis: [\[227109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of general practitioners in practice in England in each year since May 2010.

Dan Jarvis: [\[227112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many GPs were forecast to be required in England and Wales in each year since May 2010.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

Health Education England (HEE) set out in its Workforce Plan for England 2015-16 its estimate of general practitioner (GP) demand from 2014 to 2020. This can be found on page 27 of the attached document. We have committed to make available 5,000 more GPs by 2020.

HEE utilised evidence from the Centre for Workforce Intelligence in-depth review of the GP workforce in England published 2014 - the link to which is provided on page 29 of the above document. This work sets out estimates of workforce supply and expected patient demand for GP services from 2011 to 2030 in a variety of scenarios, recognising the complexity of factors influencing demand and supply and the intrinsic uncertainty of the future.

Forecast figures for Wales are a matter for the Department of Health and Social Services in Wales.

The annual National Health Service General and Personal Medical Services workforce census, published by the Health and Social Care Information Centre, shows the numbers of GPs working in the NHS in England at 30 September each year, which is a snap shot taken at the mid-point of the financial year.

The total numbers of full-time equivalent (FTE) GPs including registrars and retainers working in the NHS in England for 2010 to 2013 are shown in the

following table. The data for 30 September 2014 will be published on 25 March 2015.

Total GPs including registrars and retainers in practice between 2010 and 2013 England as at 30 September - FTE

	2010	2011	2012	2013
GPs total	35,243	35,319	35,871	36,294

Source: General practice workforce census

Note: From 2006 onwards GP FTE has been collected and therefore may not be fully comparable with previous years

Attachments:

1. Workforce Plan for England 2015–16 [HEE Investing in people.pdf]

Luciana Berger: [\[227308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether any of the pilots under the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund are offering patients GP appointments within 48 hours.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

General practitioner (GP) practices that have pilot schemes under the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund offer a range of urgent and routine appointments.

In September 2014, a second wave of £100 million was announced for further pilots under the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund. These pilots have the minimum requirement that they must be open from 8am to 8pm on weekdays (or equivalent) and offer improved access at weekends. Other ways of improving access to GP services under these pilots include extended access and more flexible ways to access GP appointments.

■ **General Practitioners: Working Hours**

Mike Weatherley: [\[226736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent steps his Department has taken to increase weekend and late night access to GP services.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Government is committed to improving access to general practitioner (GP) services.

The Prime Minister's £50 million Challenge Fund is currently improving GP services for millions of patients across England. This includes pilot sites offering evening and weekend appointments, as well as better use of technology.

Last September the Prime Minister announced £100 million to fund a second wave of pilots in 2015/16 and NHS England invited practices to bid for funding. Successful bids are expected to be announced shortly.

■ Genito-urinary Medicine

Dr Sarah Wollaston: [\[226712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what analysis his Department has made of the adequacy of the provision of workforce training within service specifications for sexual health services.

Jane Ellison:

The content and standards of professional healthcare training is the responsibility of the professional regulators, which have the general function of promoting high standards of education to ensure that healthcare professionals are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for professional practice. The Department published a model service specification for integrated sexual health services in May 2013:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210726/Service_Specification_with_covering_note.pdf

Provision of workforce training and education features prominently in this document.

■ Health Services: Devon

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [\[227361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to provide financial support to NHS organisations in Devon.

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [\[227362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions he has had with NHS England on support for NHS organisations in Devon.

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [\[227363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the financial situation of NHS organisations in Devon.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

This is a matter for the National Health Service.

Devon is one of eleven financially challenged health economies to be provided with support by NHS England, Monitor and the NHS Trust Development Authority under the Intensive Planning Support Programme. The

report of this work, along with planning guidance, was published in December 2014.

System-wide solutions to address the financial problems within the local health economy are currently being worked up under the Local NHS Futures Programme.

We hold meetings with NHS England on a regular basis to discuss a wide range of issues, including NHS services in the South West of England.

■ Health Services: Greater Manchester

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what post-devolution arrangements his Department plans to put in place to manage the funding of cross-border patients accessing NHS services in Greater Manchester.

Norman Lamb:

National Health Service bodies in devolved parts of the United Kingdom will remain able, as now, to commission secondary and specialised services from NHS providers in Greater Manchester.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what post-devolution arrangements his Department plans to put in place to manage the funding of Greater Manchester patients accessing NHS services outside Greater Manchester.

Norman Lamb:

Fundamental national policies, including Choice, will continue to apply to Greater Manchester.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how NHS services of national and regional speciality located within Greater Manchester will sit in the planning, funding and scrutiny arrangements under the Government's proposed devolution deal.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what arrangements for public scrutiny of the NHS in Greater Manchester will be put in place post-devolution.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the arrangements for patient involvement in the scrutiny of the NHS in Greater Manchester will be post-devolution.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how hospital deficits will be managed under the Greater Manchester devolution deal.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the functions of NHS England will be in Greater Manchester under the Government's devolution proposal.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the Greater Manchester Strategic Health and Social Care Partnership Board will be directly accountable to the proposed Greater Manchester Interim and Elected Mayor under the Manchester NHS devolution plan.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what residual responsibilities (a) he and (b) Parliament will have under the Manchester NHS devolution plan.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what mechanisms his Department plans to put in place to ensure that NHS finances can be effectively managed in Greater Manchester following devolution in the event of a year-end deficit.

Norman Lamb:

NHS England and clinical commissioning groups, as statutory National Health Service organisations, will remain accountable for meeting the full range of their statutory duties, including their duties as to the management of their financial resources.

NHS bodies will remain liable for the exercise of the functions given to them in legislation. Existing lines of accountability for those bodies will also remain, as will the responsibilities the Secretary of State has in relation to the health service.

The fundamental national policies, inspection regimes, guidance and regulations will continue to apply to Greater Manchester.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many (a) foundation trusts and (b) other hospital trusts in Greater Manchester were in financial deficit in the latest period for which figures are available; and what the extent of each such deficit was.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

There are 13 providers (foundation trusts and other hospital trusts) in the Greater Manchester area, of which seven have reported a financial deficit. The 2013-14 year end and the current year to date financial position of the providers are shown in the following table.

PROVIDER	2013-14 £000s	2014-15 MONTH 8		
		YEAR TO DATE (YTD) £000s	2014-15 MONTH 9 YTD £000s	2014-15 MONTH 10 YTD £000s
Manchester Mental Health and Social Care NHS Trust	29	-1,367		
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	53	-2,100		
Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust	5,835			-7,947
Stockport NHS Foundation Trust	954			-1,517
Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	-3,618			-15,563
University Hospitals of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust	-146	-2,497		
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust	3,249		-1,365	

Source:

2013-14 as per final audited accounts

2014-15 trusts as per the latest Board Report from the NHS Trust Development Authority

2014-15 foundation trusts as per the latest Board Report for the individual foundation trusts

Note:

The 2013-14 figures have been confirmed against Monitor's foundation trust consolidated schedules returns based on audited accounts. The surplus/deficits are before impairments/reversal and transfer by absorption. Figures are consolidated where applicable (i.e. for Salford, Stockport and South Manchester, these figures include their charities).

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the cost of backlog maintenance and repairs outstanding on the NHS estate to be transferred to the Greater Manchester local authorities under the Government's devolution proposal.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the total asset value is of the NHS estate to be transferred to the Greater Manchester local authorities under the Government's devolution proposal.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the stock condition is of the NHS estate to be transferred to the Greater Manchester local authorities under the Government's devolution proposal.

Norman Lamb:

No decision has been made regarding the transfers of estate to local authorities within Greater Manchester. This will form part of the discussions to take place between the relevant local and national bodies in the year running up to April 2016.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the functions of Public Health England will be in Greater Manchester under the Government's devolution proposal.

Norman Lamb:

Public Health England will remain liable for the exercise of the functions given to it in legislation. Existing lines of accountability will also remain, as will the responsibilities the Secretary of State has in relation to the health service.

■ In Vitro Fertilisation

Luciana Berger: [\[227135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 25 February 2015 to Question 224828, what assessment he has made of the factors contributing to the reduction in NHS-funded IVF cycles from 2013 to 2014.

Jane Ellison:

NHS England has made no assessment of the factors contributing to the difference between 22,340 National Health Service-funded cycles of in vitro fertilisation in 2013 and 22,238 cycles in 2014, a reduction of less than 0.5%.

■ **Laryngeal Cancer****David Simpson:**[\[226741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what support his Department provides to patients suffering from laryngeal cancer; and how many people in England and Wales were diagnosed with laryngeal cancer in 2014.

Jane Ellison:

In January 2015 NHS England announced a new independent Cancer Taskforce to develop a five-year action plan for cancer .

The Taskforce has been set up to produce a new cross-system 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. It has been set up in partnership with the cancer community and other health system leaders, and is chaired by the Chief Executive of Cancer Research UK, Dr Harpal Kumar.

The plan is for the new strategy to set a clear direction covering the whole cancer pathway from prevention to end of life care. The taskforce will produce a statement of intent shortly, with the new strategy expected to be published in the summer.

Data for the number of people diagnosed with laryngeal cancer in 2014 is not available.

The number of newly diagnosed cases of 'malignant neoplasm of larynx' for 2012, by sex, in England, is shown in the following table.

ICD-10 CODE	SITE DESCRIPTION	ALL AGES
C32	Malignant neoplasm of the larynx	Male 1,521 Female 355

Source: Office for National Statistics, cancer registrations England

Note: 2012 is the latest year currently available for England

The treatment of laryngeal cancer in Wales is a matter for the Welsh Government.

■ Medical Treatments

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NICE technology appraisals were carried out in respect of (a) infectious disease, (b) cancers and tumours, (c) disorders of the blood, (d) endocrine, nutritional and metabolic problems, (e) mental health disorders, (f) neurological, (g) cardiovascular disease, (h) musculoskeletal disorders and (i) other conditions in each of the last five years.

George Freeman:

The number of National Institute for Health and Care Excellence technology appraisals undertaken in respect of each disease category specified, for the last six financial years is shown in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. NICE technology appraisals per disease category [technology appraisals table.docx]

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NICE technology appraisals have led to (a) positive, (b) negative and (c) other recommendations in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

George Freeman:

A breakdown of National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) technology appraisal decisions by type of recommendation in each of the last six financial years is shown in the table. NICE classifies its technology appraisal decisions using four categories:

1. Recommended – recommended in line with the marketing authorisation or National Health Service clinical practice
1. Optimised - recommended for a smaller subset of patients than stated in the marketing authorisation
1. Only in research - recommended for use only in the context of a research study, for example a clinical trial
1. Not recommended

YEAR	RECOMMENDED	OPTIMISED	ONLY IN RESEARCH	NOT RECOMMENDED
2014/15 (to 10 March)	23	3	0	3
2013/14	15	8	1	8
2012/13	17	3	0	9
2011/12	20	4	1	15

YEAR	RECOMMENDED	OPTIMISED	ONLY IN RESEARCH	NOT RECOMMENDED
2010/11	27	17	2	9
2009/10	13	2	0	7

Source: NICE

■ Mental Capacity

Ann Coffey: [\[227169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Supreme Court judgment of 19 March 2014 in the case of P v Cheshire West and Chester Council and another, how many requests for a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Assessment under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 there have been in each local authority area in (a) 2013, (b) 2014 and (c) 2015 to date.

Norman Lamb:

The Health and Social Care Information Centre collects official statistics on the number of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards applications.

The figures can be found:

(a) For 2012/13 at:

<http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB11379>

(b) For 2013/14 at:

<http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB14825>

(c) For 2014/15 to date at:

Quarter One

<http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB15475>

Quarter Two

<http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB15856>

Quarter Three

<http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB16793>

Ann Coffey: [\[227171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the costs to each clinical commissioning group of GPs and ambulance staff of attending after deaths in care homes of people subject to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Assessments.

Norman Lamb:

The Department does not hold information as to the costs to clinical commissioning groups of general practitioners and ambulance staff attending after deaths in care homes of people subject to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards authorisations.

■ Mental Health Services**Luciana Berger:**[\[226862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the funding for new talking therapies targets will be held and distributed by NHS England; and what mechanisms are in place to assist mental health trusts to access that funding.

Norman Lamb:

The £10 million fund available in 2015/16 will be used to reduce the variation in Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) performance across the National Health Service in England. It will focus on waiting list validation and providing additional resource to increase assessment and therapy capacity.

The mechanism for the distribution of funding is yet to be determined. It will be the responsibility of clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to make the funding available to mental health trusts and other NHS commissioned IAPT providers from the third sector. There are a number of milestones:

- May 2015 - Identify all CCGs with long waits and offer funds, facilitation and guidance to validate waiting lists;
- July 2015 - Identify core issues that have given rise to waiting list growth, for example capacity, productivity or both and agree plans to rectify and allocate funds to make progress towards sustainable solutions; and
- To March 2016 - Monitor and support implementation.

■ Neurology: Sign Language**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[226616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress his Department has made on the establishment of a national neurological service for the Deaf British Sign Language Community.

Norman Lamb:

The Department is aware of recent work undertaken by University College London's Deafness Cognition and Language (DCAL) research centre to develop a model for a national neurological service for the deaf. DCAL has proposed that this service would be appropriate for national commissioning by NHS England. The proposed model has been shared with NHS England,

which will provide further information to support consideration of DCAL's proposal by the Prescribed Specialised Services Advisory Group (PSSAG). Ministers are advised by PSSAG on the question of which services for rare and very rare conditions should be commissioned nationally by NHS England.

Since 1 April 2013, NHS England has been responsible for commissioning specialised neurological services at a national level. NHS England's neurosciences service specification sets out what providers must have in place to offer specialised neurological care for all patients who need it, including deaf patients. The specification can be found at the follow link:

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■ NHS Trust Development Authority

Debbie Abrahams: [\[226879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the (a) total revenue budget and (b) budget for mergers and acquisitions for the NHS Trust Development Authority was in (i) 2011-12, (ii) 2012-13, (iii) 2013-14 and (iv) 2014-15; and what estimate he has made of the equivalent figures for 2015-16.

Jane Ellison:

The NHS Trust Development Authority was formed in 2013. The financial information requested for 2013-14 can be found in the Authority's Annual Report and Accounts for that financial year which is attached. The Authority's Annual Report and Accounts for 2014-15 will be published following the end of the financial year, and the Authority's budget for 2015-16 is yet to be finalised.

Attachments:

1. NHS TDA annual report and accounts for 2013-14 [NHS TDA Annual Reports and Accounts 2013-14.pdf]

■ NHS: Ancillary Staff

Luciana Berger: [\[227309\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many (a) cleaners and (b) hospital porters were employed in the NHS in each of the last five years.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The Department collects data from National Health Service organisations on the number of staff that are employed to undertake cleaning work. The number of staff, measured using whole time equivalents, will include both staff employed directly by the organisation and contracted out staff. The information for the last five years is provided in the table.

PERIOD	NUMBER OF CLEANING STAFF (WHOLE TIME EQUIVALENTS)
2013-14	38,653
2012-13	38,867
2011-12	41,046
2010-11	39,167
2009-10	38,814

Information on the number of hospital porters cannot be provided because this data is not currently collected centrally. However, the Department will begin the collection of this information starting with the 2014-15 period, which will be published in October 2015.

The information provided in the table has been supplied by the NHS and has not been amended centrally. The accuracy and completeness of the information is the responsibility of the provider organisation.

■ Pain

Richard Benyon: [\[226926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps are being taken to investigate cases of orthostatic intolerance and Chronic Regional Pain Syndrome.

Norman Lamb:

In 2010, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published the guidance *Transient loss of consciousness ('blackouts') management in adults*. Orthostatic intolerance is characterised by the development of symptoms of dizziness, nausea and fainting when standing up, which are only resolved by lying down. The investigation of such symptoms is included in the NICE guidance, which can be found at the following link:

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg109/resources/guidance-transient-loss-of-consciousness-blackouts-management-in-adults-and-young-people-pdf

To support clinicians in the diagnosis, treatment, care and support of patients with chronic/complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) has produced a best practice guideline on the condition, which was produced with a range of collaborators, including the British Pain Society. In addition, in 2013 NICE produced a guideline on the

pharmacological management of neuropathic pain, including for CRPS. Both the RCP and the NICE guidance can be found at the following links:

www.rcplondon.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/complex-regional-pain-full-guideline.pdf

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg173/resources/guidance-neuropathic-pain-pharmacological-management-pdf

■ Palliative Care

Mike Weatherley: [\[226731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to increase the availability of hospice and end of life care.

Norman Lamb:

NHS England published its Actions for End of Life Care 2014-16 in October 2014 which sets out plans to improve the commissioning and provision of end of life care services nationally, including services commissioned from hospices. This work includes:

- actions to help individuals to be empowered, informed and engaged in decisions about their care;
- actions to support health and care professionals in providing end of life care, including fostering closer partnership working; and
- actions to support local commissioners to commission high quality, personalised end of life care services.

It is for local commissioners to ensure the right services, including end of life care services, are commissioned to meet the needs of their local populations.

■ Policy

Paul Flynn: [\[226776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what policies contained in the 2010 Coalition Agreement and falling under his Department's responsibilities have not yet been implemented; and what the reasons are for each such policy's non-implementation.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

I refer the hon. Member to Departmental Business Plans which record all commitments, timescales for completion and progress against them. The Business Plans are fully transparent and are available at:

www.transparency.number10.gov.uk

■ Prescription Drugs

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what effect purdah will have on decision-taking on medicines currently under review by NICE; what assessment his Department has made of the potential effects of this on patient access to treatments; and if he will make a statement.

George Freeman:

Throughout the pre-election period, as in previous years, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) will continue the substantive work on the development of its guidance, including technology appraisals, such as evidence gathering and committee meetings, but will postpone publication of draft or final guidance until after the election. In the absence of NICE guidance on the use of a drug, commissioners should continue to make decisions on the availability of treatments based on an assessment of the available evidence. An absence of NICE guidance on a treatment alone is not an acceptable reason not to fund a treatment.

■ Radiotherapy

Grahame M. Morris: [\[226739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions he has had with his European counterparts on the procurement of proton therapy machines.

Jane Ellison:

The procurement of proton beam therapy machines has been conducted jointly between The Christie NHS Foundation Trust and University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, with Ministerial oversight and final approval. This has been done in accordance with European Union procurement law. Throughout the procurement, reference has been made to European developments as a comparator in planning the new service. There have been no discussions between the Secretary of State for Health and his European counterparts.

■ Social Services: Lancashire

Graham Jones: [\[226950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much funding has been (a) received for and (b) spent on adult social care services provided by each district authority in Lancashire.

Graham Jones: [\[227107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people were in receipt of adult social care services in each district authority in Lancashire in the latest period for which figures are available.

Norman Lamb:

The Health and Social Care Information Centre does not hold the data requested at district authority level. Not all councils have adult social care responsibilities. Councils with adult social care responsibilities (CASSRs) in Lancashire are: Lancashire county council, Blackpool unitary authority and Blackburn with Darwen unitary authority. Lancashire County Council is responsible for social care in the district authorities (Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancashire, Wyre).

Such information as is available is the number of adults in receipt of council-funded social services from the three councils with adult social care responsibility during the period 2013-14.

The information in Table 1 below is derived from the Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care (RAP) returns, table P1. RAP returns are collected annually from Councils with Adult Social Services Responsibilities (CASSRs) and refer to the reporting year 1 April to 31 March. All data are final and rounded to the nearest 5.

Table 1: Number of clients receiving services in Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen provided or commissioned by the CASSR during the period 2013-14

Total

LANCASHIRE	28,350
Blackpool (Unitary authority)	4,845
Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary authority)	2,825

Source: RAP P1

Note:

Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.

Funding allocations to authorities with social services responsibilities will consider the fact that they are responsible for adult social care.

Adult social care is one of the services supported through the Local Government Finance Settlement. Funding from the Local Government Finance Settlement is unhypothecated i.e. local authorities are able to use it for any service. For this reason it is not possible to say how much funding has been provided for any particular service, including adult social care. It is up to local authorities to prioritise their budgets based on the needs and priorities of local people in their area.

Local authorities do report expenditure on adult social care. The Latest expenditure data is from the 2013/14 financial year. Table 2 below shows expenditure in Lancashire:

Table 2

COUNCILS WITH ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES RESPONSIBILITIES (CASSRs) IN LANCASHIRE	SOCIAL CARE EXPENDITURE (2013/14 PRICES, £ MILLION)
Lancashire	357.67
Blackpool (Unitary authority)	46.27
Blackburn with Darwen (Unitary authority)	41.94

■ Strategic Clinical Networks

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[226577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect the work of strategic clinical networks has had on (a) cardiovascular disease outcomes and (b) the quality of anticoagulation services.

Jane Ellison:

Strategic clinical networks (SCNs) across the country are working with their local health communities to improve the quality of cardiovascular disease services and many produce an annual report which provides information on their activities and the impact they have made.

Examples of the action some SCNs have taken to improve anticoagulation services include:

- The London Cardiovascular SCN has been mapping the various anti-coagulation models that exist across the different settings with a view to improving commissioning of these services;
- Wessex SCN has been working collaboratively with the academic health science network to understand variation in anticoagulation practice in Wessex so that this can be addressed; and
- The South East Coast SCN has collaborated with the academic health science network to develop an enhancing quality pathway for anticoagulation of atrial fibrillation (AF) in secondary care and to explore collaborative working with the pharma sector in promoting good AF management and anticoagulation in primary care.

■ University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust

Tessa Munt: [\[227124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 6 March 2015 to Question 225987, which refers to there being a contract for stereotactic radiosurgery and stereotactic radiotherapy services (SRS) with University Hospital Bristol, for what reasons that hospital is listed as non-contracted and non-commissioned to deliver SRS in the NHS England document *Stereotactic radiosurgery and radiotherapy services needs assessment and service review*, published in November 2014.

Tessa Munt: [\[227144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 6 March 2015 to Question 225987, for what reasons the Answer states that a contract for University Hospital Bristol to deliver stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS) was transferred to NHS England in April 2013 when that hospital first acquired a gamma knife to deliver SRS in October 2013.

Jane Ellison:

All existing contracts for stereotactic radiosurgery and stereotactic radiotherapy services, including that with University Hospital Bristol, were transferred to NHS England on 1 April 2013. Gamma Knife treatments started at University Hospital Bristol in October 2013, as there was an identified need for this provider to replace its existing equipment.

NHS England intends to update the information contained within the *Stereotactic Radiosurgery and Radiotherapy Services - needs assessment and service review* to reflect the 2014-15 contract position as part of the work to review the results of the consultation on the future provision of stereotactic radiosurgery services.

HOME OFFICE

■ Asylum

Richard Burden: [\[226793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the relative effectiveness of (a) the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme and (b) comparable schemes being implemented by other EU member states.

Richard Burden: [\[226794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have (a) applied and (b) successfully resettled in the UK under the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (i) in total and (ii) in each month since September 2014.

James Brokenshire:

[Holding answer 12 March 2015]: The Government is deeply concerned about the crisis in Syria, the suffering and hardship it is causing for millions of displaced Syrians in the region, and the strain it is placing on their host countries. That is why we launched the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation (VPR) scheme, offering protection in the UK to some of the most vulnerable refugees, who cannot be supported effectively in the region. The scheme is based on need rather than fulfilling a quota, but we have said that we expect it to help several hundred people over three years, and we remain on track to deliver that commitment. We therefore have no current plans to change the way the scheme operates. However, we continue to monitor the situation in Syria and the surrounding region and work closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to identify the most vulnerable people displaced by the conflict to ensure that the scheme remains responsive to need.

However given the scale of the crisis, we believe the most effective way to ensure the UK's help has the greatest impact for displaced people and their host countries is through substantial humanitarian aid and actively seeking an end to the conflict so that refugees can return to their homes and livelihoods safely. We have committed £800 million in response to the crisis, making us the second largest bilateral donor in the world, and UK funding is helping to support hundreds of thousands of displaced people in the region, providing food, healthcare and essential supplies. Compared with aid, resettlement can only ever help a minority of those in need.

The VPR scheme does not form part of the UN quota but runs in parallel with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees' (UNHCR) own Syria Humanitarian Admission Programme. The Government has been clear that this is a crisis of international proportions and needs a fitting response from the international community.

EU member states have responded to the Syrian crisis in different ways and it is for each state to decide how they help those displaced by the crisis. The UNHCR is best placed to comment on the policies of other countries regarding Syrian refugees.

■ Asylum: Syria**Dr William McCrea:**[\[227083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people (a) applied and (b) successfully resettled in Northern Ireland under the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme in 2013 and 2014.

James Brokenshire:

The Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme was launched in January 2014 to help particularly vulnerable Syrians who are displaced in the regions

neighbouring Syria, for whom resettlement to the UK is the only option. In particular, the programme prioritises survivors of torture and violence, women and children at risk and those in need of medical care. We are working closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the region to identify the exceptional cases whose needs are so profound that they need to be resettled to a country like the UK.

Individuals do not apply but are referred by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Northern Ireland is not currently participating in the scheme.

143 people were relocated to the UK under the Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme between the first group of arrivals on 25 March 2014 and the end of December 2014. This is the latest publicly available figure, as numbers are released as part of the Home Office official statistics each quarter.

■ Child Sexual Abuse Independent Panel Inquiry

Diana Johnson:

[\[226478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much funding has been provided to the independent panel inquiry into child sexual abuse.

Lynne Featherstone:

[Holding answer 10 March 2015]: The Independent Panel Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse is of the highest priority for the Home Secretary. Funding has been provided to meet initial costs and work is currently underway to pursue a cost-sharing arrangement across Government. At her pre-appointment confirmation hearing before the Home Affairs Select Committee on 11 February, Justice Goddard committed to publish the costs of the Inquiry incurred so far before Parliament is dissolved at the end of March.

■ Drugs: Misuse

Dan Jarvis:

[\[226861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made on legislative proposals to ban the sale of legal highs.

Lynne Featherstone:

[Holding answer 12 March 2015]: The Government is developing proposals for a general ban on the supply of new psychoactive substances across the UK, with a view to introducing legislation at the earliest opportunity, notwithstanding the lack of appropriate legislative vehicle in this Parliament.

■ Offenders: Deportation

Dr William McCrea: [\[227098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many foreign criminals remain in the UK after being released from prison in the latest period for which figures are available; and how many were deported.

James Brokenshire:

The information requested is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-enforcement-data-february-2015>

■ Police

Jack Dromey: [\[226525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many police officers in each force area were assigned to response in each of the last five years.

Mike Penning:

[Holding answer 10 March 2015]: The table provided shows the number and proportion of full-time equivalent police officers within the response function for each police force area in England and Wales, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2014.

The table also includes the number of full-time equivalent police officers within the neighbourhoods function as some forces are unable to make a clear distinction between these two functions.

Attachments:

1. Number & proportion full-time equivalent staff [PQ226525 _table.xlsx]

Andrew Jones: [\[227469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many full-time equivalent neighbourhood police officers there were in March 2010.

Mike Penning:

There were 15,670 full-time equivalent police officers within the neighbourhoods function as at 31 March 2010, which represents 10.9% of the total number of police officers in England and Wales.

■ Police: Emergency Calls

Seema Malhotra: [\[226908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) 999 calls and (b) 999 calls to report incidents of domestic violence were made to the police in each of the last five years.

Mike Penning:

The table provided contains the available data on the number of 999 calls received by police forces in England and Wales from 2009/10 to 2013/14.

NUMBER OF 999 CALLS RECEIVED BY POLICE FORCES IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 2009/10 TO 2013/14 ¹,
²

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Number of 999 calls received	8,789,070	9,166,679	9,033,120	8,407,084	7,836,530

1. Figures on 999 calls received by each police force area are published in the Value for Money Profiles produced by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (<http://www.hmic.gov.uk/programmes/value-for-money/value-for-money-profiles>).

2. The figure for 2009/10 excludes West Midlands, the figure for 2011/12 excludes Dyfed-Powys and the figure for 2013/14 excludes Greater Manchester. These forces were unable to supply data at time of submission.

The Home Office does not collect information on the reasons for these 999 calls.

■ **Police: Pensions**

Martin Horwood:

[\[227011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what reasons there are for the time taken to give serving police officers information about the New Police Pensions Scheme for which the regulations were laid before Parliament on 5 March 2015 and will take effect on 1 April 2015.

Martin Horwood:

[\[227071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that police officers have sufficient time to consult financial advisers about the effects of the New Police Pensions Scheme before that scheme takes effect on 1 April.

Mike Penning:

Information about the main elements of the reform has been in the public domain for some time. This includes: the Reform Design Framework which was published on the Home Office website on 3 September 2012; an online calculator which allows officers to determine what benefits they might receive under the new arrangements, published on 3 September 2012; and further detailed questions and answers which were published on 19 November 2013.

The Police Pensions Regulations 2015 were laid after extensive consultation with partners including police officers' representatives. Members' guidance was published on Friday 6 March, available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-police-pensions-scheme-2015-members-guide>.

This provides police officers with all the information they need to seek the necessary independent financial advice on the scheme.

■ Police: Stun Guns

Mark Hendrick: [\[227464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on how many occasions tasers were used by the police in (a) Preston, (b) Lancashire and (c) the North West in 2014.

Mike Penning:

The Home Office routinely publish the Police Use of Taser Statistics in England and Wales. The Police Use of Taser Statistics in England and Wales for July to December 2014 have not yet been published. The Police Use of Taser Statistics for January to June 2014 are published on Gov.uk.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-use-of-taser-statistics-england-and-wales-january-to-june-2014-data-tables>

The statistics show that Taser was used (either drawn, red-dot, aimed, arced, drive-stun, angle drive-stun, or fired) by the police 84 times in Lancashire between January and June 2014. Police forces in the North West, including Merseyside, Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester and Lancashire, used Taser on 756 occasions in this period. The Home Office cannot provide detailed figures on the number of occasions Taser was used in Preston. Data on location is incomplete. The cost to retrieve, validate and quality assure this data would be disproportionate.

The Home Secretary has already set out, in October 2014, that there is a need to bring much greater transparency and accountability to how this sensitive tactic is used, and has asked Chief Constable David Shaw to conduct an in-depth review of the publication of Taser data and other use of force.

■ Religious Buildings: Security

Greg Mulholland: [\[226670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to fund increased security costs for synagogues and mosques.

James Brokenshire:

The police have increased their operational response to possible threats to the British Jews and Muslims following recent attacks in Europe, and arrangements to ensure the safety and security of citizens from all backgrounds remain under regular review.

Together with the police we are carefully considering what more can and should be done to protect people of different faiths and their institutions in the current climate.

■ Road Traffic Offences

Andrew Stephenson: [\[227253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many fixed penalty notices were issued for neglect of traffic direction in the last 12 months.

Mike Penning:

The Home Office collects data on the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued for various motoring offences on a calendar year basis. The latest published figures relate to 2012.

In 2012 there were 97,134 FPNs issued for 'neglect of traffic signs and directions, and of pedestrian rights', in England and Wales.

■ Special Demonstration Squad

Steve Rotheram: [\[226978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 10 March 2015 to Question 226443, on what date the review commissioned by the Permanent Secretary into the extent of her Department's knowledge of the Special Demonstration Squad from 1968 to 2008 will be published.

Mike Penning:

Stephen Taylor's independent review into the Home Office's knowledge of the Special Demonstration Squad was published on 12 March 2015. A copy has been made available on Gov.uk and placed in the House Library.

■ Temporary Employment

Mr David Hanson: [\[226758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many agency staff are employed in (a) her Department, (b) the Passport Office, (c) UK Visas Immigration and (d) the Border Force.

Mr David Hanson: [\[226759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many full-time equivalent staff there are in (a) her Department, (b) the Passport Office, (c) the Border Force and (d) UK Visas and Immigration; and what the projected staffing levels are for each such body for (i) March 2015, (ii) November 2015, (iii) March 2016 and (iv) November 2016.

James Brokenshire:

The number of agency workers employed by (a) the Home Department, (b) Her Majesty's Passport Office, (c) UK Visas and Immigration and (d) Border Force is provided in Table 1.

The number of full-time equivalent staff employed and the projected staffing levels for March 2015 broken down by (a) the Home Department, (b) Her Majesty's Passport Office, (c) UK Visas and Immigration and (d) Border Force is provided in Table 2.

The information provided for staff and agency workers in post is as at 31st January 2015.

The Home Department is currently finalising projected staffing levels for 2015-16 as part of the annual planning round so projected levels beyond March 2015 are not yet available.

Attachments:

1. Agency workers and the full-time employed [PQ 226758 Table 1 and 226759 Table 2.xlsx]

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Advertising

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[226603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what her Department's advertising and communications expenditure was in each month since September 2014; and what that expenditure is forecast to be in March 2015.

Justine Greening:

DFID does not centrally hold information on its monthly advertising and communications expenditure, and to gather the required information would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Developing Countries: Disability

Sir Malcolm Bruce: [\[226920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department plans to take to advocate for disability-disaggregated reporting in forthcoming negotiations on (a) the post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction and (b) the post-2015 development framework.

Justine Greening:

Strengthening disability data at all levels is a key part of DFID's work on disability. DFID is working closely with the UN, including the UN Statistical Division, and others donors on this agenda. The UK has been, and will continue to be, explicit about the need for disaggregated data for all social groups, including disability, in negotiations on the post-2015 framework. Disability data disaggregation is included in the draft of the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Report of the Open Working Group report for the Post-2015 development framework.

■ Policy

Paul Flynn: [\[226778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what policies contained in the 2010 Coalition Agreement and falling under her Department's responsibilities have not yet been implemented; and what the reasons are for each such policy's non-implementation.

Justine Greening:

DFID has met all its international development commitments as set out in the 2010 Coalition programme for government.

JUSTICE

■ Administration of Estates

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[226643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will take steps to enable the executors of a deceased person's estate to access the funds in the executors' account prior to obtaining grant of probate, and avoid the need for the executors to set up a personal bank account.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

We have taken 'executors' account' to refer to the deceased person's account.

A bank may permit an executor to withdraw money from the deceased's bank account before probate is granted. However, the bank in question will be liable to the deceased's estate if it releases funds to the wrong person. The bank may therefore insist on production of proof of the executor's right to administer the deceased's estate, namely the grant of probate, before releasing the money.

The Government considers that this strikes a fair balance between the parties and has no plans to change the law at present. Information about the role of executors and the significance of the grant of probate is available from various sources including <https://www.gov.uk/wills-probate-inheritance/overview> and <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/ihtmanual/ihtm05101.htm>.

■ Advertising

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[226604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what his Department's advertising and communications expenditure was in each month since September 2014; and what that expenditure is forecast to be in March 2015.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The department's communication and external advertising budget is shown in the table below:

MONTH	COMMUNICATION AND ADVERTISING BUDGET
September 2014	£256,711
October 2014	£262,843
November 2014	£317,704
December 2014	£257,978
January 2015	£383,340
February 2015	£380,703
March 2015 (estimated)	£375,523

The communication and advertising budget shown above covers staff costs (84% of the total), and external advertising spend (16% of the total). The external advertising costs have supported campaigns on Restorative Justice and Family Mediation.

■ Antisocial Behaviour

Mr Steve Reed:

[\[226326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of (a) the cost of legal aid and (b) other court costs arising from the introduction of injunctions to prevent nuisance and annoyance.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

Injunctions to prevent nuisance and annoyance are introduced under Part 1 of the Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime Policing Act 2014 (ASBCPA). Part 1 injunctions replace anti-social behaviour injunctions (ASBIs) and anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs).

The Government's intention has always been to minimise the impact on the legal aid fund, whilst enabling legal aid services to be provided where required. Injunctions to prevent nuisance and annoyance under Part 1 of the ASBCPA broadly correspond with ASBIs, with remuneration for applications and appeals being paid at the same civil legal aid rates. The full cost to the legal aid fund cannot be estimated, as it is not possible to predict the number of breach proceedings that may be pursued for the Part 1 injunctions that correspond with ASBIs.

HM Courts and Tribunals Service does not separately record court costs in relation to anti-social behaviour injunctions and therefore cannot estimate the

costs as a result of the introduction of injunctions to prevent nuisance and annoyance under Part 1 of the ASBCPA.

Although HMCTS are unable to provide figures in response to this PQ, Home Office have published an Impact Assessment which includes an assessment of HMCTS costs and can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/197611/ReformingASBtools_and_powers__CBO-CPlanandDispersal130509.pdf

■ Contempt of Court

John Hemming:

[226767]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter sent on 2 February 2015 to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Yardley by HM Courts and Tribunals Service's Performance, Analysis and Reporting Team, what the (a) name of the judge, (b) date, (c) period of committal and (d) court was of each court order issued by courts in England and Wales for contempt of court since November 2014.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

Details of contempt of court hearings are not held on Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) case management systems, and HMCTS do not centrally collate data on contempt of court cases. Contempt of court can cover a wide variety of circumstances and can be committed by a party in a case or by someone unconnected with specific proceedings such as a juror or a member of the press. Those relating to a specific case will be noted on the court log or daily list and the warrant retained on file. Those not relating to specific cases will be recorded on daily lists and warrants stored along with other orders.

In order to identify all cases where a contempt of court occurred in every Crown Court centre, County Court centre, Family Court centre, magistrates' court and the Royal Courts of Justice, HMCTS would have to manually check daily records for each courtroom at every court centre for the 4 months from November 2014 to February 2015. This would incur disproportionate costs.

■ Employment and Support Allowance: West Midlands

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[227357]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 9 March 2015 to Question 907921, what the average clearing time was for employment and support allowance mandatory reconsideration appeals in (a) Coventry and (b) the West Midlands in the latest period for which figures are available.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The First-tier Tribunal (Social Security and Child Support), administered by HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS), hears appeals against the Department for

Work and Pensions' (DWP) decisions on a range of benefits including Employment Support Allowance (ESA). Before HMCTS receives an ESA appeal it will be subject to the mandatory reconsideration process administered by DWP.

In the period 1 April to 31 December 2014 (the latest period for which data has been published) the average waiting time from receipt at the Tribunal to disposal for an appeal against an ESA decision was:

- (a) Coventry - 19 weeks
- (b) West Midlands* - 17 weeks

*West Midlands includes the venues Birmingham, Coventry, Stoke, Hereford Magistrates Court, Wolverhampton, Worcester Magistrates Court and Shrewsbury

■ Employment Tribunals Service

Meg Munn: [\[227352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what information is collected by the Employment Tribunal Service to monitor the protected characteristics of people making claims to the Employment Tribunal Service.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

HM Courts & Tribunals Service collects information on the protected characteristics of those making a claim to the employment tribunals via the Diversity Monitoring section of the application form ET1. The form and questions can be found at <http://hmctsformfinder.justice.gov.uk/courtfinder/forms/et001-eng.pdf>.

Meg Munn: [\[227356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how the level of gross monthly income thresholds was determined for people applying for fee remission in employment tribunals.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The current fee remission scheme was introduced in October 2013, which established a single fee remissions scheme across all courts and tribunals of HMCTS (including the Employment Tribunals but excluding proceedings in the Immigration and Asylum Tribunal) and the UK Supreme Court.

The gross monthly income test, which was introduced following a consultation exercise, is designed to ensure that fee remissions are targeted to those who need them most. Those on qualifying benefits, including Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit Guarantee credit are

automatically entitled to a full fee remission, provided they also meet the disposable capital test.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Mrs Cheryl Gillan: [\[226752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will review his Department's decision not to provide legal aid to petitioners appearing before the High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Bill Select Committee.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

Decisions about legal aid funding in civil cases are a matter for the Director of Legal Aid Casework and his staff at the Legal Aid Agency (LAA), which is responsible for administering the legal aid scheme. Ministers cannot intervene in decisions made about the grant of funding in individual cases.

The LAA refused an application for funding from the High Speed 2 Action Alliance ("HS2AA") in relation to the Bill procedure, as it did not meet the statutory criteria to receive public funding in respect of either means or exceptional funding. A review of the refusal of the application was sought and the LAA has upheld its decision.

■ Judicial Review: Legal Aid Scheme

Mr Andy Slaughter: [\[226919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much the Government spent on legal fees in the case of *R (Ben Hoare Bell and Others) v Lord Chancellor* [2015], case number CO/2770/2014.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

Judicial Review is an important way of challenging decisions by public authorities and will remain so. However, the Government considers that limited legal aid resources should be targeted at those judicial review cases where they are needed most if the legal aid system is to command public confidence and credibility.

We are carefully considering the recent judgment in the case of *R (Ben Hoare Bell and Others) v Lord Chancellor* and our next steps.

As of 11 February 2015, the Ministry of Justice had incurred total legal fees (including fees paid to the litigation team in the Treasury Solicitor's Department and to Counsel) of £47,555.43 (including VAT) in this case.

■ National Tactical Response Group

Sadiq Khan: [\[227072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many full-time equivalent staff worked in the National Tactical Response Group on 1 March (a) 2010, (b) 2011, (c) 2012, (d) 2013, (e) 2014 and (f) 2015.

Andrew Selous:

The central administrative database does not record staffing in sufficient detail to allow the number of staff employed in the National Tactical Response Group to be identified.

■ **Offenders: Compensation**

Stephen Doughty: [\[226943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much his Department and its agencies have paid in ex-gratia payments to people convicted of a criminal offence to settle cases prior to litigation in each of the last four years.

Andrew Selous:

The Ministry of Justice and its Agencies each manage their ex-gratia payments separately and this data is not held centrally. To provide the information would require each prison establishment to manually search databases, which could only be achieved at disproportionate cost.

■ **Policy**

Paul Flynn: [\[226779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what policies contained in the 2010 Coalition Agreement and falling under his Department's responsibilities have not yet been implemented; and what the reasons are for each such policy's non-implementation.

Andrew Selous:

Since 2010 MoJ has delivered major changes by reducing costs in the services we provide and seeking to improve the way we provide them. Our extensive reform programme, covering all areas of the justice system, including back office functions, has reduced net spend by £1.7bn, or 19% in real terms, in 2013-14 compared to 2010-11, and is expected to reduce by a total of over £3bn or 34% in real terms by 2015-16.

The Ministry of Justice has been working hard to deliver its commitments from the 2010 coalition agreement including major programmes such as Transforming Rehabilitation, which is now changing the lives of offenders.

We have met our commitment to revolutionise rehabilitation by establishing a new National Probation Service and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies, which are now up and running, supervising offenders. We have changed the law to ensure that every offender will receive rehabilitative support for at least a year after release from prison. The Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 also introduces a new Rehabilitation Activity Requirement to aid in the rehabilitation of offenders in the community.

We are reforming the prison system to create a fit-for-purpose, modern estate which provides accommodation at a much lower cost to the taxpayer. We are ensuring that the sentencing framework operates as efficiently and

effectively as possible and delivers appropriate punishment of offenders, without compromising on public safety. We are continuing to transform the prison system, and we have announced the construction of a new prison in Wales. The construction of four new house blocks at established prisons will provide modern accommodation at a lower cost to the taxpayer, and three of these have already been completed.

We are transforming youth custody to create a more cost-effective system which ensures that young people are appropriately punished, while at the same time receiving the support and education required to turn away from a life of crime. We have legislated to create Secure Colleges and we have awarded new education contracts in Young Offender Institutions that will more than double the number of hours education young people receive.

We are creating a more affordable and sustainable Legal Aid system. The Legal Aid Transformation Programme was put in place after the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act came into force on 1 April 2013. Its aim is to examine the possibilities of further legal aid savings, including the concept of tendering to be a criminal legal aid provider, and to identify ways in which public confidence could be improved.

We have met our commitment to provide greater transparency by extending the scope of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to Academy schools and the Association of Chief Police Officers amongst others.

Only one policy from the 2010 Coalition Agreement, as set out in the 'Programme for Government' document, has not been implemented. The Coalition government made it clear from the outset that it would only extend anonymity in rape cases to defendants if there was clear and sound evidence to justify it. The proposal was not progressed. An announcement to this effect was made in November 2010

■ Prisons: Civil Disorder

Sadiq Khan:

[\[226949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many times the National Tactical Response Group was called out in 2014; and to which prisons that group was called out in each month of that year.

Andrew Selous:

The National Offender Management Service's National Tactical Response Group (NTRG) is a specialist resource to assist both public and private sector establishments in safely managing and resolving serious incidents in prisons.

NTRG was called out on two hundred and twenty three occasions in 2014.

While NTRG staff have the specialist skills required to deal with such incidents they are also frequently called to attend as a precautionary measure with the

vast majority of such incidents being dealt with very quickly with minimal disruption to the prison.

The following table sets out the number of occasions the NTRG were called out to public and private sector establishments from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014 (not including aborted call-outs).

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
January 2014	Aylesbury	1
	Glen Parva	2
	Hewell	1
	High Down	1
	Highdown	1
	Holme House	1
	Lancaster Farms	2
	Leeds	2
Date	Establishment	Occasions
January 2014	Nottingham	1
	Oakwood	1
	Ranby	1
	Risley	1
	Wandsworth	1
	Wealstun	1
	Winchester	2
	Woodhill	1
January 2014 Total		21
February 2014	Bullingdon	1
	Glen Parva	1
	Hewell	1

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
	Highdown	1
	Ranby	1
	Wayland	1
	Whitemoor	1
February 2014 Total		7
March 2014	Cardiff	3
	Doncaster	1
	Full Sutton	1
	Hewell	1
	Hindley	1
	Lindholme	2
	Lowdham Grange	1
	Moorland	1
	Northumberland	1
	Nottingham	1
	Ranby	4
	Stoke Heath	1
March 2014 Total		18

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
April 2014	Coldingley	1
	Feltham	1
	Forest Bank	1
	Hewell	2
	Hindley	1
	Holme House	1

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
	Liverpool	1
	Moorland	3
	Nottingham	3
	Onley	2
	Parc	1
	Risley	3
	Rye Hill	1
	Wetherby	1
April 2014 Total		22
May 2014	Altcourse	1
	Bristol	1
	Buckley Hall	1
	Cardiff	1
	Guys Marsh	1
	Haverigg	1
	Hewell	1
	High Down	1
	Hindley	1
	Nottingham	2
	Peterborough	1
	Portland	1
	Ranby	1
	Rochester	1
	Wandsworth	1
	Wetherby	2
May 2014 Total		18

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
June 2014	Bullington	1
	Channings Wood	1
	Gartree	1
	Glen Parva	1
	Guys Marsh	2
	Haverigg	1
	Hewell	1
	Leicester	1
	Lincoln	1
	Liverpool	1
	Lowdham Grange	2
	Nottingham	1
	Oakwood	1
	Stafford	1
Wayland	1	
June 2014 Total		17
July 2014	Altcourse	1
	Birmingham	1
	Chelmsford	1
	Deerbolt	2
	Glen Parva	1
	Haverigg	2
	Hindley	2
	Lindholme	3
	Lowdham Grange	1

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
	Nottingham	1
	Parc	3
	Pentonville	1
	Peterborough	1
	Preston	1
	Ranby	2
	Rochester	1
	Rye Hill	1
	Swaleside	1
	Swinfen Hall	2
	Werrington	1
	Winchester	3
July 2014 Total		32

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
August 2014	Alyesbury	1
	Bullingdon	1
	Channings Wood	1
	Erlestoke	1
	Harmondsworth	1
	Hewell	1
	Leicester	2
	Moorland	2
	Morton Hall	1
	Norwich	1

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
	Nottingham	3
	Pentonville	1
	Wayland	1
	Wolds	1
	Wormwood Scrubs	1
August 2014 Total		19
September 2014	Altcourse	2
	Belmarsh	1
	Cardiff	1
	Deerbolt	2
	Feltham	1
	Haverigg	1
	High Down	1
	Highdown	1
	Hindley	1
	Lewes	1
	Liverpool	2
	Morton Hall	1
	Nottingham	3
	Oakwood	1
	Pentonville	2
	Peterborough	1
	Ranby	1
	Styal	1
	Swaleside	1
	Swinfen Hall	1

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
	Wayland	1
	Winchester	1
September 2014 Total		28

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
October 2014	Altcourse	1
	Belmarsh	1
	Cardiff	2
	Durham	1
	Humber	1
	Lewes	1
	Liverpool	1
	Manchester	1
	Northumberland	1
	Parc	1
	Portland	1
	Swaleside	1
	Wayland	1
	Wormwood Scrubs	1
October 2014 Total		15
November 2014	Brinsford	1
	Chelmsford	1
	Durham	1
	Elmley	1
	Haverigg	1

DATE	ESTABLISHMENT	OCCASIONS
	Humber	3
	Lindholme	2
	Northumberland	1
	Portland	1
	Swansea	1
November 2014 Total		13
December 2014	Highpoint	1
	Hull	2
	Humber	1
	Isis	1
	Lancaster Farms	1
	Lindhome	1
	Liverpool	1
	Pentonville	1
	Ranby	1
	Rochester	1
	Wandsworth	1
	Whitemoor	1
December 2014 Total		13
Grand Total		223

■ Prisons: Private Sector

Jenny Chapman:

[\[226677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average starting salary is for prison officer grade staff in each privately-run prison in England and Wales.

Andrew Selous:

Information on average starting salaries for Prison Custody Officers in privately-run prisons in England and Wales is given in the following table:

HM PRISON	STARTING SALARY
	(£)
Altcourse	21,830
Ashfield	17,654
Birmingham	20,561
Bronzefield	23,108
Doncaster	17,654
Dovegate	17,654
Forest Bank	19,655
Lowdham Grange	17,654
Northumberland	19,655
Oakwood	20,677
Peterborough	19,655
Rye Hill	21,851
Parc	21,429
Thameside	20,804

Jenny Chapman:

[\[226678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many staff have (a) left and (b) joined the workforce in each privately-run prison in England and Wales in the most recent 12 month period for which figures are available.

Andrew Selous:

Staff working at private prisons are employed by a number of providers, to deliver a range of services. These include, for example, probation services, education and healthcare, as well as custodial services. While each prison is

managed by a main contracted provider, it is not possible to provide information covering workforce staff employed by all these providers.

Jenny Chapman: [\[226679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many days' training on average new prison officers receive before starting work in each privately-run prison in England and Wales.

Andrew Selous:

On average each prison custody officer receives 45 days of training before commencing officer duties. The training given is approved by the Ministry of Justice and equates to that undertaken by new-entrant prison officers in the public sector. Candidates who do not complete the course satisfactorily will not be employed.

■ Probation: Foreign Nationals

Stephen Doughty: [\[227009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many foreign nationals who have been convicted of a crime outside the UK and who currently live in the UK are being supervised by email by probation officers based in their native country.

Andrew Selous:

The number of foreign national offenders who have been convicted of a crime outside the UK and are currently living in the UK and are being supervised by email by probation officers based in their native country is not centrally held.

■ Radio

Stephen Doughty: [\[226942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Maya KA505A world receiver radios his Department has purchased since 2010; and how much such purchases have cost.

Andrew Selous:

The Departments central data records held show that this or similar wind up radio products have not been purchased by the Department during the defined period. These radios do not form part of any formal contract supply both currently and in the past.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ National Crime Agency

Dr William McCrea: [\[227086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what progress she has made on operating the National Crime Agency in Northern Ireland.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

The Northern Ireland Assembly recently agreed to the making of an Order which will enable the National Crime Agency (NCA) to be fully operational in Northern Ireland. That Order has been considered by Committees in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords on 10th March and will be made before dissolution, subject to the approval of both Houses.

■ **Parades: Belfast**

Dr William McCrea: [\[227087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent discussions she has had with the Parades Commission on allowing the Orange Brethren parade from Twaddell Avenue, North Belfast.

Mrs Theresa Villiers:

I have had no discussions with the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland about the Orange Order parade from Twaddell Avenue or any other individual parades. Decisions regarding individual parades are strictly an operational matter for the Commission acting independently of the Government.

PRIME MINISTER

■ **Former Prime Ministers: Business Interests**

Norman Baker: [\[227058\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, if he will make it his policy that former Prime Ministers be prohibited for life from working for an overseas government and that their activities be subject to indefinite scrutiny by the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments.

Norman Baker: [\[227060\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what proposals he has received to secure greater public accountability for the earnings of former Prime Ministers; and what replies he has sent to those proposals.

Mr David Cameron:

The Ministerial Code requires former Ministers to seek advice from the independent Advisory Committee on Business Appointments about all appointments and employment they intend to take up in the two years after leaving ministerial office. These rules have applied under successive Governments, and there are no plans to revise them.

■ Mark Jenner

Steve Rotheram: [\[226976\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether the decision to send Mark Jenner of the Special Demonstration Squad into a covert long-term surveillance operation in the 1990s was approved by (a) officials of 10 Downing Street and (b) the then Prime Minister.

Mr David Cameron:

I refer the hon. Member to the Written Statement made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) on 12 March 2015, *Official Report*, column 43WS-44WS, HCWS381.

TRANSPORT**■ Bus Lanes**

Mike Weatherley: [\[226733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has conducted or commissioned research on the effect of limiting bus lane access on speed of traffic flow.

Mike Weatherley: [\[226820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effects of removing bus lanes in Manchester on the rate of traffic flow.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Department has not carried out any recent assessment of the impact of bus lanes on traffic flow. However, in 2004 we published 'Bus Priority: The Way Ahead (Resource Pack Edition 2)' which was the final report of a 4-year research project comprising the analysis of case studies about bus priority projects on UK roads.

Provision of bus priority facilities, including bus lanes, are for the relevant local authority. Assessment and monitoring of the impact of bus lanes on traffic is for the authority concerned to carry out. In relation to Manchester, the responsible authority is Transport for Greater Manchester.

■ Bus Services

Ian Lavery: [\[226681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of oil prices on the uptake of the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) by operators of commercial bus services; what the total BSOG claimed from his Department for commercial bus services was in each year since 2010-11; and

what estimate he has made of BSOG payments to operators of commercial bus services in 2015-16.

Mr John Hayes:

BSOG is paid on a fixed rate of £0.3457 per litre and is no longer directly linked to fuel duty. As a result, changes in oil prices will not have had any direct impact on the uptake of BSOG for commercial services.

Information on the past amounts of BSOG paid for commercial services is not available. However, details of past payments of BSOG overall to individual bus operators can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-service-operators-grant-payments-to-english-operators-up-to-31-march-2013>.

The grant is demand-led; therefore the amount of BSOG to be paid out for commercial services in 2015/16 will depend upon the size of the claims that are submitted by operators; at this stage it is too early to determine for certain what this might be.

Ian Lavery:

[226682]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many local authorities in England do not tender contracts for bus transport services, other than those that they are statutorily obliged to do so.

Mr John Hayes:

My Department does not hold this information. However we understand that a large majority of local transport authorities choose to support public transport in their areas by means of tendered services

Ian Lavery:

[226708]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much of the bus services operators grant (BSOG) was allocated by local authorities to operators of tendered bus services in each year since 2012-13; what estimate he has made of the total BSOG to operators of tendered bus services in 2015-16; and whether the BSOG budget is ring-fenced for use by local authorities to fund tendered bus services.

Mr John Hayes:

Since January 2014, BSOG for tendered bus services has been devolved directly to individual local authorities in England outside London. Some £10 million was devolved to authorities for the period January to March 2014, and some further £39 million to cover April 2014 to March 2015. An additional payment will be made in April 2015 to cover the period up to March 2016; this amount is still being finalised. The devolved funding is ring fenced so that authorities must use it to support bus services in their area, although they have

the flexibility to decide how best to do this in order to benefit local communities.

Ian Lavery:

[226766]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of the oil price on the uptake of the Bus Service Operators Grant for tendered bus services.

Mr John Hayes:

Since January 2014, tendered bus services have not been eligible for Bus Service Operators Grant. Instead a similar sum to the amounts paid for tendered services in the past is devolved each year to individual local authorities. Therefore the amounts devolved are not affected by any changes in oil prices.

■ Bus Services: Fares

Ian Lavery:

[226709]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the average passenger fare increase on deregulated bus services in England since July 2014.

Mr John Hayes:

The table at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/387116/bus0415.xls

shows the change in the local bus fares index in England since March 2014. Data are collected on a quarterly basis (March, June, September and December).

■ Cycling

Richard Burden:

[226878]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, from what budget line his Department's £114 million investment for cycling for 2015-16 to 2017-18 has been allocated; and whether it is capital or revenue expenditure.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The original two-year funding for the Cycle Ambition Cities programme was announced at Autumn Statement 2012, with a further £114m investment announced by the Chancellor at Autumn Statement 2014, with all government funding being capital. It is a free-standing programme in its own right.

■ **Cycling: York**

Sir Hugh Bayley:

[\[227310\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much has been spent on cycling improvements in York Unitary Authority in each year since 2010.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

In 2010-2011, the Department for Transport provided funding to York Unitary Authority (also known as City of York) for cycling through Cycling England, an arm's length organisation set up in 2005. Funding totalled £1.379m. We do not hold a record of how the funding was split across each year.

In July 2011, City of York was awarded £4.645m revenue and capital funding through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. The table below shows each year's allocation for City of York. The funding supported a package of sustainable transport interventions called 'i-Travel York' which included cycling projects. We do not hold a record of how funding was split between i-Travel York's various sustainable transport projects, but we do know that cycling improvements formed a significant element.

FINANCIAL YEAR	REVENUE	CAPITAL
2011-12	0.421m	0.227m
2012-13	0.647m	0.594m
2013-14	0.777m	1.112m
2014-15	0.685m	0.182m

In July 2014, we awarded a further £1m to the City of York to support the continuation of their Local Sustainable Transport Fund project into 2015-16.

Sir Hugh Bayley:

[\[227311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many (a) accidents and (b) fatal accidents involving cyclists there have been in (a) York Central constituency and (b) York Unitary Authority area in each year since 2010.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The table below gives the number of (a) accidents (b) fatal accidents involving cyclists and (c) the number of pedal cyclists killed in reported personal injury road traffic accidents in (i) York Central constituency and (ii) York Unitary Authority area in each year from 2010 to 2013.

	YEAR	TOTAL ACCIDENTS INVOLVING PEDAL CYCLISTS	TOTAL FATAL ACCIDENTS INVOLVING PEDAL CYCLISTS	NUMBER OF PEDAL CYCLISTS KILLED
York Central Const	2010	86	0	0
York Central Const	2011	86	1	1
York Central Const	2012	107	0	0
York Central Const	2013	122	0	0
York Unitary Authority	2010	128	0	0
York Unitary Authority	2011	130	1	1
York Unitary Authority	2012	139	0	0
York Unitary Authority	2013	149	0	0

Statistics for 2014 will be available in June 2015.

■ Freightliner

Kelvin Hopkins:

[R] [[227166](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will assess the potential effect on (a) jobs and (b) skills in the rail freight industry of Genesee & Wyoming's acquisition of a 95 per cent stake in Freightliner.

Claire Perry:

Freightliner is a private enterprise; its acquisition by Genesee and Wyoming is a commercial matter for the company.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Mrs Cheryl Gillan:

[[226727](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many staff of each salary band have been employed by (a) his Department and (b) HS2 Ltd to work on High Speed 2 in (i) total and (ii) each month since July 2012.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The information requested is in the attached document.

Attachments:

1. Table [226727 attachment.pdf]

Mrs Cheryl Gillan:

[226749]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what environmental information his Department took into account to inform the choice of a Y-shaped network for High Speed 2.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

In developing the choice of a Y-shaped network for High Speed 2, the Secretary of State for Transport has taken into account environmental information as contained in or evidenced by:

2009 information

- the HS2 2009 Report, High Speed Two: London to the West Midlands and Beyond

2010 information

- Atkins Report, High Speed 2 Strategic Alternatives Study Baseline Study (March 2010)
- Atkins Report, High Speed 2 Strategic Alternatives Study Strategic Outline Case (March 2010)
- Atkins Report, High Speed " Strategic Alternatives Study Rail Interventions Report (March 2010)
- Atkins Report, High Speed Strategic Alternatives Study Highway Interventions Report (March 2010)
- HS2 Report, High Level Assessment of the wider network options – reverse 'S' and 'Y' (October 2010)
- High Speed Rail London to the West Midlands and Beyond – Supplemental Report – An additional report to Government by High Speed Two Ltd refining the alignment of HS2's recommended route (September 2010)
- High Speed Rail London to the West Midlands and Beyond – Line of Route Supplementary Report (4 November 2010)
- High Speed Rail London to the West Midlands and Beyond – Line of Route Supplementary Report (19 November 2010)
- High Speed Rail London to the West Midlands and Beyond – Confirming the Line of Route Supplementary Report (3 December 2010)

2011 information

- HS2 London to West Midlands Appraisal of Sustainability (February 2011)

- Atkins Report, High Speed 2 Strategic Alternatives Study London to West Midlands Alternatives – update of economic appraisal (February 2011)
- High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future Consultation Summary Report (November 2011)
- High Speed Rail Consultation Summary Report (Dialogue by Design) (November 2011)
- Network Rail Report, Review of Strategic Alternatives to High Speed Two (November 2011)

2012 information

- Review of the Government's Strategy for a National High Speed Rail Network (January 2012)
- Atkins Report, High Speed Rail Alternatives study Update following consultation (January 2012)
- Review of possible refinements to the proposed HS2 London to West Midlands Route a report to Government by HS2 (January 2012)
- Review of HS2 London to West Midlands Route Selection and Speed a report to Government by HS2 (January 2012)
- Review of HS2 London to West Midlands Appraisal of Sustainability a report to Government by HS2 (January 2012)
- High Speed Rail Investing in Britain's Future – Decisions and Next Steps (January 2012)
- Arup/URS report, Draft EIA Scoping and Methodology Report on High Speed 2 London to West Midlands (March 2012).
- Scoping and Methodology Consultation Summary Report (Arup/URS September 2012) (CT-001-000/3)
- HS2 London – West Midlands EIA Scope and Methodology Report (Arup/URS September 2012) (CT-001-000/1)
- HS2 Options for Phase Two of the High Speed Network – Appraisal of Sustainability (March, 2012)
- Options for Phase Two of the High Speed Rail Network (March 2012)

2013 information

- High Speed Rail Consultation on the route from the West Midlands to Manchester, Leeds and beyond Sustainability Statement (July 2013)
- HS2 London to West Midlands Environmental Statement (November 2013)
- HS2 Phase Two Initial Preferred Scheme – Sustainability Summary (January, 2013)

- High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future – Phase Two: The route to Leeds, Manchester and beyond (January, 2013)

2014 information

- HS2 Independent Assessor report, High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill – summary of issues raised by comments on the Environmental Statement (April 2014)
- Environmental Audit Committee HS2 and the environment (April 2014)
- Environmental Audit Committee HS2 and the environment – Government response (June 2014)
- High Speed 2 Information Paper A1: Development of the Proposed Scheme (July 2014)
- High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill Additional Provision Amendment (September 2014)?
- High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill Additional Provision Environmental Statement (September 2014)?
- HS2 Independent Assessor High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill Additional Provision summary of issues raised by comments on the supplementary environmental information (December 2014)
- Rebalancing Britain from HS2 towards a national transport strategy (2014)
- Steer Davies Gleave Transport Constraints and Opportunities in the North of England (October 2014)

Mrs Cheryl Gillan:

[[226750](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which (a) universities, (b) research institutes, (c) consultancy firms and (d) individuals have been engaged by (i) his Department and (ii) HS2 Ltd to produce a review or a report on which aspects of High Speed 2; and how much each such report has cost.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

A list of reports and reviews produced by DfT and HS2 limited is attached. We have interpreted the terms "report or review" to relate to any final documents for work commissioned to provide research into various aspects of HS2. By final we mean completed and assured (i.e. not work in progress). We have also focussed our response on recent reports (i.e., reports and reviews completed between Jan 2014 and February 2015).

Attachments:

1. Report Table [[226750 reports.pdf](#)]

Mrs Cheryl Gillan: [\[227106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 9 March to Question 225879, if he will publish an updated business case for (a) phase 1, (b) phase 2 and (c) the whole of the High Speed 2 project.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The most recent update to the HS2 Business Case was published in October 2013 [here](#).

The Department will continue to keep the Business Case under review and further updates will be prepared as the programme reaches critical milestones.

■ **Lifeboats: Finance**

Tessa Munt: [\[226719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that small charities are aware of (a) the inshore and inland lifeboat grant scheme and (b) other Government funding schemes.

Mr John Hayes:

The Department will, through its public communication channels and local engagement, continue to raise awareness of all of its grant schemes to the widest possible audience and relevant recipient groups.

Tessa Munt: [\[226720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has for further funding rounds under the inshore and inland lifeboat grant scheme.

Mr John Hayes:

The Government announced in the 2014/15 budget that it would make £1 million of grant funding available annually for the inshore and inland lifeboat scheme, for a 5 year period from this financial year.

■ **M67: Fly-tipping**

Andrew Gwynne: [\[226747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 9 March 2015 to Question 225868, if he will instruct Highways Agency officers to clear fly tipping along the embankments on the M67 in Denton at Queen Street, Holland Street, Manchester Road, Lake Road and Wood Street.

Mr John Hayes:

The Highways Agency is, as of 10 March 2015, on site undertaking an inspection of all areas of the M67, including the embankments. This assessment applies a grading for both litter and refuse in accordance with a Code of Practice, which supplements the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and specifies standards of cleanliness and response times. Nevertheless, I

regard these standards as a baseline above and beyond which we should aim.

Any restoration measures are required to take place within timescales set out in the Code of Practice. It specifies fourteen days for slip-road carriageways, their hard-shoulders, verges and embankments. It specifies twenty-eight days (or as soon as is reasonably practicable) for mainline carriageways, their central reservations, hard-shoulders, verges and embankments. I have asked the Highways Agency to ensure that it meets its obligations for removing litter and fly-tipped waste, in accordance with the results of the ongoing assessment of all areas of the M67 and to report to me accordingly. When they have done so I will ensure that a copy of the report is forwarded to the honourable gentleman.

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[226748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 9 March to 2015 to Question 225869, if he will direct Highways Agency officers to clear the slip roads, central reservations and embankments of the M67 of litter.

Mr John Hayes:

The Highways Agency is, as of 10 March 2015, on site undertaking an inspection of all areas of the M67, including the slip-roads, central reservations and embankments. This assessment applies a grading for both litter and refuse in accordance with a Code of Practice, which supplements the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and specifies standards of cleanliness and response times. Nevertheless, I regard these standards as a baseline above and beyond which we should aim.

Any restoration measures are required to take place within timescales set out in the Code of Practice. It specifies fourteen days for slip-road carriageways, their hard-shoulders, verges and embankments. It specifies twenty-eight days (or as soon as is reasonably practicable) for mainline carriageways, their central reservations, hard-shoulders, verges and embankments. I have asked the Highways Agency to ensure that it meets its obligations for removing litter, in accordance with the results of the ongoing assessment of all areas of the M67 and, as noted in my answer to 226747, report to me accordingly. When they have done so I will ensure that a copy of the report is forwarded to the honourable gentleman.

■ Network Rail

Lilian Greenwood: [\[226905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the value of support provided by (a) his Department and (b) Network Rail to the Rail Industry Planning Group was in each year from 2010-11 to date.

Claire Perry:

This group is part of the way in which Network Rail consults with the rail industry as part of the industry planning process. The Department and Network Rail do not provide any financial support to this group.

Lilian Greenwood: [\[226907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the value of support provided by (a) his Department and (b) Network Rail to the Route Investment Review Groups was in each year from 2010-11 to date.

Claire Perry:

These route based groups are part of the way in which Network Rail consults with the rail industry as part of the industry planning process. The Department and Network Rail do not provide any financial support to the groups.

■ Oil: Prices

Ian Lavery: [\[226680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the effect on fares for (a) rail and (b) bus passengers of changes in the price of a barrel of oil since August 2014.

Mr John Hayes:

I am aware that my Rt Hon Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury recently wrote to the five largest UK bus operators seeking their assurance that they are doing all they can to ensure passengers benefit from the fall in oil prices.

The bus market outside London is deregulated, with the vast majority of services provided on a commercial basis by private sector bus operators. Decisions on the level of fares are a commercial matter for individual bus operators.

As fuel costs are such a small proportion of the cost of providing rail services we would not expect to see a strong relationship between the two. Rail fares are set based on inflation, of which fuel prices are a component.

■ Railways: Freight

Kelvin Hopkins: [\[R\] \[226896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with (a) Freightliner, (b) Maersk, (c) Forth Ports and (d) Hutchison Port Holdings on the viability of the rail freight line between Felixstowe and Tilbury ports.

Kelvin Hopkins: [R] [[226897](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with Network Rail on the status of the rail freight line between Felixstowe and Tilbury ports (a) in Control Period 5 and (b) under the Freight Utilisation Strategy.

Claire Perry:

There is no direct rail freight line between Felixstowe and Tilbury, although up to two services a day in each direction operate between the two. I have not had any discussions with any of the bodies in question about rail freight operations between the two ports, as this is a commercial matter for the freight operators and their customers.

Kelvin Hopkins: [R] [[226898](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what volume of freight was moved on the rail freight line between Felixstowe and Tilbury ports in each of the last 10 financial years for which figures are available; how many road freight journeys would have been required to move that volume in each of those years; and how many extra gallons of fuel a modal switch from rail to road would have used in each of those years.

Claire Perry:

Freight volumes are a commercial matter for the freight operating company concerned and can be obtained directly from Freightliner Group Ltd.

Kelvin Hopkins: [R] [[226899](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an environmental impact assessment of the rail freight line between Felixstowe and Tilbury ports.

Claire Perry:

There is no direct rail freight line between Felixstowe and Tilbury, although up to two services a day in each direction operate between the two. There is no requirement to carry out an environmental impact assessment on the existing rail infrastructure used by the services between the two ports.

■ Railways: West Midlands

Mr Adrian Bailey: [[226900](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential for running passenger trains on double track rail lines used for freight trains in the Birmingham and Black Country area.

Claire Perry:

I have not undertaken an assessment of the potential use by passenger services of freight routes in Birmingham and the Black Country. Network Rail is currently reviewing the West Midlands and Chilterns Route Utilisation Strategy, published on 27 May 2011, to assess any changes in the level of passenger and freight demand.

■ Railways: Yorkshire and the Humber

Greg Mulholland: [\[226810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with Network Rail and train operating companies on the electrification of the Leeds-Harrogate-York railway line.

Claire Perry:

Network Rail is considering the electrification of this route as part of the work to refresh its 2009 electrification strategy. The findings of this work are due to be published for consultation shortly. The Northern Electrification Task Force's recommendations for priority schemes in the North of England will be taken into account in the Network Rail consultation and Network Rail's further development of its nationwide proposals.

Sir Hugh Bayley: [\[227312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the average cost was of a super off-peak rail return from York to Leeds in each year since 2010.

Claire Perry:

There is no "super off-peak rail return" from York to Leeds.

■ Roads: Accidents

Sir Greg Knight: [\[226814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the (a) number and (b) proportion of accidents was on UK roads that involved non-UK registered (i) lorries and (ii) other vehicles in each year between 2010 and 2014.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Department does not hold information that allows the identification of foreign registered vehicles in reported road traffic accidents. However, the accident record does include information on left hand drive vehicles. The Department uses this as a proxy for foreign vehicles and recognises that there will be some UK registered vehicles that are left hand drive (for example dust carts and road sweepers) which are included in the figures.

The Department only holds information on reported personal-injury accidents on public roads (including footways) in Great Britain, which became known to the police.

i) The attached table shows the number of reported personal injury road accidents in Great Britain involving at least one heavy goods vehicle as well as the number involving at least one left hand drive heavy goods vehicle for the years 2010 to 2013.

ii) The table also shows the number of reported personal injury road accidents in Great Britain involving at least one of the shown vehicle types split by

whether the vehicle was left hand drive (except for pedal cyclists and motor cyclists).

Data for 2014 will be available in June 2015.

Attachments:

1. Table [Reported personal injury road accidents.docx]

■ **Roads: Animals**

Dan Jarvis: [\[227113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of pets found dead near roads whose owners were identified by the Highways Agency in each year since May 2010; and how many of those owners were informed that their pets had been found.

Mr John Hayes:

Existing records relating to identified and contacted pet owners are not held centrally by the Highways Agency.

I have however written to the Highways Agency to instruct that steps are taken to ensure current and future road maintenance contracts include requirements to formalise the record keeping arrangements covering pet fatalities on the Strategic Road Network. If the honourable gentleman is interested in this topic I refer him to the transcript of my adjournment debate of 2nd March 2015.

■ **Southeastern**

Damian Green: [\[226638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to implement the proposals from Passenger Focus for amendments to the Delay Repay scheme for Southeastern season ticket holders; and if he will make a statement.

Claire Perry:

This is an area we are looking at closely but if we chose to require further changes to passenger compensation arrangements, the costs will ultimately fall to the Department and the taxpayer.

The Government has progressively introduced Delay/Repay compensation to ensure passengers are compensated fairly. The arrangements are more generous than the previous compensation arrangements for delays to individual journeys and compensation payments for poor service under the Passenger's Charter have been rising significantly in recent years.

The Department is requiring that Delay/Repay be proactively promoted and made simple for passengers to use and effective in quickly repaying compensation sums. The Department is also encouraging operators to invest in simple apps and automation to ensure this.

■ Vehicles: Insurance

Jim Shannon:

[\[226755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts from other EU member states on insurance cover for (a) ride-on lawn mowers, (b) mobility scooters and (c) golf buggies.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Vnuk judgement concerned a case before the European Court of Justice about a man (Mr Vnuk) who was injured when he was knocked off a ladder by a trailer that was attached to a tractor in a barn in Slovenia. The effect of the judgment is that any vehicle that falls within the Motor Insurance Directives' definition of a vehicle should have a compulsory motor insurance policy. The definition of vehicle in the Directives is very wide.

We are working closely with insurers, and others to identify how the ruling in the Vnuk case should be applied to a range of vehicles, including mobility scooters, golf buggies and ride-on lawn mowers. We will shortly be meeting with relevant stakeholders to discuss the particular issues that apply to those using mobility scooters.

We will, of course, consult before making any changes and we are determined to get a sensible outcome.

TREASURY

■ Child Benefit

Mr David Burrowes:

[\[226711\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of people affected by the higher income child benefit charge who have failed to declare it to HM Revenue and Customs.

Priti Patel:

Of 1.1 million individuals expected to be affected in the first year, 2012/13, 45,000 did not register for Self Assessment to pay the charge. HMRC is contacting people who have not complied to ensure the charge is paid.

Mr Graham Stuart:

[\[227164\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people who submitted applications for child benefit to the Child Benefit Office in the last 12 months were subsequently told by that office that their application was not received.

Priti Patel:

HMRC do not hold the requested data.

■ Employment: Females

Alison McGovern: [\[226298\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will estimate the benefit to the economy of London of a five per cent increase in the number of women in employment.

Andrea Leadsom:

We have made considerable progress in getting women into work since the election: the number of women in jobs is at a record high, there are more women led businesses and board members than ever before.

Female employment in London has risen by 58,000 over the last year – and is up 210,000 since 2010.

As the Chancellor set out in his long-term economic plan for London this Government has an ambition to create over half a million extra jobs in London by 2020.

■ Equitable Life Assurance Society: Compensation

Julian Sturdy: [\[227222\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will increase the level of funding available to the Equitable Life Payments Scheme.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government has no plans to change the funding available to the Equitable Life Payment Scheme.

The focus remains on finding and paying those policyholders who remain untraced.

■ Financial Services: Advisory Services

Justin Tomlinson: [\[226917\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that money and debt advice is available to people who do not have access to the internet.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government believes that everyone, regardless of circumstance, should have access to money and debt advice. The Money Advice Service (MAS) was set up to give people the support they need to manage their money well; it provides information on money matters via telephone and face-to-face channels, as well as online. MAS took on statutory responsibility for coordinating provision of debt advice in 2012 – funding for debt advice principally goes to support face-to-face debt advice.

The Independent Review of MAS, due to be published soon, was tasked with considering how MAS can most effectively and efficiently meet the need for money and debt advice.

■ Mortgages

Jim Shannon: [\[226849\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what information he holds on the number of mortgages for residential property agreed in each of the last three years.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government does not collect information on the number of mortgages for residential property agreed on an annual basis. The Bank of England and Council of Mortgage Lenders routinely collect and publish statistics about the mortgage market, which they make publicly available on their respective websites

■ Poverty

Jim Shannon: [\[226891\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government is taking to reduce the divide between the rich and the poor.

Priti Patel:

The Government has taken a number of steps to reduce poverty and inequality, and income inequality is now lower than when this Government came into office.

By introducing Universal Credit, the Government will ensure that it always pays to be in work. Those in low paid jobs continue to be supported by the Minimum Wage, and in 2014, the Government increased the Minimum Wage in real terms for the first time since 2007. For those at the top, the Government is committed to ensuring that the richest pay a fair contribution: in the last year, the top 1% of income tax payers paid 28% of income tax revenue, a higher proportion than at any time under the previous Government.

■ Treasury Board

Stephen Doughty: [\[227351\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, who the members of the Treasury Board have been in each year since 2010.

Andrea Leadsom:

The membership of the Treasury Board is set out each year in the Treasury's Annual Report and Accounts, which is published on the gov.uk website.

■ Welfare Tax Credits

Fiona O'Donnell: [\[226903\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much has been overpaid in child tax credit and working tax credit as a result of technical and administrative errors by his Department; and how much of that overpayment has been written off in (a) the UK, (b) Scotland and (c) East Lothian constituency in each year since that scheme's inception.

Priti Patel:

I refer the Member to the answer I provided on the 19 December 2014 to Question 218750:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-questions-answers/?page=1&max=20&questiontype=AllQuestions&house=commons%2clords&member=3909&keywords=overpayments>

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[226979\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent forecast he has made of the number of parents with children who will be claiming tax credits in April 2016.

Priti Patel:

The information requested could only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

WALES

■ Energy

Paul Flynn: [\[226763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, with reference to paragraph 2.4.4 of Powers for a Purpose: towards a lasting devolution settlement for Wales, published in February 2015, Cm 9020, for what reasons an upper limit of 350 MW for those energy projects over which the Welsh Assembly Government should have full planning powers has been proposed; and if he will give the Welsh Assembly Government full planning powers for power generation projects greater than 1000 MW.

Stephen Crabb:

The independent Silk Commission recommended that consenting responsibility for energy generation projects up to 350MW should be devolved to Wales and explained its rationale for this in its second report.

■ Policy

Paul Flynn: [\[227049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, which policies contained in the 2010 Coalition Agreement and falling under his Department's responsibilities have not

yet been implemented; and what the reasons are for each such policy's non-implementation.

Stephen Crabb:

The Wales Office has implemented all three of the commitments in the 2010 Coalition Agreement specific to Wales; taking forward the Sustainable Homes Legislative Competence Order; delivering the referendum on full law making powers for the National Assembly for Wales; and establishing the Commission on Devolution in Wales (the "Silk" Commission).

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Advertising

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[226607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his Department's advertising and communications expenditure was in each month since September 2014; and what that expenditure is forecast to be in March 2015.

Esther McVey:

The information is not available. The Department does not have a specific advertising or communications budget.

■ Employment and Support Allowance

Stephen Timms: [\[226880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make it his policy that claimants applying for mandatory reconsideration after being refused employment and support allowance should routinely be informed of the opportunity to provide additional evidence in support of their claim.

Mr Mark Harper:

It has always been our policy to encourage claimants during the mandatory reconsideration process to provide additional evidence that may affect their decision. When claimants request a mandatory reconsideration Departmental decision makers assist them in identifying evidence, and ask them to provide any additional information or evidence so that the right decision can be made as early in the process as possible.

Stephen Timms: [\[226881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make it his policy that people whose applications for employment and support allowance are rejected should routinely be advised of the mandatory reconsideration procedure.

Mr Mark Harper:

It has always been our policy to notify claimants of the mandatory reconsideration process when making decisions – including where individuals

are found fit for work. For ESA a Decision Assurance Call was introduced into the process to collect any additional evidence from claimants and signpost to other benefits where it is likely a fit for work decision will be made. When claimants have been found fit for work the Department provides a decision letter which includes details of the mandatory reconsideration and appeals process.

Stephen Timms: [\[226883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people claiming employment and support allowance have been taken off that benefit after being found fit for work following a work capability assessment since October 2013; and how many such people have subsequently been awarded jobseeker's allowance.

Mr Mark Harper:

The information requested for those found fit for work following an Employment and Support Allowance Work Capability Assessment is published and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/esa-outcomes-of-work-capability-assessments-claims-made-to-june-2014-and-appeals-to-dec-2014>

The information requested in respect of those who have subsequently been awarded Jobseeker's Allowance is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Employment and Support Allowance: Appeals

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[227358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the number of employment and support allowance appeals (a) nationwide, (b) in the West Midlands and (c) in Coventry in each of the last five years.

Mr Mark Harper:

Information about the number of ESA appeals made nationwide, but not geographically, is provided quarterly by the Ministry of Justice. Each publication includes historical data.

Table 1.4 in the link below provides the information for the period from 1.4.2009 – 31.12.2014 (the latest information available).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunal-and-gender-recognition-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2014>

■ Employment Schemes: Young People

Mr Frank Field: [\[227315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 11 March 2015 to Question 226635, how much of the £1 billion allocated to the Youth Contract has been spent to date.

Esther McVey:

Total figures for the final year are still being finalised.

■ Food Poverty

Stephen Timms: [\[226984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what responsibilities Jobcentre Plus advisers have to provide further help or information to claimants who present as being unable to afford sufficient food for them or their family.

Esther McVey:

Jobcentre Advisers ensure claimants are provided with welfare support which includes provision for hardship or an advance of benefit where required.

Where another organisation could be able to offer support to claimants, then Jobcentre Advisers are able to signpost claimants to their services.

■ Health and Safety Executive

Meg Munn: [\[226915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many meetings ministers held with officials from the Health and Safety Executive in the last 12 months.

Mr Mark Harper:

The Minister for Welfare Reform and Minister for Disabled People meet with HSE officials on a regular basis. Other Ministers also meet with HSE officials on specific issues.

■ Housing Benefit

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[226982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent forecast he has made of the number of parents with children who will be claiming housing benefit in April 2016.

Steve Webb:

The information requested is not available.

■ Housing Benefit: Social Rented Housing

Steve McCabe: [\[227213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average length of time was for a decision to be made on payment of the under-occupancy penalty in each year since 2013.

Mr Mark Harper:

Separate decisions are not made in relation to under-occupation, but are a consideration when calculating Housing Benefit entitlement.

Therefore this information is not available.

■ Housing Benefit: Southwark

Ms Harriet Harman: [\[227134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people claiming discretionary housing payments in the London Borough of Southwark have had their claim rejected because funding was unavailable in the last 12 months.

Steve Webb:

The Department does not hold this information. Details of the number of awards made by Local Authorities can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-discretionary-housing-payments-2013-to-2014>

■ Income Support

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[226981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent forecast he has made of the number of parents with children who will be claiming income support in April 2016.

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[226983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent forecast he has made of the number of parents with children who will be claiming employment and support allowance in April 2016.

Esther McVey:

The information requested is not available.

■ Mesothelioma: Compensation

Mr Jim Murphy: [\[227306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will assess the merits of extending the Diffuse Mesothelioma Payment Scheme to allow compensation to be paid to non-dependent children in the event of there being no dependent children or spouse to receive the payment.

Mr Jim Murphy: [\[227307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will assess the merits of extending the Diffuse Mesothelioma Payment Scheme to allow compensation to be paid to non-dependent children who were under 21 years of age at the time of the diagnosis of the deceased.

Mr Mark Harper:

The Scheme makes payments to eligible sufferers of diffuse mesothelioma, or, where that person has died, an eligible spouse, civil partner or other dependant, as defined in the Mesothelioma Act 2014

This is because the purpose of making payments to people who would have been dependent on the deceased at the time of death is to recognise the loss of financial support caused by their death

We are not considering extending the Scheme to those who were not dependent on a deceased sufferer of diffuse mesothelioma.

■ Remploy

Pamela Nash: [\[226941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 26 February 2015 to Question 224963, on which dates since May 2010 Ministers in his Department met a former Remploy employee.

Esther McVey:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on the 3 March 2015 to Question UIN [225675](#)

■ Social Security Benefits

Stephen Timms: [\[226882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of mandatory reconsiderations have been determined within two weeks.

Mr Mark Harper:

In December 2014 the department published an ad-hoc release of experimental statistics on mandatory reconsideration (MR) requests made between 28th October 2013 and 31st October 2014. This included data which showed that on average it took 13 days to clear an ESA MR request.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mandatory-reconsiderations-of-dwp-benefit-decisions-data-to-october-2014>

DWP plans to incorporate information on MR into existing regular statistical publications, including information on clearance times. However, before a decision to publish is made DWP statisticians need to ensure that the data is accurate and fit for purpose. When a decision has been made and as each

publication is ready, we will pre-announce the improvements in accordance with the UKSA release protocols.

■ **Social Security Benefits: Disqualification**

Fiona Mactaggart: [\[226617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many benefit claimants who have received a sanction have been on jobseeker's allowance for 26 weeks or more.

Esther McVey:

The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Fiona Mactaggart: [\[226618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many benefit claimants who have received a three-year sanction have had that sanction removed following mandatory reconsideration since the introduction of that policy.

Fiona Mactaggart: [\[226619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many benefit claimants who have received a three-year sanction have had that sanction removed after actively seeking work in each of the last three years.

Fiona Mactaggart: [\[226620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many benefit claimants have received a three-year sanction in each of the last 12 months.

Esther McVey:

The information requested, in respect of all three questions above, is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Kate Green: [\[226721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 20 February 2015 to Question 224691, what steps his Department is taking to work with specialist charities which support people with learning disabilities, blind and partially sighted people and people with other impairments to ensure sanctions are applied fairly and appropriately.

Mr Mark Harper:

The Department engages actively with a wide range of disability charities, including those who represent people with learning disabilities, blind people and partially sighted people, through the Disability Charities Consortium and the Fulfilling Potential Forum.

A claimant's medical circumstances are always taken into account when we consider whether they should undertake a specific activity to help support

them back into work and claimants are encouraged to discuss the impact of their condition on their support needs.

We do not sanction Employment and Support Allowance claimants for not finding work and will not require them to apply for or take up specific jobs. Before a sanction can be applied to vulnerable claimants such as those with learning difficulties or mental health conditions we make every effort to contact them via a home Visit or their carer/healthcare professional first to ensure they fully understand what they have been requested to do and the consequences of not doing it.

Where claimants have good reason for not meeting requirements, then a sanction will not apply.

■ Social Security Benefits: Scotland

Mr Jim Murphy:

[227078]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in each Scottish city have been subject to a benefits sanction in each of the last five years; and what proportion of such sanctions were imposed for each reason.

Esther McVey:

The information we have for Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance adverse sanction decisions, by geography and reason, is published at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Stat-Xplore_User_Guide.htm

Proportions can then be calculated using the published figures.

■ Universal Credit

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[226980]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent forecast he has made of the number of parents with children who will be claiming universal credit in April 2016.

Mr Ben Bradshaw:

[227110]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of parents expected to claim universal credit once that benefit is fully rolled out.

Mr Mark Harper:

The department published planning projections of the Universal Credit in the publication 'Universal Credit at Work' published on 22 October 2014. The publication can be found at the below link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-at-work>

The Department is not setting targets for numbers in receipt of Universal Credit at various points in time.

Stephen Timms: [\[227264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 6 March 2015 to Question 226033, when he expects migration to Universal Credit to finish, assuming no change in the labour market outlook or the pace at which claims are migrated.

Mr Mark Harper:

Our planning assumptions are unchanged from those set out in the previous answer I gave to the Rt. Hon. Member Question [UIN226033](#).

Mr Ben Bradshaw: [\[227360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his most recent forecast is of how many jobcentres will have universal credit available to all parents, both in and out of work, in April 2016.

Mr Mark Harper:

I refer the Rt. Hon. Member to the Oral answer Secretary of State gave to the House on 9 March 2015, [UIN90716](#).

■ Work Programme

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[227033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have been assisted by the Work Programme in (a) England, (b) London and (c) Hendon constituency to date.

Esther McVey:

The information requested for Work Programme Referrals, Attachments and Job Outcomes, by various geographies, is published and available 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>

Stephen Timms: [\[227265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the role and contribution is of local authorities in relation to the Work Programme.

Esther McVey:

Work Programme providers have flexibility to innovate and to design support that addresses the needs of individuals and the local labour market, rather than having to follow a one size fits all process.

Work Programme providers remain responsible for promoting and publicising the programme to ensure effective engagement with key stakeholders, including local partners such as local authorities. Indeed, the last stocktake of the Work Programme supply chain shows 30 local authorities or councils working directly to prime providers as either a tier 1 or tier 2 sub-contractor with other local authorities and councils also involved beyond those tiers. As of September 2014, the Work Programme has helped 368,000 long term unemployed people into lasting work with local authorities playing a part in this success.

We are currently exploring ways in which we can build on the success of the current programme in the design of future contracts, including through ensuring effective partnership working at the local level. We will be engaging with stakeholders, including local authorities, as this work progresses.

Stephen Timms:[\[227266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will place in the Library a copy of the latest stocktake of Work Programme sub-contractors.

Esther McVey:

This information is also available online at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/organisations-that-supply-services-to-the-work-programme-providers>.

I have arranged for the last published stock take to be placed in the Library.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

HEALTH

■ Billing

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[226077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of undisputed invoices his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies paid within five days in the last period for which figures are available.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 10 March 2015. The correct answer should have been:

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The last period for which complete figures are available is the 2013-14 financial-year i.e. 12 months ended 31 March 2014. The table below details the proportion (%) of undisputed payments made, by individual body:

BODY	PROPORTION OF INVOICES PAID WITHIN 5 DAYS (% TO NEAREST 1%)
Department of Health	95
Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency	76
Human Tissue Authority	95
Monitor	92 0*
Public Health England	81
Care Quality Commission	89
NHS Litigation Authority	13
Health Education England	2
Health Research Authority	6
Health and Social Care Information Centre	16
National Institute for Health & Care Excellence	6
NHS Blood and Transplant	24
NHS Property Services	0
NHS Business Services Authority	24

BODY	PROPORTION OF INVOICES PAID WITHIN 5 DAYS (% TO NEAREST 1%)
NHS England	54

***Monitor return is 0% because it works towards paying all valid invoices within 10 working days not five. The 10-day compliance for 2013-14 was 92%.**

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ The Private Rented Sector

Minister of State for Housing and Planning (Brandon Lewis): [\[HCWS413\]](#)

My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement on 13 March 2015.

I would like to update the House on the actions that the Coalition Government has put in place to support a healthy and prosperous private rented sector. The private rented sector is an important part of the housing market providing flexibility and allowing people to move quickly, helping those who do not want to own a house or who are currently saving to buy in the future.

There are now 4.4 million households who rent in England. Rents in the private rented sector have risen less than inflation during this Parliament. Surveys suggest that 84% of private renters are satisfied with their accommodation, and the average tenancy length is 3.5 years.

This Government has actively encouraged more institutional investment into the provision of new build rented homes, avoided excessive regulation and taken action to tackle the small minority of bad landlords.

Increasing housing investment

Supporting house building is part of this Government's long-term economic plan. The Build to Rent Fund provides development finance to support the creation of a purpose-built private rented sector, backed by institutional investment. We have already announced 14 contracts worth £230 million, delivering over 3,000 homes for private rent. Over this year as the contracts are finalised, the Fund will deliver £1 billion of investment, meeting our 10,000 homes target.

The Private Rented Sector Housing Guarantee Scheme will facilitate investment of up to £3.5 billion in new private rented sector homes across the UK. PRS Operations Ltd (a subsidiary of Venn Partners LLP) was appointed to operate the Scheme in December 2014 and has already started engaging with potential borrowers.

The Affordable Housing Guarantee Scheme utilises the Government's hard won fiscal credibility to deliver more affordable housing by making debt cheaper for affordable housing providers. It aims to deliver up to 30,000 homes through guaranteeing up to £3.5 billion of debt. To date, 35 Registered Providers have been approved under the scheme. Combined they will borrow over £1.25 billion of guaranteed debt, supporting the delivery of over 11,000 additional affordable homes across the United Kingdom. In March 2015, a £194 million bond issuance

achieved an all-in price of 2.92% and brought the total value of bond issuances to £600 million since launching in May. This is the cheapest ever housing association bond, and the cheapest debt of any kind for 27 years. It is also the first bond in the sector to break the 3% barrier.

Through the Rent to Buy programme, the Government is providing £400 million of low cost loans to housing associations to build new homes between 2015 and 2018. This programme will act as a springboard to home ownership for aspirational working households on lower incomes. The Rent to Buy programme will enable us to deliver thousands of new, high quality homes to help those who need them at a far lower cost to the taxpayer. This fund will deliver 8,000 to 10,000 new homes, helping households to move from renting to owning, while giving very good value to taxpayers.

In addition to direct funding, the Government's Private Rented Sector Taskforce is continuing to accelerate the development of the private rented sector as an investment market and has helped to generate aspirations to invest over £10 billion of domestic and foreign investment in this tenure. The Taskforce is holding a conference to launch their Build to Rent guide for local authorities later this month.

Ensuring a professional industry

The Coalition Government has not jeopardised investment in the sector by increasing red tape and unnecessary regulation. Instead we want to drive up standards in the sector and improve the level of professionalism amongst landlords. We have:

- Published "How to Rent", an accessible guide with clear advice for tenants on their rights and responsibilities with advice on what to do if something goes wrong;
- Issued a Model Tenancy Agreement which sets out a fair balance between the rights and responsibilities of the tenant and landlord and which can be used for longer tenancy arrangements, helping to reduce voids and letting agency fees;
- Rejected calls for statist rent controls, which would destroy investment in new and existing rented properties, reduce supply and ultimately force up rents;
- Introduced a new code of practice in September 2014 to improve the sector's professionalism, so all landlords and agents understand what they should deliver;
- Required all letting agents and property managers to belong to one of the three government-approved redress scheme. This will offer a clear and simple route for landlords and tenants to pursue complaints about their agent and where complaints are upheld they could receive compensation;
- Ensured full transparency on letting agents' fees shortly All letting agents will have to publicise, prominently in their offices and on their websites a full tariff of their fees, whether or not they are a member of a client money protection scheme and which redress scheme they have joined. Transparency will encourage competition on fee levels and enable choice on service provided not

just cost. We have considered but ruled out a ban on fees, as this will simply increase rents for tenants.

We are today publishing a short guide Renting a Safe Home which will help tenants recognise potentially harmful hazards in the home, such as damp, mould and excess cold and what to do about them. This will help tenants avoid properties with potential health hazards.

Supporting leasehold properties

There is an estimated 4.1 million leasehold dwellings in England, 1.6 million of which are in the private rented sector. My Department announced in August a number of areas that we are looking to address. A package of works is therefore being taken forward, which includes making it easier for tenants associations to be recognised and improving the provision of pre-purchase information to enable informed decisions to be made.

Ensuring high standards for Park Homes

We are committed to ensuring that the rights of park home residents are respected and the sites they live on are healthy and safe. Many have suffered over the years from unscrupulous site operators. We have already introduced important new measures under the Mobile Homes Act 2013 which have given residents important new rights to improve their lives and protect them from rogue site owners.

We have given local authorities powers for the first time, to issue compliance notices requiring a site owner to carry out any necessary work to the site to comply with their licence obligations. In an emergency, a local authority may also enter a site and do the works if it considers there is an imminent risk to the health and safety of residents. The local authority will in any of these cases be able to recover all its enforcement costs directly from the site owner.

To ensure the costs of carrying out their licensing functions did not fall unfairly on council taxpayers we gave local authorities powers to charge site owners an annual fee for administering and monitoring existing licences.

Each local authority must publish its policy on how it will set the fees, showing clearly this is reasonable and will do no more than recover the council's costs. To ensure the system for charging fees was fully transparent, we published a guide for local authorities on setting site licensing fees, which provides options for setting fees and devising their fees policy. We also published a guide for site owners on the new enforcement regime introduced by the 2013 Act.

The new Park Homes site licensing regime gives local authorities more effective control of conditions on mobile home sites. In appropriate cases, it provides local authorities with the tools required to take enforcement action including the power to serve compliance notices in relation to breaches of site licence conditions, emergency action powers, and the ability to carry out works in default

and recover expenses. We have today issued enforcement guidance to local authorities on how to use their new powers to best effect.

We have given local authorities powers to refuse to grant a new application or transfer of a site licence. We have today issued guidance which sets out the matters an authority can take into account when considering an application including the funding and management arrangements in place for managing the site and complying with the licence.

Getting the right balance on regulation

We made a commitment to take forward a review of property conditions in the private rented sector. A discussion paper, *Review of Property Conditions in the Private Rented Sector*, was subsequently published last year seeking views on what more can be done to improve property conditions in the private rented sector, and how best to tackle bad landlords without negatively impacting on the good ones. The Government's response has been published today.

- We are issuing updated guidance to local authority officers to help them identify and successfully prosecute rogue landlords and letting agents. We made available £6.7 million to a number of local authorities to help tackle the acute and complex problems they face in tackling rogue landlords in their area, which includes action on "Beds in Sheds". So far nearly 40,000 properties have been inspected and over 3,000 landlords are now facing further action or prosecution for breaking the law;

- We have laid secondary legislation to reform selective licencing schemes, giving councils more discretion to target action against by rogue landlords. At the same time, the new measures put tighter checks and balances on the introduction of blanket licensing, which increases costs on responsible landlords and drives up tenants' rents;

- We are protecting tenants against retaliatory eviction where they have a legitimate complaint and made the eviction process more straightforward in appropriate circumstances. Subject to the Deregulation Bill receiving Royal Assent, these provisions will come into effect in October 2015;

- We are clarifying tenant deposit protection legislation in response to recent court cases. As a result where landlords took a deposit prior to the introduction of the tenancy deposit protection legislation on 6 April 2007 in respect of a tenancy which (a) rolled over into a statutory periodic tenancy on or after that date and (b) is still in existence when the Deregulation Bill shortly receives Royal Assent will have a period of 90 days from the date of Royal Assent to protect their tenant's deposit or potentially face a fine.

- We are laying legislation requiring landlords to install smoke alarms on every floor of their property, and test them at the start of every tenancy. Landlords would also need to install carbon monoxide alarms in high risk rooms – such as those where a solid fuel heating system is installed; affirmative resolution secondary

legislation is being laid and subject to Parliamentary approval, the provisions will come into effect in October 2015; we have worded the secondary legislation to allow for rollover to the next Parliament if necessary;

We believe this is the right balance to ensure high standards, whilst avoid excessive red tape which would reduce supply and force up rents. By working constructively with landlords and the property sector and supporting free enterprise, tenants will benefit from a better range of quality rented accommodation and competitive rents.

Copies of the documents associated with these announcements have been placed in the Library of the House.

EDUCATION

■ Asbestos Management in Schools

Minister of State for Schools (Mr David Laws):

[\[HCWS414\]](#)

On Thursday 12 March I published the Department for Education's review of asbestos management in schools. The review was initiated following a statement by the Department of Health's Committee on Carcinogenicity on the vulnerability of children to asbestos compared with adults in 2013.

It is important for the safety and health of all staff and children in schools that asbestos is managed properly. The Department for Education has a role to support schools, and those legally responsible for managing school buildings such as local authorities and academy trusts, in ensuring that they are fully aware of their responsibilities and are executing them effectively.

This review sets out the steps we will take to enhance our role in supporting the management of asbestos in schools. First, we are publishing refreshed, more user-friendly, guidance and ensuring it is widely disseminated, so that all of those with a responsibility for keeping their schools safe know and understand how to manage asbestos.

Second, we want to improve accountability in the system, and are proposing to gather data to ensure those responsible for asbestos management are fulfilling their duties. The Department will consult with stakeholders to ensure we do this in the most effective and efficient way possible.

We will continue to invest in the school estate in a way that ensures asbestos can be dealt with adequately and that, over time and where appropriate, we see a reduction in the number of schools buildings with asbestos-containing materials. And we will continue to seek to improve the evidence base on asbestos levels and asbestos management in schools, so that we can ensure our policies fully respond to any barriers to the effective management of asbestos in schools.

This publication builds upon the extensive investment made by this government in improving the condition of our schools, including most recently last month's

announcements of a further £6 billion of investment. Copies of the review have been placed in the House library.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Informal meeting of EU Foreign Ministers (Gymnich): 6–7 March 2015

Minister for Europe (Mr David Lidington):

[\[HCWS415\]](#)

My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs attended the informal Foreign Ministers meeting on 6–7 March in Riga, Latvia.

The informal format of the Gymnich allows EU Foreign Ministers to engage in a free-ranging discussion on a number of issues. In contrast to the formal Foreign Affairs Council (FAC), Ministers do not agree written Conclusions. The next FAC is due to be held on 16 March. The Gymnich was chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini. Discussion centred on Libya, Ukraine/Russia, Eastern Partnership and European Neighbourhood Policy Review.

Elmar Brok MEP, Chairman of the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs and the OSCE Secretary General, Lamberto Zannier attended the discussion on Ukraine / Russia. Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations also attended. Foreign Ministers from EU Candidate Countries joined EU Ministers for a session on the European Neighbourhood.

Gymnich discussion

Libya

UN Special Envoy to Libya, Bernardino Leon joined the discussion by telephone and gave a broadly positive outline of the talks in Rabat. Ms Mogherini stressed the EU's support for the talks and highlighted the need for the March FAC to prepare for the discussion on Libya at the March European Council. The EU was looking at all options for Libya, including possible missions and operations.

Ukraine/Russia

OSCE Secretary General Zannier briefed Ministers on progress in the OSCE's tasking in support of the implementation of the Minsk Agreements, and provided his assessment of the situation on the ground. Mr Zannier welcomed the EU's readiness to increase availability of personnel, resources and technical support to strengthen the effectiveness and the mandate of the OSCE Monitoring Mission. Ministers expressed support for the role of the OSCE.

EU Ministers highlighted the importance of fully implementing the Minsk Agreements and noted the fragility of the situation. The Foreign Secretary argued that economic sanctions should remain in place until the Minsk agreements had

been fully implemented to strengthen the likelihood of full compliance. The Foreign Secretary also noted the anniversary of Crimea's illegal annexation, highlighting the human rights violations, especially towards the minority Tatar population.

Ms Mogherini emphasised that the EU should be ready to increase economic pressure on Russia if there was further escalation, but the question of sanctions should be left to the March European Council. Meanwhile the Special Monitoring Mission should get all necessary support. Ms Mogherini emphasised need for EU unity in handling Russia.

Eastern Partnership (EaP): Riga Summit (21-22 May)

Ms Mogherini set out her view that the Riga EaP Summit's political messages should be: commitment to the Eastern Partnership; a differentiated approach; the importance of implementing reforms; and a cooperative, not divisive approach. The challenges would include managing expectations on European perspectives, and ensuring coherent political messages. The Summit would also be discussed at the March FAC and at a joint EaP Ministerial in the margins of the April FAC in Luxembourg.

European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Review

Ms Mogherini drew attention to the launch of the review process through the EEAS and Commission Joint Communication published on 4 March. There would be an ENP discussion at the April FAC. Consultations on the review will run until June, with final proposals emerging in the autumn.

Assessment of the impact of changes in the global environment

Ms Mogherini updated Ministers on the ongoing analysis of changes in the global environment as tasked by the December 2013 European Council. Initial findings will be presented to Ministers for discussion at the May FAC, which will inform a paper for discussion at the June European Council.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

■ VE Day 70th Anniversary

Leader of the House of Commons (Mr William Hague):

[\[HCWS416\]](#)

I would like to inform the House of plans to commemorate the 70th anniversary of VE Day. On VE Day in 1945 millions of people across the UK and abroad, shared a sense of relief and euphoria that the war in Europe was over. The 70th anniversary is an opportunity to remember the sacrifice and sheer determination of the people who saw us through this dark period, give thanks to all those who so bravely played their part and celebrate peace and reconciliation. The three days of events will commence on Friday 8 May at 1500, the moment Sir Winston Churchill made his famous speech declaring that the war in Europe was over. There will be a national two minute silence followed by a Service of

Remembrance at the Cenotaph, with wreaths laid in tribute, including by representatives of veteran organisations. Schools will be taking part in a range of activities. In the evening, a chain of beacons will be lit across the UK to mark the transition from remembrance to celebration. On Saturday 9 May, cathedrals, churches and others will ring bells, ships will sound their horns and in the evening there will be a live commemorative concert broadcast from Horse Guards Parade. Central London will reflect the spirit of VE Day with flags flying and illumination of landmarks; from Trafalgar Square, along the Mall, Whitehall and in Parliament Square. On Sunday 10 May, there will be a Service of Thanksgiving in Westminster Abbey and later, military and civilian veterans and their representatives will parade through Whitehall. In the afternoon there will be a reception for the veterans and a flypast by aircraft, including the Spitfire and the Lancaster. Throughout the weekend communities and families will bring the commemorations to life in the way which is most meaningful for them, whether this is a picnic in the park, a street party, exhibitions or formal receptions. The programme of events will be staged in partnership with a large number of organisations, including the Royal British Legion, and I thank them in advance for their passion and commitment to making VE Day 70 a success. I hope as many people as possible of all ages and from all walks of life will take the opportunity to reflect on, and mark, this important anniversary in our history and give thanks to those that contributed so much.

PRIME MINISTER

■ The Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings

Prime Minister (Mr David Cameron):

[\[HCWS417\]](#)

I would like to update the House that a report into the main findings of the Muslim Brotherhood Review will be published alongside the Government's new counter-extremism strategy.

As we consider broader policy questions emerging from the review and the wider strategy, it is clear that further, more comprehensive measures will be required in the next Parliament to tackle the threat from extremism in the UK, and to support communities to challenge those who oppose British values.