



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 4 June 2015 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:35 P.M., 04 June 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 **90000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ FIFA

Clive Efford: [\[626\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, whether criminal investigations are being carried out to determine whether UK financial institutions have been used to carry out illegal transactions related to FIFA.

Clive Efford: [\[627\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, when the Serious Fraud Office first became aware that UK financial institutions may have been used to carry out illegal transactions relating to FIFA; what action was taken; and when he was first made aware of this possibility.

Robert Buckland:

The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) has been aware of allegations relating to FIFA for some time and has kept the situation under active review. It would not be appropriate to go into the details of those allegations.

For the SFO to open an investigation, the Director must be satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to suspect serious or complex fraud within the UK's criminal jurisdiction.

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

■ Conditions of Employment

Louise Haigh: [\[184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what his policy is on whether workplace regulations should form part of the UK's negotiations on future EU membership.

Anna Soubry:

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has started to discuss his plans for EU reform and renegotiation with other EU leaders. He has been clear that the plans involve reforming welfare and immigration rules, increasing economic competitiveness and cutting red tape to create jobs and growth for hard working families, and protecting Britain's interests outside the euro. It also means halting the constant flow of powers to Brussels including by ensuring a stronger role for national Parliaments.

■ Students: Grants

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the cost was of (a) partial and (b) full maintenance grants in (i) 2012-13, (ii) 2013-14 and (iii) 2014-15.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the cost was of partial maintenance grants to households earning less than £17,000 each year in (a) 2012-13, (b) 2013-14 and (c) 2014-15.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the cost was of full maintenance grants to households earning less than £17,000 each year in (a) 2012-13, (b) 2013-14 and (c) 2014-15.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the cost was of partial maintenance grants to households earning more than £17,000 each year in (a) 2012-13, (b) 2013-14 and (c) 2014-15.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the cost was of full maintenance grants to households earning more than £17,000 each year in (a) 2012-13, (b) 2013-14 and (c) 2014-15.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the cost of full maintenance grants to households earning (a) more and (b) less than £17,000 per year was in (i) 2012-13, (ii) 2013-14 and (iii) 2014-15.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the cost of partial maintenance grants to households earning (a) more and (b) less than £17,000 per year was in (i) 2012-13, (ii) 2013-14 and (iii) 2014-15.

Joseph Johnson:

The Student Loans Company (SLC) administers student support for each of the UK Government Administrations. Information on English applicants awarded Maintenance Grants is published annually by SLC in the Statistical First Release '*Student Support for Higher Education England*'.

The amount of Maintenance Grants awarded to English applicants by their household income for the academic years 2012/13, 2013/14, and 2014/15 has been provided in the table.

Maintenance Grants ⁽¹⁾ awarded ⁽²⁾ to English applicants by their household income

Academic years 2012/13, 2013/14, and 2014/15 [provisional] ⁽³⁾

		AMOUNT AWARDED (£ MILLION)		
Maintenance Grant level	Household income	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15 [p]
Full	Less than or equal to £17,000	973.6	1103.6	1076.0
	More than £17,000	233.3	251.7	255.4
Partial ⁽⁴⁾	Less than or equal to £17,000	1.9	1.8	0.4
	More than £17,000	224.6	235.0	233.9

Source: Student Loans Company

Notes:

(1) Figures include Special Support Grants, which are payable in place of Maintenance Grants to vulnerable students who may otherwise have their DWP benefits reduced.

(2) Awards do not necessarily translate into payments. An awarded applicant will only receive payments once SLC have received confirmation from the student's provider at the start of the academic year that the student has been registered on the course.

(3) The data are effective at November following each academic year. Figures for the academic year 2014/15 are provisional, as they are effective at November at the beginning of the academic year, and so will not include applicants who were awarded Maintenance Grants after November 2014. Complete figures for the academic year 2014/15 will be available from November 2015.

(4) Applicants awarded a partial grant, and whose household income is less than £25,000, are typically those who have suspended study for part of the year.

■ Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

Paul Flynn:

[\[271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, if he will make it his policy that the arbitration mechanism to be included in the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership will not be carried out by a for-profit company.

Anna Soubry:

The detail of the arbitration mechanisms contained in the EU-US Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will be the result of on-going negotiations between the EU and the US.

Any arbitration conducted under the EU-US FTA would involve a fair and transparent procedure, with a range of public and private sector participants including, EU and Member States, investors and arbitrators, with all parties to the dispute able to appoint their own lawyers.

Arbitration proceedings under an international investment treaty are typically carried out on an ad hoc basis, with the tribunal constituted solely for the purpose of resolving a single dispute. The costs of the arbitration are apportioned according to the arbitrators' findings. Disputing parties may rely upon an international institution, such as the World Bank or the United Nations to provide the procedural rules for the tribunal. These services are provided on a non-profit basis.

Mr Christopher Chope:[\[657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, when he expects the TTIP negotiations between the EU and the US to be concluded.

Anna Soubry:

The UK Government remains strongly committed to completing an ambitious EU-US Free Trade Agreement (EU-US FTA), also known as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). We are pressing for an agreement under the current US Administration, which means we need to see tangible progress by end-2015.

Following the most recent negotiating round which took place between 20 and 24 April in New York, there continues to be good progress on the technical work which would underpin the final deal. However, in order to reach an agreement in principle this year, the European Commission, EU Member States and the US will need to work closely together over the coming months. The next negotiating round is due to take place in July.

■ York College**Rachael Maskell:**[\[448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what funding from the public purse was allocated to York College in each of the last 10 years.

Nick Boles:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 23 March 2015 to Question UIN [228227](#) regarding further education funding.

The Department provides funding for adult further education and higher education. Adult skills funding allocations to further education providers are published on the Skills Funding Agency website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-funding-allocations-to-training-providers-2014-to-2015>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-funding-allocations-to-training-providers-2005-to-2013>

For higher education, Table 1 shows the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) funding to York College between financial years 2005-06 and 2014-15.

Funding to further education providers for learners aged 16-18 is provided by the Department for Education.

Table 1: HEFCE funding to York College, 2005-06 to 2014-15

FINANCIAL YEAR	FUNDING (THOUSANDS)
2005-06	£1,175
2006-07	£1,086
2007-08	£1,153
2008-09	£1,338
2009-10	£1,753
2010-11	£1,750
2011-12	£1,764
2012-13	£1,380
2013-14	£848
2014-15	£415

Rachael Maskell:

[449]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what information his Department holds on the number of pupils at York College in each of the last 10 years.

Nick Boles:

Table 1 shows the number of government funded further education learners participating at York College between academic years 2004/05 and 2013/14.

Table 1: Further education and skills participation by academic year for York College, 2004/05 to 2013/14

ACADEMIC YEAR	LEARNERS
2004/05	13,470
2005/06	9,190
2006/07	8,100

ACADEMIC YEAR	LEARNERS
2007/08	8,440
2008/09	8,650
2009/10	7,940
2010/11	6,260
2011/12	6,180
2012/13	7,030
2013/14	6,480

Notes:

- 1) Volumes are rounded to the nearest ten.
- 2) Full-year numbers are a count of the number of learners that participated at any point during the year.

CABINET OFFICE■ **Elections: Proof of Identity**

Emily Thornberry: [\[516\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Answer of 21 May 2012, Official Report, column 483W, on voter identification, whether the Government plans to bring forward legislative proposals during the course of the current Parliament to require voters to produce photographic identification at polling stations.

John Penrose:

The Government considers tackling electoral fraud as a high priority and believes that more needs to be done to safeguard the integrity of elections.

The Electoral Commission has been developing proposals for a scheme to require voters in polling stations to provide identification before they can be issued with ballot papers. The Government will consider these proposals in due course.

■ **Electoral Register**

Emily Thornberry: [\[108\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Written Statement of 5 July 2013, Official Report, column 71WS, what proportion of (a) the Targeted Canvassing Fund, (b) the ERO Registration Fund, (c) the Innovation Fund and (d) Schools Outreach has been spent in (i) England, Wales and Scotland combined, (ii) England, (iii) London, (iv) the London Borough of Islington and (v) Islington South and Finsbury constituency to date.

John Penrose:

In July 2013 £4.2million funding was announced to support efforts aimed at increasing the completeness and accuracy of the register. In October 2013 £385,848 of this funding was awarded to 24 successful Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) applicants. The remainder of the funding, as announced on 5 February 2014, was shared between every ERO in Great Britain and five national organisations. Full information is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/funding-for-new-ways-to-encourage-voter-registration>

In addition almost £10million was invested in 2014/15 aimed at maximising levels of voter registration with £6.8million being shared among every ERO in Great Britain.

Louise Haigh:[\[185\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of people (a) entitled and (b) registered to vote in each parliamentary constituency at the May 2015 general election.

John Penrose:

The Office for National Statistics has published electoral statistics for those registered to vote based on the registers published on 1 December 2014 in England and Wales and 28 February in Scotland. They can be found here:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/pop-estimate/electoral-statistics-for-uk/2014/index.html>

The Electoral Commission made its assessment of the registers used for the General Election on 7 May and plan to publish their report in June.

Emily Thornberry:[\[222\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the effect of the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration on (a) the incidence of electoral fraud and (b) public perceptions of the integrity of the electoral system.

John Penrose:

A report on allegations of electoral fraud reported to police forces in the UK is published each year jointly by the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission also publishes an annual UK wide public opinion survey (the 'Winter Tracker') which asks the public for its views on electoral fraud.

■ Electorate**Emily Thornberry:**[\[288\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many UK citizens of voting age are currently living overseas; and how many citizens of EU countries of voting age excluding the UK, Ireland, Cyprus and Malta live in (a) the UK and (b) Islington South and Finsbury constituency.

John Penrose:

There are no official Government statistics on the number of UK citizens of voting age resident overseas, but the World Bank's "Estimates of Migrants Stocks in 2010" as updated by the UN Department for Social and Economic Affairs in 2013 estimates there were approximately 5.2 million British born migrants living overseas.

The Office for National Statistics' Annual Population Survey estimates that the total number of EU citizens (excluding British citizens) resident in the UK was 2,507,000 in 2013 (excluding the citizens of Ireland, Cyprus and Malta). The estimates are broken down by local authority rather than Parliamentary constituency.

■ Honours: Northern Ireland

Jim Shannon: [\[682\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many nominations for honours were made through the Northern Ireland Assembly in each year since its inception; and whether the nomination was successful in each such case.

Matthew Hancock:

Since 2012, no honours nominations are recorded as being from the Northern Ireland Assembly. For the period 1998 and 2012, the information requested is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ National Security

Vernon Coaker: [\[595\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what progress the Government has made on developing the next National Security Strategy; and when he expects that Strategy to be completed.

Mr Oliver Letwin:

Work has now begun on the 2015 National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review. We expect the Review to report towards the end of the year.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Help to Buy Scheme**

Emily Thornberry: [\[169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the average cost of homes sold to first-time buyers under the Help to Buy scheme in (a) England, (b) London, (c) London Borough of Islington and (d) Islington South and Finsbury constituency in each of the last four years.

Brandon Lewis:

Information on the average cost of homes sold to first time buyers under Help to Buy is not currently published. However available figures show the average cost of all homes sold under the Help to Buy: Mortgage Guarantee scheme as £163,921 for England and

£287,109 for London. Available figures for the Help to Buy: Equity Loan scheme show the average cost of all homes was £212,932 for England.

Neil Coyle:

[284]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans his Department has to develop the Help to Buy scheme to ensure it supports people in (a) Bermondsey and Old Southwark constituency, (b) London and (c) the UK.

Brandon Lewis:

This Government is committed to supporting people's aspirations to own their own home.

By 31 March 2015, almost 100,000 families have bought a home with the assistance of the Help to Buy schemes in the UK. This includes 27 families in the Bermondsey and Old Southwark constituency and 5,819 families in London.

At Budget 2014, the Chancellor announced that the Help to Buy Equity Loan scheme would be extended to 2020 providing a further £6 billion to support 120,000 more people into home ownership.

Official statistics on Help to Buy: Equity Loan scheme sales, at 31 March in England, broken down by constituency, local authority and postcode, are available at:

www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/help-to-buy-equity-loan-scheme-monthly-statistics

Official statistics on Help to Buy: Mortgage Guarantee sales, at 31 March, broken down by constituency, local authority and postcode are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/help-to-buy-mortgage-guarantee-scheme-quarterly-statistics-october-2013-to-march-2015>

Official statistics on Help to Buy: New Buy sales, at 31 March, broken down by local authority are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/help-to-buy-equity-loan-scheme-monthly-statistics>. Figures are not available by constituency.

■ **Mayors: Liverpool**

John Pugh:

[208]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, on what dates and occasions Ministers or other representatives of his Department met the Mayor of Liverpool in the last six months.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Details of Ministers' meetings and those of the Permanent Secretary with external organisations are published on-line here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dclg-ministerial-data>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dclg-permanent-secretary-data-2014#history>

■ Right to Buy Scheme: Kingston Upon Hull

Diana Johnson: [238]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many right to buy homes have been bought in Hull in each of the last 10 years.

Brandon Lewis:

Statistics on annual Right to Buy sales for each local authority district in England are published in the Department's table 685 which is available at the following link:

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

■ Urban Areas: Trade Promotion

Sir Greg Knight: [305]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what (a) advice and (b) assistance he has recently provided to local authorities to help them promote trade in town centres; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Government has provided a range of advice and assistance to help town centre partners, including local authorities, to promote trade and create vibrant town centres. These include guidance on discretionary rate relief, Business Improvement Districts, digital high streets and guides that showcase successful local initiatives. We also developed the 'Kick Start Your High Street' action pack which contains a range of practical guides and support for councils and local people.

In addition, since 2010, the Government has provided over £1.4 billion in business rates support, helped create over 360 town teams and given over £18 million to towns – boosting struggling town centres with the High Streets Innovation Fund and launching successful initiatives such as "Love your Local Market" and the "Great British High Street" Portal and Awards.

The Great British High Street Awards, now in its second year, is in full swing and is currently open for entries. Winners across the seven categories (London; City; Town centre; Market town; Coastal community; Local centre; Village) share a cash prize, but more importantly, receive mentoring and support such as free training to develop digital skills for local businesses.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Arts: Pay**

Kerry McCarthy: [900107]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on trends in the number of low-paid and unpaid jobs in the entertainment industry.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

My Right Hon. Friend the Secretary of State shares a commitment with his counterpart in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to supporting the creative industries, and the two Departments regularly discuss issues of concern to the sector. National Minimum Wage underpins wage levels for those at work and applies equally in the creative sector as elsewhere. Creative SkillSet has published guidelines and a toolkit for employers to promote best practice and legal responsibilities for work placements in the sector.

■ **BBC: Finance****Mr Peter Bone:**[\[560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to reform funding of the BBC.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

My Right Hon. Friend the Secretary of State is aware of the range of opinions that have been expressed over the future of BBC funding and the licence fee in particular. All aspects of the BBC are up for debate as part of the Charter Review. The Secretary of State is currently considering options for how this will run and will make an announcement in due course.

■ **Brass Bands****Jason McCartney:**[\[900111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to promote and support brass bands.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

This Government continues to recognise the important place that brass bands have in British culture and their local communities. Before the end of the last Parliament, the Treasury confirmed that the new orchestra tax relief will be available to the full range of orchestras, including large brass bands. Orchestra tax relief will be available from April 2016.

■ **Broadband****Neil Coyle:**[\[285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what plans his Department has to improve access to high speed internet for people in (a) former dockyard areas and (b) rural communities.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Current superfast broadband coverage is over 80% of UK premises and the Government remains committed to providing access to superfast broadband for 95% of homes and businesses by December 2017. In areas of the country covered by the Superfast Broadband Programme, projects are managed by Local Authorities who can agree their own priority areas with their supplier. There is no superfast broadband project under the

programme in London, but small and medium sized enterprises in London are eligible for grants of up to £3,000 to improve their broadband connections under the Broadband Connection Voucher Scheme

■ Direct Selling

Jim Shannon: [\[678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will take steps to ensure that elderly people without sufficient means can block calls from call centres on PPI claims, accident claims and claims against banks without cost.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Under the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 (as amended) (PECR) it is a legal requirement that companies do not make unsolicited marketing calls to numbers registered on the Telephone Preference Service (TPS). Individuals can register their telephone number with the TPS and there is no charge for doing so. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) enforces the PECR and has powers to issue monetary penalties of up to £500,000 against non-compliant firms.

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is ICO's sponsoring Department. MoJ also has a dedicated unit, which regulates companies offering claim services, including for PPI, accidents and financial products.

While call blockers are available on the open market for consumers to purchase, the government is exploring options to provide free devices to people identified as being at higher risk of financial damage and personal distress as a result of nuisance calls.

■ FIFA: Corruption

Jim Shannon: [\[679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions the Sports Minister has had with FIFA on the recent FBI investigation.

Tracey Crouch:

I have not had any recent discussions with FIFA regarding the recent FBI investigation. However, I am in regular contact with The FA on matters related to the governance of FIFA.

■ Football

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[900113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment his Department has made of the structure and governance of the Football League.

Tracey Crouch:

The Football League have made some significant steps forward over the past few years, particularly on issues like financial sustainability of their clubs. However, the events of this last week have shown us the importance of the highest standards of governance, of

independence and of transparency. This is what I will continue to ask of all our sports bodies in the UK and the football authorities in this country are no different.

■ Gaming Machines

Graham Jones:

[900110]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the efficacy of current legislation on fixed-odds betting terminals; and if he will bring forward proposals for local authorities to determine locally the provision of such gaming machines.

Tracey Crouch:

New legislation came into force to improve player protections on FOBTs in April, and the law was also changed to require planning applications to be submitted to local authorities for new betting shops. Government measures on FOBTs are very new, but we are working with the Gambling Commission and industry to ensure they are effectively evaluated.

We are also pushing the industry to do more on social responsibility, including self-exclusion pilots that are currently underway in Chatham and Medway. This is the first multi-operator scheme of its kind.

I will be meeting with the Gambling Commission, Association for British Bookmakers and the Campaign for Fairer Gambling next week to discuss FOBTs and related issues.

■ Internet: Children

Chris Bryant:

[618]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to introduce age-restriction controls for websites.

Chris Bryant:

[619]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will introduce an independent regulator for website age-restriction controls in 2015.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Government is considering its approach to delivering this commitment, and will share its plans in due course. Helping parents to protect their children from inappropriate and harmful content online remains a top priority for the Government. Work will continue on the measures implemented under the previous administration, these include easy to use parental control filters in the home.

Ministers will engage with the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) and other key stakeholders as this policy is developed.

■ Mobile Phones

Chris Bryant: [564]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will publish the Statement of Commitment signed with the mobile network operators in December 2014.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Statement of Commitment was published on 12 March 2015 as part of the Government's response to the consultation on 'Tackling Partial Not-Spots in Mobile Coverage'. This is available online at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/412618/Government_Response_FINAL_1_.pdf

■ Museums, Libraries and Archives Council

Chris Bryant: [615]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when the liquidation of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council will be complete.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council is effectively liquidated and will end as a legal entity in due course.

■ National Lottery

Bridget Phillipson: [900105]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to make the allocation of National Lottery funding more open and transparent.

Tracey Crouch:

The National Lottery etc. Act 1993 sets out clearly the four good causes that the lottery supports and the precise proportions of funding which each of the 12 Lottery distribution bodies receive. Government requires each distributor to make their guidance on how to apply for grant funding, and their policies for the appraisal of applications, widely available to the public, ensuring their decisions are open and transparent.

■ Public Libraries

Chris Bryant: [613]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many libraries (a) closed and (b) switched to being run by volunteers between 2010 and 2015.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

With reference to the answer I gave on 10 February 2015 to Question 222966 our desktop research has identified some further static library closures that have taken place between 7 May 2010 and 8 May 2015. Our estimate is that up to 100 static libraries

have closed during this period. The DCMS does not collect information on the number of volunteer-run libraries.

■ Public Libraries: WiFi

Chris Bryant: [\[614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many public libraries do not have free wifi; by what date he plans that all public libraries will have access to free wifi; and what the cost to his Department will be of providing all remaining libraries with free wifi.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

Current desktop research indicates that up to 800 public libraries do not currently have Wi-Fi. On 18 March it was announced, as part of the Budget 2015, that £7.4m is being made available to help all public libraries to install WiFi. This programme will be run via Arts Council England who aim to launch the scheme in July.

DEFENCE

■ Chief of Defence Materiel

Douglas Chapman: [\[359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many people of each grade and payroll cost work for the Chief of Defence Materiel.

Mr Philip Dunne:

A breakdown of the people who work in Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), including their grade and salary band, is published on the gov.uk website as part of the Government's Transparency Agenda at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mod-roles-and-salaries-2014>.

This organogram is updated twice per year and the latest publication reflects the position in DE&S as at 30 September 2014. The next iteration, which will reflect the position as at 31 March 2015, is due to be published shortly.

■ Clyde Naval Base: Security

Brendan O'Hara: [\[385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what access is given to civilian contractors at HMNB Clyde and RNAD Coulport aboard and alongside nuclear armed submarines; what vetting is required for civilian personnel; how many civilian contractors from each company have been (i) refused security clearance at the base and (ii) had their security clearance revoked; and what the reason was in each instance in each of the last five years.

Penny Mordaunt:

All personnel are required to undergo the appropriate level of National Security Vetting (NSV) for the role they undertake, in accordance with Her Majesty's Government's Security Policy Framework. In addition, Her Majesty's Naval Base Clyde and Royal Navy Armament Depot Coulport operate on a "need for access" and "need to know" basis,

which means that even permanent staff are prohibited from entering areas outside of their remit.

The information requested in answer to your further questions is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. Security clearance applications can be denied or security clearances withdrawn for a number of reasons. It is not our policy to comment on specific vetting cases.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment the Joint Terrorist Analysis Centre, Royal Navy Fleet Intelligence, MI5 and MDP special branch have made of threats to security at HMNB Clyde and RNAD Coulport; what those threats are in order of the likelihood of them occurring; and what steps are being taken to address those threats.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[388\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what defences are in place to protect HMNB Clyde and RNAD Coulport from possible terrorist attack from the air.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what defences exist against a momentum vessel attack on the Explosive Handling Jetty at RNAD Coulport.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Ministry of Defence works closely with wider national police, security and intelligence organisations, including the Security Service, to ensure it maintains effective protection for all defence assets against a range of threats. We do not comment on detailed intelligence or security measures to protect defence nuclear assets.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many vessels transit by RNAD Coulport en route to Finnart Oil Terminal each year; and whether those vessels are boarded by Military Police during the transit.

Penny Mordaunt:

Between 1 June 2014 and 31 May 2015 146 tankers transited to and from Finnart Oil Terminal.

We do not comment on specific security procedures as this would, or would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ Defence Reform Review

Douglas Chapman: [\[406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many of the recommendations of the Defence Reform report, published in June 2011, have been successfully implemented.

Mr Philip Dunne:

My right hon. friend, the Defence Secretary (Michael Fallon), released a written statement to the House on 17 December 2014 (Official Report, column 95ws) on

Defence Reform: Review of Implementation, and placed a summary of progress against the Defence Reform recommendations in the Library of the House. I have attached an updated version of the summary. I will also place an updated copy in the Library as the version provided was found to have serial 12c missing in error.

Attachments:

1. 406 - Recommendations of Defence Reform Report [20150601 53 recs table for PQ406(1).XLS]
2. WMS Hansard Extract on Defence Reform [20141217 WMS - Defence Reform Review of Implementation.doc]

■ **Defence Reform Review: Costs**

Douglas Chapman: [\[405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the cost to his Department was of the Defence Reform report, published in June 2011.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Defence Reform report published in June 2011 was the result of the review led by the Defence Reform steering group, chaired by the noble Lord, Lord Levene. None of the steering group were paid for this task and the team supporting the review comprised staff reallocated from other duties at no additional cost to the Department beyond some £10,000 incurred on travel and subsistence.

■ **Future Large Aircraft**

Vernon Coaker: [\[552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment he has made of the efficacy of the procurement of the A400M.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The procurement of the A400M aircraft remains on track to meet both its Key User Requirement and capability milestones on time, including Initial Operating Capacity in late 2015, subject to any delay resulting from the recent tragic accident involving the loss of a pre-delivery aircraft in Spain.

The programme is continually reviewed by the Senior Responsible Owner through regular Programme Boards and is subject to independent review including the Office of Government Commerce and the Major Project Review.

■ **HMS Bulwark**

Jim Shannon: [\[681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the cost to his Department is of HMS Bulwark rescuing migrants in the Mediterranean.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Ministry of Defence is contributing to an international search and rescue operation in the Mediterranean to rescue migrants, of which HMS Bulwark is providing an essential part. The additional costs of using military assets in support of this international

assistance effort are to be borne by the UK Aid budget, as it is eligible as Official Development Assistance, and as such there will be no additional costs attributable to Defence for the use of HMS Bulwark.

■ HMS Vanguard: Repairs and Maintenance

Paul Flynn: [\[137\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the reported problems with the main hydraulic plant on HMS Vanguard; and whether each such reported defect has been resolved.

Paul Flynn: [\[138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department of reported inadequacies in the missile control and monitoring position procedures on HMS Vanguard.

Mr Philip Dunne:

I have interpreted this question to refer to recent claims made about HMS Victorious.

As the Secretary of State for Defence (Michael Fallon) said in his Written Statement of 28 May 2015 (Column 1WS), and as was reiterated during the Adjournment Debate the same day (Column 293), I can assure the House and the general public that the recently reported comments and concerns raised by an Able Seaman following his first submarine deployment have been thoroughly investigated. That investigation concluded that neither the operational effectiveness of our continuous at-sea deterrent nor the safety of our submariners or members of the public has been compromised.

Attachments:

1. WMS Hansard Extract 28 May 2015 [Written Statements.doc 28 May HOC 129.doc]
2. WMS Hansard Extract Adjournment Debate 28 May 2015 [28 May 2015.doc HM N Naval Base Clyde.doc]

■ Katrice Lee

Mr Iain Wright: [\[330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on what dates the Royal Military Police (a) made contact and (b) met with the German authorities in (i) 2014 and (ii) 2015 on the case of Katrice Lee.

Mr Iain Wright: [\[331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he expects Operation Bute to be concluded; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Lancaster:

The Royal Military Police made contact with the German authorities on three occasions in 2014 and five in 2015. In addition they met with the German authorities in 2012 and 2013 to discuss the case. The table below provides dates of the contacts with the German authorities in 2014 and 2015:

2014	2015
16 July	5 January
21 October	8 January
20 November	21 April
	30 April
	6 May

As the investigation is still under way it would not be helpful to speculate on when it might conclude. However Katrice's family is being kept informed of any developments.

■ Military Aircraft

Jim Shannon: [\[680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the effect on intelligence gathering as a result of the withdrawal of maritime patrol aircraft.

Penny Mordaunt:

The decision to withdraw the Nimrod Maritime Patrol Aircraft was made in the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review. We judged that this was partially mitigated by using other maritime assets and was an acceptable risk against the threat assessment at the time. We do not normally comment on intelligence matters or media speculation relating to these. To do so would, or would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ Ministry of Defence: Public Expenditure

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of his Department's budget for each of the next five years.

Michael Fallon:

Our current planning assumption is that the Defence budget for 2015-16 will be £34 billion. Decisions on spending for 2016-17 and beyond will be determined in the next spending review. However, the Government has committed to an annual 1% real terms increase in spending on Defence equipment over this Parliament.

■ Nuclear Submarines: Accidents

Brendan O'Hara: [\[391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what collisions involving a nuclear-powered submarine and (a) another submarine, (b) another naval vessel, (c) a private vessel and (d) a merchant vessel have taken place since 2 April 2009.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what grounding incidents involving UK nuclear-powered submarines have taken place since 2 April 2009.

Penny Mordaunt:

Two such incidents have been recorded since 2 April 2009:

HMS Torbay grounded in the Eastern Mediterranean in April 2009.

HMS Astute grounded off the Isle of Skye in October 2010.

■ Nuclear Submarines: Fires

Brendan O'Hara: [\[384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what fires have taken place on UK (a) nuclear-powered and (b) nuclear-armed submarines since 3 December 2014.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Due to the nature of submarine operations, meticulous records are kept of all fire safety incidents, irrespective of how minor.

Since 3 December 2014 there has been one small-scale fire, that was categorised as minor. It was dealt with quickly and effectively using onboard resources.

■ Strategic Defence and Security Review

Vernon Coaker: [\[494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to consult (a) the public, (b) the defence industry and (c) academics on the forthcoming Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Michael Fallon:

In the Queen's Speech on 27 May 2015, the Government made clear its intention to conduct a full Strategic Defence and Security Review. Led by the Cabinet Office, the Government will consult with the academic and think tank communities, defence industry, members of Parliament and the public to inform our decision-making

Vernon Coaker: [\[594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress his Department has made on developing the next Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Michael Fallon:

Work has now begun on the 2015 National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review. The Review will build on the 2010 Review and will be informed by a refreshed National Security Risk Assessment. This work is led by the Cabinet Office in close consultation with relevant Departments including the Ministry of Defence.

■ Trident Submarines: Fire Prevention

Paul Flynn: [140]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what procedures exist to stop toilet rolls catching fire on Trident submarines; and what recent assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of any such procedures.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Strict safety rules govern the stowage of all flammable material on Trident submarines. These rules are regularly reviewed and compliance is subject to regular independent assessment.

EDUCATION

■ Academies

Kevin Brennan: [646]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information is sought from the applicant for an Academy Order for a federated school to ensure that it complies with Regulation 46 of the School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012.

Kevin Brennan: [647]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will place in the Library her Department's guidance on the requirements for governors making an application for an Academy Order on behalf of a federated school.

Kevin Brennan: [648]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of comments by a spokesman from her Department in Schools Week of 29 May 2015 that there is a technicality which needs resolving in the process of applying for an Academy Order on behalf of a federated school; and if she will revise Regulation 46 of the School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012.

Kevin Brennan: [649]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many Academy Orders made on behalf of a federated school have been made on or after 1 September 2012; and how many such applications (a) she has approved and (b) have an Academy Agreement in place.

Edward Timpson:

Guidance and an application form are available on GOV.UK for all maintained schools that are considering applying to convert to academy status - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/convert-to-an-academy-information-for-schools>.

It is for schools to ensure that they have complied with relevant requirements at the point they make their application. We are exploring if there is a need to revise Regulation 46 of the School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012 and whether additional guidance is needed to support federations of schools wishing to

convert. The Department does not hold data on federated schools that have already changed their status and are now open as academies. There are currently 30 federated schools with an approved academy order. These schools will open as academies in due course, subject to them conducting a consultation, and satisfying the Department that they have completed the necessary legal checks and processes.

■ Academies: York

Rachael Maskell: [441]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the academy funding agreement was signed for (a) Millthorpe School, (b) Scarcroft Primary School and (c) Knavesmire Primary School in York.

Rachael Maskell: [442]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the academy order was signed for (a) Millthorpe School, (b) Scarcroft Primary School and (c) Knavesmire Primary School in York.

Rachael Maskell: [443]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the stakeholder consultation was completed in order for the academy funds to be released for (a) Millthorpe School, (b) Scarcroft Primary School and (c) Knavesmire Primary School in York.

Rachael Maskell: [444]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much resource, including support grants has been granted in relation to their transfer to academy status in total to Millthorpe School, Scarcroft Primary School and Knavesmire Primary School, in York.

Edward Timpson:

These three strong primary schools in York applied to convert and were granted academy orders on 12 March 2015.

It is up to governing bodies to decide when they consult; it can be done before or after academy order but must have been completed prior to entering into the funding agreement (the legal contract establishing the academy) with the Secretary of State. The schools are consulting until 19 June 2015. The academy conversion support grant of £25,000 is paid to schools after the academy order has been issued and is not linked to completion of the consultation.

Further information about grants for academies is published online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/academy-funding#support-grant>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-academy-chain-development-grant-forms>

■ Adoption

Fiona Bruce: [214]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will assess the scope for closer co-operation between her Department and the Department of Health on raising awareness of

adoption as an option for women with unwanted pregnancies; and if she will make a statement.

Edward Timpson:

The Department for Education and the Department of Health co-operate on a wide range of issues including children's services.

Fiona Bruce:

[215]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the current level of unmet demand for adoption of children under the age of one in England and Wales.

Edward Timpson:

This information is not collated centrally.

■ **Department for Education: Jon Wood and Quantum Securities**

Tristram Hunt:

[374]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on what occasions and dates she has held meetings with (a) Jon Wood and (b) representatives of Quantum Securities Ltd; and which such meetings have been held on her Department's premises.

Nick Gibb:

The Secretary of State for Education has held no official meetings with Jon Wood or representatives of Quantum Services Limited.

■ **Department for Education: Mott MacDonald**

Steve McCabe:

[332]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 26 March 2015 to Question 228859 on special educational needs, what criteria her Department used to select Mott McDonald.

Edward Timpson:

The Department for Education procured the 2015-16 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) delivery support contract through an open tender process.

The criteria for assessing bids are set out in pages 32-45 of the invitation to tender document, which can be found here:

<https://online.contractsfinder.businesslink.gov.uk/Common/View%20Notice.aspx?site=1000&lang=en&Noticeld=1611969>

Steve McCabe:

[356]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on how many occasions her Department has hired Mott Macdonald in each year since 2010.

Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education has let the following number of contracts to Mott MacDonald in these years:

YEAR	NUMBER OF CONTRACTS
2010	0
2011	2
2012	4
2013	1
2014	2
2015	5

■ Educational Psychology

Steve McCabe:

[\[333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 26 March 2015 to Question 228860, how many educational psychologists were employed in all local authorities in each year since 2010.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The number of educational psychologists reported as permanently employed by each local authority in every year from 2010 to 2013 is provided in the table below.

A response regarding educational psychologists was received for 72 to 74 per cent of local authorities each year.

HEADCOUNT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS EMPLOYED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND, 2010-2013 (NOVEMBER OF EACH YEAR)

Local Authority	2010	2011	2012	2013
City of London	1	1	NA	NA
Camden	22	19	17	20
Greenwich	16	12	12	15
Hackney	15	15	14	20
Hammersmith and Fulham	7	7	8	NA
Islington	17	NA	NA	NA
Kensington and Chelsea	7	7	7	NA
Lambeth	16	14	11	12

HEADCOUNT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS EMPLOYED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND, 2010-2013 (NOVEMBER OF EACH YEAR)

Lewisham	NA	NA	NA	13
Southwark	20	14	6	15
Tower Hamlets	25	13	15	24
Wandsworth	16	18	18	17
Westminster	10	10	8	NA
Barking and Dagenham	NA	13	10	14
Barnet	21	23	19	15
Bexley	NA	10	23	12
Brent	11	NA	8	8
Bromley	NA	12	11	10
Croydon	19	12	19	13
Ealing	NA	19	17	15
Enfield	24	20	NA	21
Haringey	13	12	13	16
Harrow	14	12	13	13
Havering	9	8	13	11
Hillingdon	15	NA	NA	NA
Hounslow	12	2	15	13
Kingston upon Thames	14	18	14	20
Merton	6	13	17	14
Newham	NA	7	7	NA
Redbridge	12	10	10	NA
Richmond upon Thames	9	11	NA	10
Sutton	NA	NA	10	NA

HEADCOUNT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS EMPLOYED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND, 2010-2013 (NOVEMBER OF EACH YEAR)

Waltham Forest	22	11	13	9
Birmingham	62	NA	90	47
Coventry	NA	60	17	16
Dudley	NA	17	15	16
Sandwell	18	17	19	17
Solihull	9	7	7	5
Walsall	9	11	13	0
Wolverhampton	17	16	17	19
Knowsley	7	7	6	5
Liverpool	17	NA	NA	NA
St. Helens	10	10	8	6
Sefton	NA	NA	NA	NA
Wirral	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bolton	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bury	NA	10	NA	NA
Manchester	NA	NA	NA	NA
Oldham	NA	NA	NA	NA
Rochdale	8	9	8	8
Salford	NA	NA	NA	NA
Stockport	15	13	13	12
Tameside	12	8	5	5
Trafford	7	7	5	NA
Wigan	12	11	8	10
Barnsley	11	7	7	5
Doncaster	7	10	9	0
Rotherham	NA	NA	NA	NA

HEADCOUNT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS EMPLOYED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND, 2010-2013 (NOVEMBER OF EACH YEAR)

Sheffield	15	NA	NA	18
Bradford	NA	21	20	NA
Calderdale	7	7	8	0
Kirklees	20	16	NA	20
Leeds	36	NA	NA	NA
Wakefield	NA	13	15	15
Gateshead	32	18	8	10
Newcastle upon Tyne	16	NA	NA	NA
North Tyneside	11	8	7	NA
South Tyneside	10	NA	7	7
Sunderland	14	9	11	9
Isles of Scilly	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bath and North East Somerset	NA	4	NA	NA
Bristol, City of	NA	NA	NA	NA
North Somerset	NA	NA	NA	NA
South Gloucestershire	9	12	11	12
Hartlepool	8	6	7	12
Middlesbrough	NA	NA	8	0
Redcar and Cleveland	8	9	2	4
Stockton-on-Tees	12	13	13	12
Kingston upon Hull, City of	0	NA	0	0
East Riding of Yorkshire	13	13	12	13

HEADCOUNT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS EMPLOYED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND, 2010-2013 (NOVEMBER OF EACH YEAR)

North East Lincolnshire	9	7	7	0
North Lincolnshire	9	10	8	NA
North Yorkshire	27	NA	23	NA
York	9	8	8	14
Luton	12	11	11	13
Bedford	8	7	7	4
Central Bedfordshire	NA	5	6	5
Buckinghamshire	NA	39	32	35
Milton Keynes	15	12	10	13
Derbyshire	33	35	34	34
Derby	NA	NA	NA	NA
Dorset	20	17	15	28
Poole	NA	6	7	7
Bournemouth	6	NA	NA	NA
County Durham	12	NA	NA	NA
Darlington	7	3	2	2
East Sussex	21	22	23	25
Brighton and Hove	18	30	13	18
Hampshire	72	64	66	71
Portsmouth	NA	9	9	9
Southampton	NA	8	11	12
Leicestershire	31	NA	20	15
Leicester	19	20	18	19
Rutland	1	1	1	1
Staffordshire	30	NA	32	34

HEADCOUNT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS EMPLOYED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND, 2010-2013 (NOVEMBER OF EACH YEAR)

Stoke-on-Trent	35	10	10	15
Wiltshire	32	NA	NA	19
Swindon	35	NA	12	NA
Bracknell Forest	6	6	6	5
Windsor and Maidenhead	NA	10	NA	NA
West Berkshire	0	0	0	0
Reading	8	8	7	NA
Slough	5	15	13	0
Wokingham	0	NA	NA	6
Cambridgeshire	24	28	31	32
Peterborough	10	NA	NA	NA
Halton	NA	5	5	3
Warrington	6	NA	NA	NA
Devon	41	35	0	0
Plymouth	21	NA	19	19
Torbay	6	8	5	4
Essex	NA	48	53	61
Southend-on-Sea	2	6	8	8
Thurrock	NA	NA	NA	8
Herefordshire, County of	11	8	NA	5
Worcestershire	NA	28	30	29
Kent	NA	47	42	44
Medway	15	12	13	NA
Lancashire	49	34	NA	31
Blackburn with	10	10	4	0

HEADCOUNT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS EMPLOYED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND, 2010-2013 (NOVEMBER OF EACH YEAR)

Darwen				
Blackpool	NA	NA	7	6
Nottinghamshire	29	25	23	NA
Nottingham	NA	13	13	20
Shropshire	NA	0	NA	NA
Telford and Wrekin	NA	NA	NA	NA
Cheshire East	13	11	9	15
Cheshire West and Chester	16	14	NA	15
Cornwall	22	0	0	39
Cumbria	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gloucestershire	17	NA	1	0
Hertfordshire	56	57	55	48
Isle of Wight	1	0	0	0
Lincolnshire	25	25	23	23
Norfolk	NA	30	25	23
Northamptonshire	34	35	35	37
Northumberland	NA	15	16	18
Oxfordshire	21	20	NA	0
Somerset	29	30	28	24
Suffolk	30	25	25	28
Surrey	54	54	52	56
Warwickshire	24	2	33	44
West Sussex	35	28	31	26
Total	1,886	1,728	1,721	1,723

Source: School Workforce Census

HEADCOUNT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS EMPLOYED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND, 2010-2013 (NOVEMBER OF EACH YEAR)

NA = Local authority who did not report the direct employment of any educational psychologists.

■ Foster Care

Steve McCabe: [334]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 26 March 2015 to Question 228386, what specific weaknesses were found in the timelines of visits to children who are privately fostered.

Edward Timpson:

According to our records, examined in March 2015, Ofsted found that in five authorities - Birmingham, Blackpool, Calderdale, Coventry and Swindon - visits to privately fostered children were not always made within statutory timeframes as set out in the Private Fostering Regulations (England) 2005.

As set out in response to PQ 228386, four of the five authorities - all bar Swindon - are subject to formal intervention measures. The Department for Education drew this information from 45 Ofsted inspection reports of local authority children's social care published under the single inspection framework.

■ Free Schools

Tristram Hunt: [373]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many of her Department's employees are working on the free school programme; and what the annual cost of such work is.

Edward Timpson:

Of the total number of employees in the Department of Education, the equivalent of 95.24 full-time free schools group staff assess free school applications, work with successful applicants as they prepare to open their free schools and support the schools once opened. In 2014-15, the cost of the free schools group was £6.15 million.

Tristram Hunt: [379]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will publish the full list of capital investment on a school-by-school basis for each wave of the free school programme.

Edward Timpson:

The Department for Education publishes final capital costs for all free schools on the GOV.UK website at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-funding-for-open-free-schools

■ Home Education

Louise Haigh: [255]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to support providers of education outside mainstream schooling.

Louise Haigh: [256]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the level of demand for pupil referral units.

Nick Gibb:

Local authorities and schools are best placed to assess the level of demand for education outside of mainstream schools, in line with the needs of their pupils.

Where pupil referral units meet local demand the Department for Education is supporting them to become alternative provision academies. In addition, the free schools programme is giving local communities and exceptional school leaders the freedom to establish new and innovative alternative provision free schools in areas where they are needed. To date we have opened 29 alternative provision free schools and there are a further 13 currently approved to open in the future. 87% of alternative provision free schools that have been inspected by Ofsted have been rated 'good' or 'outstanding'.

■ Pre-school Education: Assessments

Rachael Maskell: [439]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information her Department holds on how many countries currently conduct testing of four year olds.

Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education does not hold information on how many countries currently conduct testing of four-year-olds.

There is a variety of international sources on Early Years. Information on this subject has been published online by the European Commission:

eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/key_data_series/166EN.pdf

Rachael Maskell: [440]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the evidential basis is of her Department's assessment that testing of four year olds is beneficial to a child's education and development.

Nick Gibb:

All schools currently do some form of assessment of pupils on entry to school to support planning of teaching.

The optional reception baseline assessment which was announced in March 2014 is intended to form part of this broader assessment.

■ Priority School Building Programme

Tristram Hunt: [\[371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) school places and (b) schools have been created by the Priority School Building Programme to date.

Edward Timpson:

The Priority School Building Programme (PSBP) will address the condition needs of 537 schools.

PSBP1 is a centrally managed programme set up to address the needs of the schools in worst condition across the country. Through the programme, 260 schools will be rebuilt or have their condition needs met by the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

25 PSBP1 schools have now opened providing rebuilt or refurbished buildings for 11,216 school places.

In May 2014 the Government announced a further £2 billion for the second phase of the programme, PSBP2. A list of the 277 schools to benefit from this second phase was published on 9 February 2015.

Tristram Hunt: [\[372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) school places and (b) schools will be created by the Priority School Building Programme by September (i) 2016, (ii) 2017 and (iii) 2018.

Edward Timpson:

The Priority School Building Programme (PSBP) will address the condition needs of 537 schools.

PSBP1 is a centrally managed programme set up to address the needs of the schools in the worst condition across the country. Through the programme, 260 schools will be rebuilt or have their condition needs met by the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

25 PSBP1 schools have now opened providing rebuilt or refurbished buildings for 11,216 school places. PSBP is primarily a rebuild and refurbishment programme and has not been designed to provide additional school places.

The construction timescales for each school are dependent on a number of factors, including, for example, ground conditions and planning permission.

In May 2014 the Government announced a further £2 billion for the second phase of the programme, PSBP2. A list of the 277 schools to benefit from this second phase was published on 9 February 2015.

■ Private Education: Regulation

Tristram Hunt: [\[375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that all independent schools are abiding by the Independent Schools Regulations.

Nick Gibb:

Meeting the independent school standards is a condition of continued registration for independent schools. All of them are inspected on a regular cycle. If a school does not meet the required standards, the Department for Education takes appropriate regulatory action to ensure that the situation is rectified in the shortest possible time, or the school is closed.

The department has underpinned this approach by commencing the relevant provisions of the Education and Skills Act 2008 ('the Act'), so that the role of the three independent inspectorates, and Ofsted's role in quality assurance of those inspectorates, is put on a statutory footing. In accordance with the Act, the independent school standards were revised and strengthened from January 2015, introducing a new leadership and management standard. These changes form part of the reform programme outlined by Lord Nash in his letter of 28 March 2014 to the Chair of the Select Committee.

■ Pupil Exclusions: Sheffield

Louise Haigh: [253]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many expulsions were made by each school in (a) Sheffield, Heeley constituency and (b) Sheffield in each year since 2010.

Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education publishes information on the number of permanent and fixed period exclusions at national and local authority level in the 'Statistics: exclusions' series, available online at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-exclusions

School and parliamentary constituency level information is not routinely published.

■ Schools: Asbestos

Louise Haigh: [246]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how her Department is supporting the removal of asbestos in schools.

Edward Timpson:

The Department for Education supports the removal of asbestos from schools, where it is safe and appropriate to do so, through its capital funding schemes. The department published a review on the management of asbestos in schools in March 2015. This can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/asbestos-in-schools-policy-review

Louise Haigh: [247]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to improve asbestos management in schools.

Edward Timpson:

While the management of asbestos in schools remains the responsibility of individual schools and duty holders, the department has taken steps to support them to fulfil their responsibilities.

In parallel with the review on asbestos management published in March 2015, the department published refreshed guidance for schools, which provides an accessible, step-by-step guide to managing any asbestos present in their buildings.

This guidance can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/asbestos-management-in-schools--2

Louise Haigh: [251]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the last assessment of levels of asbestos in schools in England and Wales was undertaken by her Department.

Edward Timpson:

The department's review of the management of asbestos in the school estate was published in March 2015.

The department is clear that, under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, the responsibility for managing asbestos lies with the legal duty holder for schools, which is typically the employer. Under these regulations, the relevant duty holder for each school should hold detailed information about the amount and location of asbestos in their buildings and keep this information up-to-date.

■ **Schools: St Ives****Mr Christopher Chope:** [659]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when she expects to respond to the letter from Dorset County Council seeking to prevent St Ives School increasing its age range.

Mr Christopher Chope: [660]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will place in the Library a copy of the letter from Dorset County Council seeking to prevent St Ives School increasing its age range.

Nick Gibb:

The letter referred to, dated 27 May, was received by the Department for Education on 3 June and we intend to respond as soon as possible. The department aims to respond to correspondence we receive within 15 working days, in line with government standards.

We have no plans to publish the letter, but the correspondent is free to do so should they wish.

■ Teachers: Temporary Employment

Tristram Hunt: [37]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the total cost of the hiring of agency teachers by state-funded schools was in (a) 2010-11, (b) 2011-12, (c) 2012-13 and (d) 2013-14.

Nick Gibb:

Information on the income and expenditure of local authorities and schools (including academies) can be found in the Department for Education's local authority and school finance data publications, available online at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-local-authority-school-finance-data

■ Teachers: Training

Tristram Hunt: [32]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the Schools Direct recruitment target is for initial teacher training in all years for which figures are available.

Nick Gibb:

There is no target for the number of trainee teachers to be recruited to the School Direct scheme. The Department for Education aims to recruit in line with the number of trainees needed across all routes, as estimated by our Teacher Supply Model.

The Teacher Supply Model figures for the academic year 2015/16 have been published as part of management information about initial teacher training allocations. This is published online at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-allocations-for-academic-year-2015-to-2016

Allocations for 2014/15 and 2013/14 are published online at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-teacher-training

■ Teachers: Veterans

Tristram Hunt: [29]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many teachers have been recruited on the Troops to Teachers scheme; what the annual recruitment target for the scheme has been; and what the annual retention rate is of teachers recruited on to that scheme.

Nick Gibb:

The Troops to Teachers undergraduate programme started in January 2014 and 94 trainees have started so far. A further cohort will start in September 2015.

There are no recruitment targets set for this programme. This programme is part of the Department for Education's commitment to the cross-government military covenant and is part of a package of measures designed to support service leavers.

Of the 94 that started, 80 trainees remain on the programme.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

■ Carbon Sequestration

Harry Harpham: [\[608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what level of investment her Department plans to make in the development of carbon capture and storage.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government is investing in the development of carbon capture and storage (CCS) in the UK. We are in negotiations to support up to two commercial scale CCS projects in the UK by making up to £1 billion available, together with operational support through a project specific Contract for Difference.

Together with the Scottish Government, we have recently committed, in principle, to provide £4.2 million to support Summit Power to undertake industrial research and development at their proposed CCS Caledonia Clean Energy Plant in Grangemouth Scotland. This is in addition to over £30 million of Government investment in CCS research and development since 2011.

■ Carbon Sequestration: Employment

Harry Harpham: [\[609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many (a) jobs and (b) apprenticeships were created in the development of carbon capture and storage in each of the last five years.

Andrea Leadsom:

DECC does not hold this data.

■ Energy: Imports

Harry Harpham: [\[610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what proportion of coal used in UK energy generation is imported; and from which countries coal is imported.

Andrea Leadsom:

DECC does not hold figures on the proportion of coal used in UK electricity generation from imports.

However, in 2014, 34,174 thousand tonnes of steam coal (mainly used by coal-fired power stations) were imported into the UK, representing 89% of coal used for electricity generation (38,398 thousand tonnes).

The table below gives the breakdown of these imports by country:

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	STEAM COAL IMPORTS (THOUSAND TONNES)	SHARE OF ALL STEAM COAL IMPORTS
Russia	15,831	46.3%

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	STEAM COAL IMPORTS (THOUSAND TONNES)	SHARE OF ALL STEAM COAL IMPORTS
Colombia	9,269	27.1%
United States of America	7,687	22.5%
European Union (1)	690	2.0%
Republic of South Africa	129	0.4%
Other Countries	569	1.7%
Total all countries	34,174	

(1) European Union includes non-EU routed through the Netherlands

Source: Energy Trends tables 2.1 and 2.4, available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/solid-fuels-and-derived-gases-section-2-energy-trends>.

■ Energy: Infrastructure

Harry Harpham: [600]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what comparative assessment she has made of the benefits and disbenefits of (a) UK and (b) foreign ownership of energy infrastructure; and if she will make a statement.

Harry Harpham: [605]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what assessment she has made of the benefits and disbenefits of UK ownership of energy infrastructure in relation to the security of energy supply.

Andrea Leadsom:

The UK Government welcomes responsible investment by both national and foreign investors in the UK's energy infrastructure. This benefits our energy security, creates jobs, build skills, and helps grow our economy. All energy infrastructure in the UK must be operated in accordance with the relevant UK regulatory system.

■ Energy: Meters

Jonathan Reynolds: [904]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, when she expects the Smartmeter rollout to be completed.

Andrea Leadsom:

Energy suppliers are required under licence conditions to take all reasonable steps to roll-out smart meters to all their domestic and smaller non-domestic customers by 31 December 2020.

■ Fuel Poverty: Children

Harry Harpham:

[607]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many children live in households that are classed as being in fuel poverty in (a) England, (b) Yorkshire and the Humber and (c) Sheffield, Brightside and Hillsborough constituency.

Andrea Leadsom:

Fuel poverty is measured at the household level rather than the individual level and detailed data on the age of household occupants is not available at the sub-regional level. The table below shows the number and proportion of fuel poor households which contain at least one child under the age of 16 in (a) England and (b) Yorkshire and the Humber, in 2013.

	<i>FUEL POOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH AT LEAST ONE CHILD UNDER 16 (000s)</i>	<i>PROPORTION OF FUEL POOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH AT LEAST ONE CHILD UNDER 16 (%)</i>
England	1,064	45
Yorkshire and Humberside	124	52

In Sheffield, Brightside and Hillsborough the total number of households in fuel poverty was estimated to be six thousand, representing 14 per cent of all households in the region.

■ Hinkley Point C Power Station

Jonathan Reynolds:

[903]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what progress has been made in relation to the construction of Hinkley C nuclear power station; and if she will make a statement.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Government and EDF are continuing to work together to finalise the contract for the Hinkley project. EDF expects that Hinkley Point C will come online around 2023.

■ MOZES

Lilian Greenwood:

[554]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, whether her Department has received a report from Ray Noble relating to the Mozes community energy co-operative.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Department has not received a report from Mr Noble relating to the Mozes community energy co-operative. But I understand that he was able to suggest to Mozes ways in which they could considerably reduce the life-time maintenance cost for their solar panels compared to the figure that they had originally estimated.

■ National Grid

Harry Harpham: [597]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what her Department's policy is on the potential sell-off by National Grid of its (a) gas distribution networks and (b) metering business.

Harry Harpham: [598]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what assessment she has made of the potential effect on (a) local economies, (b) customer service and (c) safety of any sell-off of National Grid (i) gas distribution networks and (ii) metering business.

Andrea Leadsom:

Any sale of this kind would be a commercial matter. Any owner would need to be fully compliant with all relevant regulatory requirements.

Harry Harpham: [599]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what meetings have taken place between representatives of her Department and National Grid about any sale of National Grid assets or businesses.

Andrea Leadsom:

No such discussions have taken place under this Government.

■ Plutonium

Sue Hayman: [559]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what assessment she has made of the merits of (a) the Prism reactor, (b) Areva Mox, (c) Canmox, and (d) immobilisation for the disposition of plutonium; and if she will make a statement.

Andrea Leadsom:

We expect the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) to submit a report to DECC to support us in our considerations on the policy options in due course. Informed by the advice from NDA, ministers will then make an assessment of the options and decide on the appropriate next steps.

The NDA intend to publish a public position paper in due course summarising the outcomes of the latest phase of work.

■ Tidal Power: Swansea

Christina Rees: [718]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what estimate she has made of the number of jobs created in the Swansea Bay region as a result of the construction of the proposed tidal lagoon.

Andrea Leadsom:

The socio-economic effects of the proposed Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon will form part of my rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State's consideration of the application for development consent for that project. However, as that application is still under consideration, she cannot currently engage in any discussion of that project's merits or otherwise.

The first phase of the Contract for Difference negotiation, which is currently taking place, is a due diligence exercise. This will, amongst other things, consider the value for money case for the proposed Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project and a wider programme of lagoons. The value for money case will give consideration to whether lagoons contribute to the delivery of a more socially cost effective electricity generation mix.

■ Wind Power: Seas and Oceans**Harry Harpham:**[\[601\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, how many jobs will be created by investment in the planned Rampion wind farm; and what steps she is taking to ensure that UK supply chains benefit from such investment.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Department has not estimated how many jobs will be created by investment in the planned Rampion wind farm.

The EON press release on Rampion states that during the planned 3 year offshore construction period up to 300 jobs will be created and local vessels utilised, with 40 roles being based at the project management facility in Newhaven Port. The press release also states that a workforce of up to 100 is expected to be needed for the onshore cable route and around a further 40 to 60 people at the onshore substation during onshore construction. Once the wind farm is commissioned and fully operational, it is envisaged that up to 65 full time permanent jobs will be created at the operations and maintenance base.

The Department, together with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, are working closely with EON to maximise UK benefit and ensure that UK supply chain companies have the opportunity to compete for contracts that have yet to be awarded.

Harry Harpham:[\[602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what estimate she has made of the value of work accruing to UK manufacturing companies in each region from the development of the Rampion wind farm.

Harry Harpham:[\[603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what assessment her Department has made of the potential benefit to the economy of each UK region of investment in the Rampion wind farm.

Harry Harpham:

[604]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what assessment she has made of the potential for northern cities to benefit from (a) Rampion wind farm and (b) other investment in renewable energy sources.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Department has not estimated the value of work accruing to UK manufacturing companies in each region from the development of the Rampion wind farm.

In November 2014 the Offshore Wind Industry Council adopted an industry-wide methodology for reporting on UK Content. This reporting helps industry hold itself to account on the commitment to reach 50% UK content, while charting progress and reporting to a wider public. This figure will show total UK content and break this down into the three main phases of development (devex), manufacture & construction (capex) and operation (opex).

The first data will be submitted to RenewableUK by industry in summer 2015 for publication later in the year.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Biodiversity

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[344]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the UK's ability to meet the Aichi global biodiversity targets by 2020; what steps she is taking to ensure the UK meets those targets; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

Biodiversity is a devolved issue; actions to deliver biodiversity outcomes are set out in individual country strategies - the England Biodiversity Strategy [Biodiversity 2020](#), and Scottish Biodiversity Strategy <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2013/06/5538>. Wales' biodiversity strategy, The Nature Recovery Plan for Wales, to be published by the end of this year, will set out the action to reverse the decline of biodiversity in Wales. The Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy http://www.doeni.gov.uk/nibs_2002.pdf is under review and a new Biodiversity Strategy for Northern Ireland will be published by the summer.

The UK submitted its 5th National report to the CBD in May 2014 and it is available on the CBD website at <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/gb/gb-nr-05-en.pdf>. Key actions taken by the UK include:

- Continued designation of protected areas, especially at sea, and the development of a UK Marine Strategy;
- Continued work to improve the management and condition of all designated sites, with 96% of SSSIs in England in favourable or recovering condition;

- Integrated, landscape-scale approaches to improving the natural environment, such as Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs) and river-basin management plans.
- Agri-environment programmes to support environmental improvements on farmed land, for example with 67,000ha being brought under management for creation of priority habitat in England since 2011, and the development of country policies and strategies for issues which impact on biodiversity such as forestry, water, invasive species, pollinators, and fisheries.
- Research to develop knowledge and evidence-based guidance, such as ecosystem assessment and payment for ecosystem services.

The most recent update on progress is presented in the UK Biodiversity Indicators, published in December 2014: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4229>. The indicators show a mixed picture, with recent improvements in the area of land in agri-environment schemes, sustainable fisheries, air pollution, the extent of protected sites on land and at sea, the condition of areas/sites of special scientific interest, status of species of European importance and plant genetic resources.

However, pressures on biodiversity remain high and there is more to do, which will require the engagement of all sectors and civil society as a whole.

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[354]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many farmers have (a) obtained Fair to Nature accreditation and (b) are working towards Fair to Nature accreditation; if she will assess the effect of the scheme on UK biodiversity; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

Conservation Grade reports that approximately 86 farmers are currently accredited and approximately 20 are waiting to establish a commercial relationship. This information is not held by Defra.

Fair to Nature is part of Conservation Grade, an independent, non-profit accreditation organisation that establishes commercial relationships between farmers and customers. Membership of Conservation Grade requires standards to be maintained for biodiversity benefits. Fair to Nature have undertaken their own trials demonstrating benefits for a range of biodiversity species, notably bumblebees, small mammals and farmland birds. Although independent, the scheme requirements are similar in scope to our supported agri-environment schemes, that have been shown to deliver outcomes for biodiversity.

■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Vaccination

Jim Fitzpatrick:

[472]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions her Department has held with other EU member states in which bovine TB occurs on establishing joint research on a TB vaccine for cattle.

George Eustice:

To date, no other EU member States have expressed interest in developing a TB vaccine for cattle. But we are working with officials and businesses in both New Zealand and the USA in our quest to identify, through research, an effective DIVA test (a TB test to differentiate infected from vaccinated animals), which is a critical element of any programme which would involve BCG vaccination of cattle.

■ **Owls: Surveys****Mrs Madeleine Moon:**[\[380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will repeat the national barn owl surveys of 1982-85, 1995-97 and 2000-09; and if she will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

The Barn Owl was surveyed as part of the British Trust for Ornithology 2007-11 Bird Atlas for Britain and Ireland and populations are also monitored annually by the BTO/Joint Nature Conservation Committee/Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Consequently Defra has no present plans to repeat these surveys.

Surveys suggest that the Barn Owl was declining during much of the twentieth century. However the 2007-11 Bird Atlas indicates a 67% increase in distribution since the last atlas for 1988-91. In addition the annual Breeding Bird Survey indicates that numbers increased by 277% in the UK between 1995 and 2012 and 273% for England. The increase is believed to result from the provision of nest boxes, mild winters and the sympathetic management of suitable feeding habitat through agri-environment schemes.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE■ **Armed Conflict: Schools****Wes Streeting:**[\[653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if the Government will (a) sign the Safe Schools Declaration and (b) support implementation of that declaration in countries where armed conflict is taking place.

James Duddridge:

The intention of the Safe Schools Declaration is for countries to endorse the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military use During Armed Conflict. While we support the spirit of the initiative, we have concerns that the Guidelines do not mirror the exact language and content of International Humanitarian Law. We consider that the full implementation of International Humanitarian Law provides the best protection for civilians in all situations of armed conflict. The UK and several other countries therefore did not sign the Safe Schools Declaration in Oslo in May.

■ Burma: Ethnic Groups

Louise Haigh: [\[206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had on the situation of ethnic minorities in Burma.

Mr Hugo Swire:

Our Officials regularly discuss a wide range of human rights issues with the Burmese government, including the treatment of ethnic minorities in Burma.

We are particularly concerned by continued intercommunal tensions in Rakhine State, the plight of the Rohingya, and an increase in anti-muslim hate-speech and intolerance. We have raised our concern at the situation of the Rohingya community in all of our recent Ministerial contacts with the Burmese government. Most recently, I called the Burmese Ambassador to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to discuss this issue on 18 May, and urged Burma to take swift action to address the persecution and dire situation of the Rohingya in Rakhine. This should include an end to restrictions on freedom of movement; humanitarian access; and a path to citizenship for eligible Rohingya residents of Rakhine State.

We also share the view of UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma, Yanghee Lee, in her report of March 2015, that the government of Burma must "address hate speech and incitement to violence as part of its obligation to ensure a safe and secure environment for all persons, including ethnic minorities, religious minorities and women".

■ FIFA: Corruption

Hilary Benn: [\[293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the (a) US and (b) Swiss authorities about allegations of corruption in FIFA.

Mr Philip Hammond:

[Holding answer 1 June 2015]: We are deeply concerned about the allegations of corruption in FIFA, a view that is shared by many international partners. There is a clear need for reform within FIFA. The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, my right hon. Friend the Member for Malden (Mr Whittingdale) updated the House on 1 June and today on the Government's position.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Public Expenditure

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made his Department's budget for each of the next five years.

Mr David Lidington:

The total Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) settlement for the current financial year is £1.3 billion. After non-discretionary spend is removed, the FCO budget is around £700 million.

Like all Departments, we are preparing for the forthcoming Spending Review, which will determine the FCO's budget for 2016-17 and beyond.

■ Israel: Ethnic Groups

Mr Jim Cunningham: [669]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the effects of the proposed resettlement of Bedouin in Southern Israel on the peace process; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Government is deeply concerned about the proposals to demolish Bedouin villages in Israel. I visited the Khan al Ahmer Bedouin during my visit in October 2014 and saw at first hand the devastating impact resettlement plans had on the communities. Officials at our Embassy in Tel Aviv are monitoring the situation closely, including the case of the Um Il Hiran and Ateer. Embassy officials have been in contact with the Adalah Legal Centre who have continued to provide updates on the legal situation. They have also been in contact with other organisations that work within the Bedouin community, such as Itach-Maaki and The Arab-Jewish Center for Equality, Empowerment and Cooperation-Negev Institute for Strategies of Peace and Development, to best inform the UK's lobbying of the Israeli authorities on this issue.

■ Referendums: Voting Rights

Catherine McKinnell: [553]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to page 60 of background briefing notes to the Queen's Speech 2015, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) British citizens living overseas for more than 15 years in the (i) EU and (ii) rest of the world and (b) EU citizens resident in the UK who will not be eligible to vote in the upcoming European Union referendum.

Mr David Lidington:

There are a number of different reports and figures available on the number of British nationals living abroad and EU nationals living in the UK. These will vary depending on source, methodology and the point in time to which the figures relate. The figure which the Government believes is most accurate is from the World Bank's "Estimates of Migrant Stocks in 2010" as updated by the UN Department for Social and Economic Affairs in 2013:

http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimate_sorigin.shtml

This report estimates that there were approximately 5.2 million British born migrants living overseas, of which approximately 1.3 million were in other EU countries. The same report estimated that there were 2.7 million EU born migrants resident in the UK. We do not have any figures distinguishing between British citizens living overseas for more or less than 15 years.

■ South China Sea: Politics and Government

Mark Pritchard: [\[276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will discuss with his Chinese counterpart reducing regional tensions over territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

Mr Hugo Swire:

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), has discussed the security situation in the South China Sea with his Chinese counterpart. He has also discussed the issue in other multilateral fora, for instance at the recent G7 Foreign Ministers' meeting. The Secretary of State for Defence, my right hon. Friend the Member for Sevenoaks (Mr Fallon), highlighted our concerns about the current situation during his speech at the Shangri-la Dialogue in Singapore on 30 May. The UK has a clear interest in regional peace and stability and respect for freedom of navigation. We will continue to make our concerns known.

■ Sri Lanka: Ethnic Groups

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received on official discrimination against Tamils in Sri Lanka; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Hugo Swire:

We recognise that more progress needs to be made on Tamil concerns as part of broader reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

President Sirisena has committed to introduce reforms to address inequalities faced by minority communities. These reforms are intended to improve access to education in Tamil; provide relief to displaced people; establish a democratic civil administration in the North and East; put a stop to racial and religious hatred; and to promote reconciliation between communities.

■ Sri Lanka: War Crimes

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has received from the government of Sri Lanka about allegations of war crimes in that country.

Mr Hugo Swire:

The matter of accountability for alleged war crimes in Sri Lanka has been raised on a number of occasions with the new Sri Lankan government. I discussed the matter with the Sri Lankan government during my visit to Sri Lanka in January, and again with Foreign Minister Samaraweera during his visits to the UK in February and March. Separately the Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Whitney (Mr

Cameron), also discussed accountability with President Sirisena, and the Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) further with Foreign Minister Samaraweera in March.

We were encouraged by the Sri Lankan government's February commitment to cooperate with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and to establish a credible domestic process to investigate incidents of alleged war crimes and hold individuals to account. As Sri Lanka returns to the UN Human Rights Council in September for discussion it will be important for Sri Lanka to show real progress on this important matter.

■ Syria: Military Aid

Hilary Benn: [\[662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the latest position regarding training of the Syrian moderate opposition is; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Hammond:

The UK is contributing to the US-led effort to train and equip the moderate armed opposition ISIL. We will provide 85 personnel to the programme. This includes headquarters staff and trainers, and their deployment will be phased over time as the programme is established. They will provide instruction in the use of small arms, infantry tactics and medical skills. The programme is designed to help the moderate opposition fight ISIL and to help create the conditions for a negotiated political transition in Syria.

■ UK Membership of EU

Kate Hollern: [\[624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make it his policy before the proposed referendum takes place to publish a study of the implications of UK exit from the EU.

Mr David Lidington:

The Government is focusing on renegotiation with the EU, to get the best deal for the UK and address the concerns of the British people. The Government is confident that, with good will and understanding, the UK can and will succeed in negotiating to reform the European Union and Britain's relationship within it.

■ UK Membership of EU: Referendums

Tulip Siddiq: [\[645\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if the Government will bring forward proposals to allow 16 and 17 year olds to vote in any referendum on EU membership.

Mr David Lidington:

The Government introduced the EU Referendum Bill to the House of Commons on 28 May 2015. In the Bill, the franchise is based on the UK Parliamentary franchise with the addition of Members of the House of Lords and Commonwealth citizens in Gibraltar. The Government has no plans to lower the voting age.

■ **West Bank****Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the Israeli government about forced evictions and harassment of the inhabitants of the village of Susya on the West Bank.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

In May, officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised our serious concerns about the potential forcible transfer of the Bedouin in E1 and other parts of Area C, and the Israeli Supreme Court's ruling approving the demolition of the West Bank village Susiya with the Head of Israel's Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories' (COGAT) Civil Administration division. Most recently on the 28 May we raised these concerns with senior officials from the Israeli National Security Council. I also discussed the issue of settlements and our opposition to them with the National Security Advisor on 3 June.

■ **Yemen: British Nationals Abroad****Mrs Louise Ellman:**[\[549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his counterpart in Yemen on the safety of British citizens in that country.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Since 2011, we have advised British nationals against all travel to Yemen. Our travel advice has included information on the current situation in Yemen, as well as of the support that can be provided in neighbouring countries. We continue to work with international partners to resolve the current crisis in Yemen and bring political stability to the country. Given the current situation in Yemen, I have not discussed this issue with the Government of Yemen since the beginning of the recent crisis.

HEALTH■ **Abortion: Gender Selection****Fiona Bruce:**[\[217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to section 84 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, what plans he has made for the assessment of the evidence of termination of pregnancy on the grounds of the sex of the foetus in England, Wales and Scotland.

Jane Ellison:

The Department is planning a number of different approaches in order to make the assessment required by the Act.

■ Abortion: Maternal Mortality

Mary Glendon:

[315]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of whether there is a correlation between access to abortion and maintaining a low maternal mortality rate; and what the evidential basis is for that assessment.

Jane Ellison:

The Department has made no assessment on whether there is a correlation between access to abortion and maintaining a low maternal mortality rate.

■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Closures

Wes Streeting:

[654]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of A&E departments likely to close in each region in each of the next five years.

Ben Gummer:

The reconfiguration of local health services is a matter for the local National Health Service. All service changes should be led by clinicians and be in the best interests of patients, not driven from the top down.

It is for NHS commissioners and providers to work together, with local authorities, patients and the public, in bringing forward proposals that will improve the quality, safety and sustainability of healthcare services.

Any changes must be supported by the Government's four tests for service change, namely:

- support from general practitioner commissioners;
- clarity on the clinical evidence base;
- robust patient and public engagement; and
- support for patient choice.

Once a decision on a local case for change has been made, it is up to the NHS to ensure its local services meet the needs of its population.

■ Alzheimer's Disease

Jim Shannon:

[52]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people suffered from Alzheimer's disease in the last year for which figures are available; and what the cost of their medication was.

Jane Ellison:

The Department does not collect information on the incidence of people with Alzheimer's disease who have or not had a diagnosis or the cost of the medication.

However, it is estimated that in England, around 676,000 people have dementia, of which around 60 per cent have Alzheimer's disease.[1]

[1]https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414344/pm-dementia2020.pdf

■ Care Quality Commission**Luciana Berger:**[\[676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the indirect cost to the NHS of the Care Quality Commission.

Ben Gummer:

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care providers in England and has a key responsibility in the overall assurance of safety and quality of health and adult social care services. The CQC provides assurance that health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate high-quality care and encourage care services to improve. The CQC monitor, inspect and regulate services against meet fundamental standards of quality and safety and the CQC publish what it finds to help people choose care.

The CQC impact assessment on changes to the way they regulate and inspect services, published in September 2014, sets out the estimated costs and benefits of its new inspection model. In its Business Plan 2015-16, the CQC describes how it will continue to improve its effectiveness, and be a regulator that supports changes in health and social care. It is for the trusts to respond to CQC inspections, including when poor quality care is highlighted.

■ Defibrillators: Prices**Andrew Gwynne:**[\[349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the process was by which reference prices for implantable defibrillators and cardiac resynchronisation defibrillators were determined.

Ben Gummer:

Trust secondary user service (SUS) data and reference cost submissions for implantable defibrillators and cardiac resynchronisation defibrillators were used to collate draft average reference prices. These were validated and enhanced where appropriate from available procurement frameworks, recent market tenders, a project in the South West and work with a number of lead clinicians.

Andrew Gwynne:[\[350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what categories of implantable defibrillators and cardiac resynchronisation defibrillators have been established for reference price purposes; and what the reference price is for each category.

Ben Gummer:

The reference prices are categorised under the seven categories used by the suppliers of implantable defibrillators and cardiac resynchronisation defibrillators to identify the type of device used. The reference prices are as follows:

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION	REFERENCE PRICE EXCLUDING VAT	NICE GUIDELINES PRICES
CRT - D Generator	£12,500	
CRT - D System	£12,700	£12,293
Dual Chamber ICD Gen	£10,600	
Dual Chamber ICD Sys	£10,800	£9,692
Single Chamber ICD Gen	£9,300	
Single Chamber ICD Sys	£9,450	

Andrew Gwynne:[\[382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what advice his Department offers trusts on the use of reference prices for implantable defibrillators and cardiac resynchronisation defibrillators.

Ben Gummer:

Reference prices have been issued to commissioners to help them assess value for money on device expenditure and identify potential areas for future efficiency improvements.

Trusts are obliged to charge the National Health Service the cost of the implantable devices on a pass through basis, i.e. the cost invoiced by the supplier of the device. However, local commissioners will support any trust access to European Union compliant procurement frameworks that offer better value for the taxpayer.

Andrew Gwynne:[\[383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many trusts have contributed the prices they have paid to the calculation of reference prices for implantable defibrillators and cardiac resynchronisation defibrillators; and how many individual device prices were used in that calculation.

Ben Gummer:

In total, 52 providers are commissioned to implant defibrillators and cardiac resynchronisation defibrillators. Secondary User Service data and reference cost submissions from all these trusts were used in calculating the reference price. Available information from 25 provider tenders and procurement frameworks were also used.

NHS England is also undertaking a project in the South West to better understand the available data on device prices. This has informed the development of an improved minimum dataset which has been introduced in 2015/16. NHS England will continue to

work with providers, lead clinicians and the Association of British Healthcare Industries to update their reference price data on an ongoing basis.

Andrew Gwynne: [\[404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect of reference prices for implantable defibrillators and cardiac resynchronisation defibrillators on the ability of trusts to deliver recommendations in NICE Technology Appraisal Guidance 314, published in June 2014.

Ben Gummer:

As reference prices shared with commissioners are between 3% and 11% higher than those stated in the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Technology Appraisal Guidance TA314, NHS England does not anticipate that there will be any adverse impact on the ability of trusts to deliver on NICE recommendations. In other words, because the reference cost is higher, providers are paid more than the NICE guidance costs. However, this will be monitored as part of the routine contract management process through the improved dataset submissions.

■ Department of Health: Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group

Mr Andrew Turner: [\[643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department has taken pursuant to the meeting between the Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Care Quality on 18 March 2015.

Alistair Burt:

The previous Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, the hon. Member for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich (Dr Daniel Poulter), wrote to Simon Stevens, Chief Executive of NHS England, further to his meeting of 18 March 2015 with the Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), on 24 March 2015.

The Minister asked that NHS England officials continue to work with the CCG to try and resolve the issues they raised, as the allocation of funding to CCGs now rests with NHS England, rather than the Department.

NHS England has confirmed that their allocations working group is continuing to look at the CCG funding formula to ensure it accurately reflects the true cost of service provision for all areas of the country.

■ Epilepsy

Jim Shannon: [\[49\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people in each age cohort suffered from epilepsy in each of the last five years.

Jim Shannon: [\[51\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with the Royal Colleges about the use of radical brain surgery to reduce death from epilepsy.

Jane Ellison:

There have been no discussions between my Rt. hon. friend the Secretary of State for Health and the Royal Colleges about the use of radical brain surgery to reduce death from epilepsy. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance sets out that surgery should be a treatment option for patients with complex epilepsy who do not respond to conventional treatment. In addition, NHS England has commissioned a specialised children's epilepsy service at four centres in England to improve access to earlier surgical intervention.

NICE estimates that epilepsy affects between 362,000 and 415,000 people in England. The following table provides figures for finished admission episodes (FAEs) with a primary diagnosis of epilepsy by age group, 2009-10 to 2013-14:

YEAR	FAES PER AGE GROUP										Total		
	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+		Unknown	
2009-10		8,188	5,410	5,113	5,263	6,135	4,645	3,697	3,519	2,833	514	97	45,414
2010-11		8,606	5,344	5,155	5,137	6,346	4,743	3,932	3,664	2,915	587	106	46,535
2011-12		8,851	5,284	5,292	4,969	6,335	4,843	3,971	3,592	2,900	600	123	46,760
2012-13		8,578	4,990	4,967	4,625	5,873	4,660	4,015	3,434	2,884	624	133	44,783
2013-14		9,316	5,027	5,060	4,815	5,722	4,872	3,801	3,297	2,660	677	108	45,355

Source: Hospital Episodes Statistics (HES) Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Notes:

1. An FAE is the first period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. FAEs are counted against the year or month in which the admission episode finishes. Admissions do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the period

2. HES figures are available from 1989-90 onwards. Changes to the figures over time need to be interpreted in the context of improvements in data quality and coverage (particularly in earlier years), improvements in coverage of independent sector activity (particularly from 2006-07) and changes in National Health Service practice. For example, apparent reductions in activity may be due to a number of procedures which may now be undertaken in outpatient settings and so no longer include in admitted patient HES data. Conversely, apparent increases in activity may be due to improved recording of diagnosis or procedure information. HES figures includes activity ending in

the year in question and run from April to March, e.g. 2012-13 includes activity ending between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013.

■ General Practitioners: Herefordshire

Bill Wiggin: [\[361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to ensure Kington in Herefordshire has sufficient full-time GPs.

Alistair Burt:

NHS England is responsible for commissioning general practitioner (GP) services, and is aware of recruiting difficulties in Herefordshire. NHS England is working with the local GP Federation to promote Herefordshire to GP trainees.

Nationally, there has been an increase of 1,677 full-time equivalent GPs (including Registrars and Retainers) since September 2010. At 30 September 2014 the total number of GPs was 36,920, which represents a real increase in capacity.

In addition this Government is committed to making 5,000 more GPs available by 2020. We will increase the number of GP trainees from 40% to 50% of all trainee doctors and expect Health Education England to ensure this happens. This will mean 3,250 training places for GPs each year from 2016.

NHS England, working with Health Education England, the Royal College of GPs, and the British Medical Association, published ' *Building the workforce*' in January 2015, which sets out plans to increase the size of the GP workforce backed with £10 million funding.

Bill Wiggin: [\[362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to maintain the level of out-of-hours GP cover in Herefordshire.

Alistair Burt:

This is a matter for the National Health Service locally.

We are advised by NHS England that Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group currently commissions out of hours general practitioner services from Primecare and confirms there are no current plans to change the level of provision of these services.

■ General Practitioners: Locums

Bill Wiggin: [\[363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many locum GPs are available; and what the average daily rate is for a locum GP.

Alistair Burt:

The requested information is not collected centrally.

General practitioners (GPs) are independent contractors who provide primary medical services on behalf of the National Health Service. As independent businesses, it is the responsibility of individual GP practices to employ locum GPs to meet their needs.

In employing locums, GP practices must meet the requirements set out in the GP contract regulations to ensure that they are appropriately qualified and registered.

■ General Practitioners: Recruitment

Bill Wiggin: [364]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to increase the number of GPs employed full-time.

Ben Gummer:

The National Health Service does not employ general practitioners (GPs) directly. GPs either work as, or are employed by independent contractors who hold contracts with NHS England to provide primary healthcare services for the National Health Service and it is for them to determine the hours worked by GPs.

There are already 1,677 more full-time equivalent GPs working and training in the NHS than in September 2010. Health Education England (HEE) is responsible for delivering a better health and healthcare workforce for England and for ensuring a secure future supply. HEE has plans in place to increase the number of GP training places to 3,250 each year from 2016. We have also committed to make available 5,000 more GPs by 2020.

■ Heroin: Overdoses

Luciana Berger: [675]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many hospital admissions were related to heroin overdoses in each of the last five years.

Jane Ellison:

The data requested is published in the Health and Social Care Information Centre's annual 'Hospital Episode Statistics, Admitted patient care – England' report, which are available here:

<http://www.hscic.gov.uk/searchcatalogue?q=title%3A%22Hospital+Episode+Statistics%2C+Admitted+patient+care+-+England%22&area=&size=10&sort=Relevance>

■ King George Hospital Redbridge: Accident and Emergency Departments

Wes Streeting: [558]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what factors he took into account in deciding the timing of the announcement of the closure of accident and emergency services at King George Hospital.

Jane Ellison:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 1 June 2015 to Question [119](#).

■ Lyme Disease

Jim Shannon:

[\[55\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people suffered from Lyme disease in each of the last five years; and what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of tests available for this disease.

Jane Ellison:

The total number of people with laboratory diagnosed Lyme disease in each of the last four years is listed in the table below. It is only since 2010 that hospital laboratories are required to report positive diagnoses of Lyme disease to public health authorities. Data are available only up to 2013, as 2014 data is currently being processed.

TOTAL REPORTED CASES	2010	2011	2012	2013
Lyme disease in United Kingdom	905	959	1,040	930

These laboratory data are collated by Public Health England (PHE) and published regularly.

Tests in the National Health Service and at the national centre at Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory (RIPL) of PHE are carried out to internationally recognised standards and are used in other national laboratories across Europe. These tests have been validated over many years in clinics across Europe and have proved very reliable for diagnosing Lyme disease, except in the early stages of the rash, when clinical diagnosis is used.

RIPL participates in an international External Quality Assurance programme, exchanges samples for quality control with the Scottish reference laboratory, and reviews new tests and alternative test modalities on an on-going basis.

■ Maternity Services: Closures

Wes Streeting:

[\[655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of maternity units likely to close in each region in each of the next five years.

Ben Gummer:

The Department has not made an assessment of the number of maternity units likely to close in each region in each of the next five years.

■ Menopause: Plastics

Jim Shannon: [\[54\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with the Royal Colleges about connections between plastics in the household and the onset of the menopause.

Jane Ellison:

Ministers have had no discussions with the Royal Colleges about connections between plastics in the household and onset of the menopause.

■ NHS: Pay

Louise Haigh: [\[187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what his policy is on pay levels in the NHS.

Alistair Burt:

Pay levels in the National Health Service should support NHS organisations to recruit, retain and motivate the staff they need to care for patients whether in hospitals or patient's own homes.

Pay is not the only part of the NHS employment offer. NHS staff now receive Total Reward Statements which show the value of other benefits, for example, the NHS occupational pension scheme which includes Life Assurance, child care voucher schemes, health and wellbeing benefits. Supported by good staff engagement strategies it is the overall employment offer that helps the NHS to attract and keep the staff it needs.

Since 2010, there are more than 9,100 additional doctors and 8,200 nurses, midwives and health visitors employed in the NHS.

■ NHS: Safety

William Wragg: [\[348\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking in response to the poisonings of patients at Stepping Hill Hospital; and what steps his Department is taking to improve (a) patient safety in hospitals and (b) the verification of qualifications and vetting of nurses recruited to the NHS.

Ben Gummer:

Much is being done to raise standards in patient safety in hospitals. In February, the Department published an assessment of progress in *Culture Change in the NHS: Applying the lessons of the Francis Inquiries*.

Key areas of progress include:

- a new inspection regime with the Care Quality Commission appointing three powerful Chief Inspectors for hospitals, social care and primary care and a new set of fundamental standards;

- a programme of safety improvement including a three-year safety campaign and network of 15 patient safety collaboratives to drive improvement in areas of safety that can make the biggest impact to patients;
- a drive towards greater transparency in the NHS on measures of patient safety and patient experience, and a new legal duty of candour on all organisations to ensure that when something goes wrong, patients and their relatives are told about it promptly; and
- a national programme led by Health Education England programme to ensure that patient safety is at the heart of the education and training of the health and care workforce.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is the independent regulator of nurses and midwives in the United Kingdom and is responsible for nurse registration. We expect the NMC's registration processes and associated checks to protect patient safety through being appropriate, robust, fit for purpose and effective, and by verifying that a nursing applicant is who they claim to be, is appropriately qualified, is competent and fit-to-practise.

The criminal acts of patient poisonings in 2011 at Stepping Hill, perpetrated by registered nurse Victorino Chua (with a Philipino qualification), have raised concern about the NMC's registration processes. Since 2011, the NMC has strengthened its process for registering applicants from countries outside the European Economic Area, supported by over £4 million of additional Government funding. Improvements include a clinical test of competence, a more robust system of face-to-face identity checks and advanced passport scanning technology to verify identity documents. Due to concern about untrained overseas nurses working in the United Kingdom, the NMC audited some 14,000 nurses, which did not result in any regulatory action.

■ NHS: Temporary Employment

Louise Haigh:

[\[189\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much the NHS has spent on temporary staff in each of the last three years.

Alistair Burt:

National Health Service spend on temporary staff for 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 as included within the Q4 data collection is shown below.

	2014/15 Q4 DATA COLLECTION UNAUDITED (£ BILLION) ¹	2013/14 UNAUDITED (£ BILLION) ²	2012/2013 (£ BILLION) ³
Total NHS Spend	3.34	2.61	2.33

Following the Francis ⁴ report many trusts increased their spend on temporary staffing to meet safe staffing levels. The Department expects trusts to have a strong grip on their finances, and manage their contract and agency staffing spend (including use of locums)

responsibly through effective and efficient workforce planning and management and to minimise temporary staffing costs in future years.

The Government is clear that the current rate of spending is unsustainable. The Secretary of State has announced a comprehensive package of measures to address the problem including:

- setting a maximum hourly rate for doctors and nurses;
- banning the use of agencies that are not approved;
- putting a cap on total agency staff spending for each NHS trust in financial difficulty; and
- requiring specific approval for any expensive consultancy contracts over £50,000.

¹ The 2014/15 figures reflect data collected from NHS trusts and foundation trusts as part of the Q4 data collection which is unpublished and unaudited. Whilst this data would not ordinarily be provided as part of a Parliamentary Question contribution, it has been included within this response as both Monitor and NHS Trust Development Authority have separately released data relating to temporary agency staff spend. It should be noted that their figures vary slightly from those included above. These figures may also be subject to revision as part of the 2014/15 final audited accounts production, and should therefore not be used once the final published Department of Health Annual Report and Accounts.

² For the first time, the Department collected unaudited financial data from NHS trusts for 2013/14 on Contract and Agency staffing costs and income to give a net expenditure figure. The data was collected on the NHS Summarisation Schedules that form the basis of the Department's Annual Report and Accounts.

³ The 2012/13 figures included in the 2013/14 published accounts have been included in the same table; however they were compiled on a different basis to the 2013/14 figures. The figures published for 2012/13 for trusts are based on non-permanently employed staff which is defined as "others engaged on the objectives of the organisation and will include staff on inward secondment or loan from other organisations, bank/agency/temporary staff and contract staff." This reconciles to the figures for those organisations in note 3 (Staff Costs 2012/13), whereas the 2013/14 figures were compiled for the first time under a stricter definition of contingent labour.

⁴ <http://www.midstaffspublicinquiry.com/>

Luciana Berger:

[677]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of how much the NHS spends on agency and contract staff.

Alistair Burt:

National Health Service spend on agency and contract staff for 2013/14 is £3.34 billion[1].

Following the Francis[2] report many trusts increased their spend on temporary staffing to meet safe staffing levels. The Department expects trusts to have a strong grip on their finances, and manage their contract and agency staffing spend (including use of locums) responsibly through effective and efficient workforce planning and management and to minimise temporary staffing costs in future years.

The Government is clear that the current rate of spending is not supporting the best positive outcome for patients. The Secretary of State has announced a comprehensive package of measures to address the problem including:

- setting a maximum hourly rate for doctors and nurses;
- banning the use of agencies that are not approved;
- putting a cap on total agency staff spending for each NHS trust in financial difficulty; and
- requiring specific approval for any expensive consultancy contracts over £50,000.

[1] The 2014/15 figures reflect data collected from NHS trusts and foundation trusts as part of the Q4 data collection which is unpublished and unaudited. Whilst this data would not ordinarily be provided as part of a Parliamentary Question contribution, it has been included within this response as both Monitor and NHS Trust Development Authority have separately released data relating to temporary agency staff spend. It should be noted that their figures vary slightly from those included above. These figures may also be subject to revision as part of the 2014/15 final audited accounts production, and should therefore not be used once the final published Department of Health Annual Report and Accounts.

[2] <http://www.midstaffspublicinquiry.com/>

■ Offences against Children: Counselling

Tom Watson: [149]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of whether there are financial savings to the public purse from providing long-term counselling in local communities to adults sexually abused in their childhood.

Tom Watson: [150]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many non-statutory organisations providing counselling without pre-determined time-limits to adults who were sexually abused as children were funded by his Department in (a) 2013-14 and (b) 2014-15.

Tom Watson: [151]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance he has given to NHS England and Public Health England on how they should respond to the demand for counselling support from adults who have come forward with traumatic experiences of child sexual abuse.

Alistair Burt:

This information is not collected centrally.

No such assessment has been made. However, counselling services should be available as part of the wider mental health provision to support sexually abused children. This Government is committed to improving children and young people's mental health and wellbeing as a whole, which will also benefit children and young people who have been victims of sexual abuse.

National Health Service funding for mental health services increased by £300 million last year. Historically, treatment targets have only been attached to physical health – a problem the Government is correcting with £1.25 billion announced in the last Budget. This will direct funding to mental health services and will ensure people, including those whose mental health has been affected through sexual abuse, get the treatment they need when they need it.

Our investment to date in the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme has made a choice of psychological therapies available for those who need them in all parts of England reflecting the objective in the Government's Mandate to NHS England to provide access to therapies for around 900,000 people per year by 2015, with a recovery rate of 50%. IAPT include therapies for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in response to sexual abuse as well as therapies for depression and anxiety disorders which may result from the traumatic of the abuse.

In March 2015, 'Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation' published in March 2015, set out cross-Government actions to prevent child sexual exploitation or, where it has happened, ensure victims and survivors get the support they need. The Department and its Arms Length Bodies are taking forward the health related recommendations, which focus on improving data on prevalence so that commissioners can develop the local service response to meet local needs.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence issued guidelines on 'Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD): The management of PTSD in adults and children in primary and secondary care' issued in March 2005, reviewed in December 2011, and 'Depression in adults: The treatment and management of depression in adults', published in October 2009. The guidance includes recommendations for the care and treatment of people with psychological and mental health needs arising from sexual abuse.

■ Pregnant Women: Advisory Services**Fiona Bruce:**[\[213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of provision of information by NHS services about options for women facing unplanned pregnancies to those women.

Fiona Bruce: [\[216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of social, medical and practical support for women experiencing unplanned pregnancies in England and Wales.

Jane Ellison:

Public Health England funds the Family Planning Association (FPA) for information on sexual health. This includes information and advice on unplanned pregnancy which is available from FPA's website.

■ Psychiatry: Expenditure

Luciana Berger: [\[674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of the mental health budget has been spent on forensic psychiatry in each of the last five years.

Alistair Burt:

Information about the proportion of the mental health budget spent on forensic psychiatry is not collected centrally by the Department or NHS England.

The commissioning of a range of services to meet the needs of patients on the forensic psychiatric care pathway is the responsibility of NHS England and clinical commissioning groups.

■ Staphylococcal Scalded Skin Syndrome: Children

Jim Shannon: [\[48\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many children had scalded skin syndrome in each of the last five years.

Jane Ellison:

The table below provides a count of the number of finished admission episodes (FAEs) where a primary diagnosis of Staphylococcal scalded skin syndrome has been recorded for patients aged 0 to 17 years on admission, for each year from 2009-10 to 2013-14.

	YEAR				
Age	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
0-17	484	398	351	263	245

An FAE is the first period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider.

This does not represent the number of patients as an individual may be admitted on more than one occasion.

■ Statins

Jim Shannon: [\[68\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with the Royal Colleges about the use of statins to treat heart disease.

Jane Ellison:

There have been no discussions between my Rt. hon. friend the Secretary of State for Health and the Royal Colleges about the use of statins to treat heart disease.

■ Sugar: Taxation

Luciana Berger: [\[673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the speech at the Hay Festival by the Minister for Life Sciences on 21 May 2015, what plans he has to introduce a sugar tax.

Jane Ellison:

We have no plans to introduce a sugar tax.

■ Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor C

Jim Shannon: [\[73\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with the Royal Colleges about treatment using VEGF-C protein.

Jane Ellison:

There have been no discussions between my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and the Royal Colleges about treatment using VEGF-C protein.

HOME OFFICE**■ Cannabis**

Jim Shannon: [\[878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been (a) arrested and (b) prosecuted for the possession of skunk cannabis in the UK in each of the last five years.

Mike Penning:

The Home Office does not collect data on the number of people arrested for the possession of skunk cannabis. The Ministry of Justice does not hold data centrally on the number of prosecutions for the possession of skunk cannabis. Data are collected on prosecutions for possession of cannabis, but these data cannot be broken down to specify types of cannabis.

■ Drugs

Christina Rees: [\[719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions she has had with (a) health bodies, (b) youth organisations, (c) local government and (d) the devolved administration on legal highs; and if she will make a statement.

Christina Rees: [\[720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent research her Department has undertaken to ascertain the safety of legal highs; and if she will make a statement.

Christina Rees: [\[795\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what definition her Department uses of the term psychoactive substance.

Mike Penning:

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), the Government's independent body of expert drug advisers, has carried out a series of assessments on new psychoactive substances (NPS). In its 2011 report 'Consideration of the Novel Psychoactive Substances ('Legal Highs')', the ACMD assessed the available evidence on the harms of all NPS. Since then, the ACMD has produced several reports on groups of NPS as well as specific substances. This body of advice has informed Government action and led to the banning of over 500 NPS. All ACMD reports and Government responses are available on GOV.UK. The Government commissioned an Expert Panel to look at ways to tackle NPS and to further enhance our response last year. On 28 May, the Government introduced the Psychoactive Substances Bill in the House of Lords, which provides for a blanket ban on the supply of psychoactive substances. The Bill defines the term psychoactive substance as any substance which is capable of producing a psychoactive effect in a person who consumes it, and is not an exempted substance. Exempted substances include medicines and caffeine. A substance produces a psychoactive effect in a person if, by stimulating or depressing the person's central nervous system, it affects the person's mental functioning or emotional state. We have worked with a range of partners, including with the devolved administrations, as well as other government departments and their agencies over the last few years as we developed our response to NPS. We will continue to do so in order to ensure that the Psychoactive Substances Bill is effectively implemented and enforced.

■ Metropolitan Police: Staff

Wes Streeting: [\[656\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the likely number of officers in the Metropolitan Police Service (a) overall and (b) in Redbridge in each of the next five years.

Mike Penning:

The size and composition of the Metropolitan Police workforce is an operational matter for the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, working with the Mayor's office for Policing and Crime. The experience of the last five years shows that what matters is how police officers are deployed, not how many there are in total.

■ Offences against Children: Victim Support Schemes

Tom Watson: [\[146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of the £7 million Child Abuse Support Victims Fund dispersed in May 2015 has been allocated to non-statutory organisations which specifically provide long-term counselling support to adults who were sexually abused as children.

Tom Watson: [\[147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much police time was spent assessing child abuse victims funding applications and dispersing these to the chosen non-statutory organisations in the last year.

Tom Watson: [\[148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many non-statutory organisations providing counselling without pre-determined time-limits to adults who were sexually abused as children were funded by her Department in (a) 2013-14 and (b) 2014-15.

Karen Bradley:

The Government announced an extra £7m funding to help victims of sexual violence in December 2014. £2.15m was allocated to the 84 existing Female Rape Support Centres and two funds were established to allocate the remainder: a £2m fund to non-statutory organisations reporting an increase in demand as a direct result of the announcement of the Child Sexual Abuse Inquiry (Fund 1), and a £2.85m fund for non-statutory organisations providing support across England and Wales to victims of sexual abuse to help meet the increased demand on those services (Fund 2). Organisations that applied to Fund 2 were asked whether they supported adults who were sexually abused as children. £2.33m of the £2.85m has been allocated to organisations that showed they provide support to adults who were sexually abused as children; this includes over £1.6m to organisations offering counselling services. These two funds are being administered by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk, supported by the Home Office. Aside from the attendance of the Chief Constable for Norfolk at the Oversight Board, no police time has been spent on assessment or allocation. We do not centrally hold information on the number of non-statutory organisations providing counselling without pre-determined time limits to adults who were sexually abused as children.

■ Police: Long Service Awards

Keir Starmer:

[[839](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will introduce a Long Service Medal to recognise the contribution of long-serving police officers; and if she will make a statement.

Mike Penning:

There is already a medal available for long service and good conduct in the police, the Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal (PLSGCM). King George VI instituted the PLSGCM in June 1951 by Royal Warrant for those who have rendered long and meritorious service as members of the Police Forces of the United Kingdom (UK), the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. The PLSGCM is subject to the terms laid down in its Royal Warrant. The medal recognises police officers who have served twenty years and have demonstrated good conduct. There are no plans to change the PLSGCM or to introduce a new long service medal.

■ Police: Visits Abroad

Sir Greg Knight:

[[306](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many officers in the Metropolitan Police have travelled overseas at public expense to investigate crimes committed abroad in the last period of 12 months for which figures are available; and what information her Department holds on how many officers in other UK police forces so travelled in the same period.

Mike Penning:

In the last 12 months, under Section 26 of the Police Act (1996), the Home Office has authorised deployments at public expense of a total of 120 police officers. 88 of these were from the Metropolitan Police Service. 78 authorisations were deployments supporting the international response to the MH17 plane crash.

■ Radicalism

Mr David Anderson:

[[481](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to include provisions in the planned legislative proposals on tackling extremism and terrorism to ensure that statements which are based on fact or evidence will not be classed as extremist.

Karen Bradley:

The legislation will clearly set out the circumstances in which the new counter-extremism powers may be used, including any safeguards that are appropriate.

JUSTICE

■ Personal Injury: Compensation

Jim Shannon: [\[60\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to reduce whiplash claim fraud; and what recent discussions he has had with the devolved administrations on this issue.

Dominic Raab:

The last Government worked closely with a wide range of stakeholders to develop an effective whiplash reform programme. New rules were implemented on 6 April 2015 to make sure that medical reports used in whiplash claims are obtained through the new MedCo IT portal. The new system also makes sure that solicitors are not able to obtain a report from an organisation with which they have a direct financial link.

These measures supplement reforms implemented on 1 October 2014 to fix the costs of initial medical reports at £180; to provide an expectation that there will usually only be one report; to prohibit the reporting expert from providing medical treatment to the claimant; to discourage insurers from using pre medical offers to settle; and to allow defendants to submit their version of events to the expert if necessary.

Further reforms to tackle fraudulent claims at source came into effect on 1 June 2015, when it became mandatory for claimant-solicitors to carry out a previous claims check on potential clients. In addition a robust new accreditation scheme for medical experts will be introduced on 1 January 2016 to help improve the quality of medical reports overall.

The Government's whiplash reform programme only covers England and Wales as these issues are a devolved matter in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Ministry of Justice officials did, however, talk to colleagues from the devolved administrations during the development of the reform programme.

PRIME MINISTER

■ Iraq Committee of Inquiry

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[556\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, if he will provide an update on the progress of the Chilcot inquiry; and when he expects the Maxwellisation process to be completed.

Mr David Cameron:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the former Member for Louth and Horncastle (Sir Peter Tapsell) and the former Member for Croydon South (Sir Richard Ottaway) at Prime Minister's Questions on 21 January 2015, *Official Report*, columns 210-212.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE ON THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION■ **Constituencies****Mr Christopher Chope:**[\[658\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for South West Devon, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, which parliamentary constituencies have electorates more than 10 per cent (a) greater and (b) smaller than the UK average.

Mr Gary Streeter:

The Electoral Commission recently published data relating to the 2015 UK Parliamentary general election results on its website. The requested information is set out in the attached table.

These results should be treated as provisional as they are based on data collected separately by the BBC, ITV, Sky News, and the Press Association. The Commission will publish a range of data for the 2015 UK Parliamentary general election in its report on the administration of those elections this summer. This will include the verified electorate figures by parliamentary constituency.

Attachments:

1. Constituencies 10% outside the UK average [Electorate Data - Consituencies with Electorates 10 Per Cent Higher or Lower than UK Average.docx]

TRANSPORT■ **Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency****Sir Greg Knight:**[\[236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that staff working at DVLA Swansea provide a good customer service since the closure of regional DVLA offices.

Andrew Jones:

The Drive and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is meeting all of its customer service measures for transactions that were previously carried out in its network of local offices.

Earlier this year, the DVLA launched two new digital services, which allow customers to retain and assign personalised registration numbers in real time, removing the requirement to return paperwork to the DVLA. These were two of the most commonly used services by customers of the local offices. These services are proving extremely popular with over a third of transactions already being carried out digitally.

Overall customer satisfaction for all DVLA services is currently 93.12%.

Sir Greg Knight:[\[237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reasons staff working at DVLA Swansea use a telephone answering system which gives a message and then cuts members of the

public off without allowing them to leave a message or wait for their call to be answered; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Jones:

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) answers 1.8 million calls every month through both its Interactive Voice Recognition system and advisors, 95% of these within five minutes.

At busy times, customers are placed in a queue to speak to an advisor. If demand is very high customers may receive a message indicating that all lines are busy. Calls are then terminated so customers are not charged unnecessarily. In the 2014/15 financial year in 2014/14, 4% of calls resulted in the busy message.

Utilising existing lines or increasing the number of lines to allow customers to leave messages would require resource to be diverted from answering live calls in order to respond to those who left a message. DVLA information is available online and customers can also contact the DVLA via GOV.UK and email.

■ **Gospel Oak-Barking Railway Line: Electrification**

Jeremy Corbyn: [\[550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what funding has been allocated to Network Rail for the electrification of the Barking to Gospel Oak line.

Claire Perry:

The Department for Transport and Transport for London have respectively allocated £90m and £25m towards the electrification of the line (2013 prices).

Jeremy Corbyn: [\[551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects work to (a) start and (b) be completed on the electrification of the Barking to Gospel Oak line.

Claire Perry:

Enabling works are due to commence in October 2015, with major on site works due to commence in June 2016. Passenger services on the electrified route are due to be available for use by passenger operators by 30 June 2017.

■ **Maritime and Coastguard Agency: Labour Turnover**

Ian Lavery: [\[483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many maritime (a) surveyors and (b) inspectors have (i) left and (ii) joined the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in each of the last 10 years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The number of Marine Surveyors that have left and joined the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in each of the last 10 years is shown below:

FINANCIAL YEAR	LEAVERS	STARTERS
2005-2006	9	6
2006-2007	10	4
2007-2008	11	8
2008-2009	7	11
2009-2010	12	11
2010-2011	8	6
2011-2012	14	3
2012-2013	8	6
2013-2014	11	4
2014-2015	11	7

■ **Maritime and Coastguard Agency: Staff**

Ian Lavery:

[\[454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the expected availability of qualified maritime (a) surveyors and (b) inspectors over the next five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The current Survey and Inspection Transformation Programme is reviewing and assessing the numbers of survey and inspection staff required to deliver the survey and inspection regime in future years. The business case is due to be complete in the Autumn of 2015.

Ian Lavery:

[\[455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the average age is of (a) inspectors and (b) surveyors employed in the Maritime and Coastguard Agency; and how many staff employed in each position will reach 65 years of age within the next five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The average age of the 125 Marine Surveyors employed by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency is 52 years and 4 months.

There are 10 surveyors who are 65 years or over and another 32 will reach that age within the next five years.

Ian Lavery:

[\[456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the new employment contract for maritime surveyors employed by the

Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA); what consultancy fees were paid by the MCA in drawing up that contract; what consultation was undertaken with MCA staff on that contract; and when that contract will come into effect.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency's (MCA) Survey and Inspection Transformation Programme will review the terms and conditions for Marine Surveyors and will consider the appropriateness of the current employment contract arrangements.

The MCA did not pay any consultancy fees in drawing up these contracts. As the contract applies to all Department for Transport (DfT) staff, both DfT and the MCA consulted the Trade Unions on the new contract. The Unions balloted their members and accepted the contract. This became effective from August 2012.

Ian Lavery:

[\[457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the role of his Department was in the design of the new employment contract for maritime surveyors and inspectors employed by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency; and what impact assessment his Department has made of the provision to end the contractual commitment to provide out of hours contact.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Officials at the Department for Transport (DfT) designed and negotiated new terms and conditions of employment for all DfT staff, including those for Marine Surveyors. An offer was presented to the Trade Unions and they balloted their members and accepted the offer.

The provision of out of hours working was and remains on a voluntary and non-contractual basis. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency's (MCA) Survey and Inspection Transformation Programme will review the terms and conditions for Marine Surveyors and will consider the appropriateness of the current employment contract arrangements.

■ **Maritime and Coastguard Agency: Standards**

Ian Lavery:

[\[458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's (MCA) targets were for ship (a) survey and (b) inspection work in each of the last 10 years; and what the MCA's performance was against each such target in each of those years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency's (MCA) targets for ship survey and inspection work for the last 10 years, and its performance against these targets is shown below:

PORT STATE CONTROL (PSC) INSPECTIONS

Year	Target	Performance
2005	1614	1768

PORT STATE CONTROL (PSC) INSPECTIONS

2006	1630	1661
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2007	1626	1639
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In 2008 the measure changed to inspecting at least 25% of foreign ships visiting the UK

2008	25%	Achieved – (1660)
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2009	25%	Achieved – (1684)
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2010	25%	Achieved – (1666)
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2011	25%	Achieved – (1459)
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2012	25%	Achieved – (1452)
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In 2013 the measure changed to a fair shared commitment that is set by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

2013	1535	Met – (1384)
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2014	1177	Met – (1279)
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EMSA does not recognise Gibraltar as a separate flag-State, so taking Gibraltar's performance into account the UK has met its PSC target for the past 10 years. There are no published targets for UK vessel inspections or survey and certification work that is performed annually by MCA surveyors. However, the two tables below show the number of survey and inspections that have been completed in the last 10 years.

SURVEY & CERTIFICATION

Year	Total
2005	4028
2006	3968
2007	3900
2008	3869
2009	3664
2010	3747
2011	4165

SURVEY & CERTIFICATION

2012	3817
2013	3633
2014	3426

UK VESSEL INSPECTIONS

Year	Total
2005	5352
2006	4818
2007	5350
2008	4485
2009	5941
2010	4500
2011	4315
2012	3879
2013	3730
2014	3446

Ian Lavery:

[\[459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's ship (a) survey and (b) inspection work was completed by classification societies in each of the last 10 years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Inspection work is not performed by classification societies.

The information about the proportion of survey work performed by classification societies is not recorded.

Ian Lavery:

[\[460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much the Maritime and Coastguard Agency paid to classification societies in each of the last 10 years; and for what categories of work these payments were made in each of those years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has not made any payments to any classification societies in any of the last 10 years.

■ **Maritime and Coastguard Agency: Vacancies**

Ian Lavery:

[\[482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the vacancy rate was for maritime (a) surveyors and (b) inspectors in the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in (i) the most recent period for which figures are available and (ii) each of the last 10 years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has not historically recorded vacancy rates for specific professions within the Agency.

The current vacancy rate for Marine Surveyors is 15.0%

TREASURY

■ **Child Benefit**

Paul Flynn:

[\[98\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his policy is on maintaining current levels of child benefit.

Damian Hinds:

In April 2015 Child Benefit rates were uprated by 1 per cent to £20.70 for the eldest or only child and to £13.70 for additional children.

■ **FIFA**

Clive Efford:

[\[641\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to discover whether UK financial institutions have been used to carry out illegal transactions related to FIFA.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK has a comprehensive anti-money laundering (AML) and counter financing of terrorism regime and we are committed to ensuring our financial system is a hostile environment for illicit finances.

The Treasury is responsible for appointing AML supervisors, including the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). The FCA is responsible for ensuring compliance of financial institutions with their AML requirements.

The FCA is operationally independent from Government and carries out its functions within the framework of statutory objectives and duties agreed by Parliament.

The FCA is discussing with banks whether the FIFA episode has highlighted weaknesses in their AML systems and controls.

Clive Efford: [642]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the Financial Services Authority was informed of the possibility of UK financial institutions being used to carry out illegal transactions related to FIFA; what steps the Authority took to investigate; and when he was informed about that possibility.

Harriett Baldwin:

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

The question has been passed on to the FCA. The FCA will reply directly to the honourable member by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House

■ Financial Conduct Authority

Louise Haigh: [203]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will review the effectiveness of the Financial Conduct Authority.

Harriett Baldwin:

Under the Financial Services Act 2012 the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) was made subject to National Audit Office (NAO) audit with the associated ability of the NAO to launch Value for Money (VFM) studies of the FCA into its economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The NAO recently reported on the FCA, as well as the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA), in March 2014. A full copy of the report can be found at the following address - <http://www.nao.org.uk/press-releases/regulating-financial-services/>

The Treasury has statutory powers to appoint an independent person to conduct a review of the economy efficiency and effectiveness with which the FCA has used its resources in discharging its functions. There are no plans to launch such a review at this stage.

■ Inflation

Louise Haigh: [195]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of negative inflation on the economy.

Harriett Baldwin:

Annual inflation has fallen to record lows driven predominantly by falls in food, energy and petrol prices. This temporary period of falling prices is boosting real wages and supporting household spending and economic growth in the short term. But the government is vigilant to the risk of a period of sustained price declines. The government remains committed to the symmetric 2 per cent inflation target and welcomes the Bank of England's forecast for inflation to return to target in a timely fashion.

■ Mortgages: EU Action

Andrew Stephenson: [7]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent representations he has received on the EU Mortgage Credit Directive; and if he will make a statement.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Government has not recently received any representations on the EU Mortgage Credit Directive.

■ Mortgages: First Time Buyers

Andrew Stephenson: [6]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of the European Standardised Information Sheet on the availability of mortgages for first-time house buyers.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK already has a robust regulatory regime to protect consumers in the UK mortgage market.

As such, the Government's approach to the implementation of the Mortgage Credit Directive, has been to minimise the impact on the UK market by building on the existing UK regulatory framework.

Under this framework, the independent regulator, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) is responsible for the rules that mortgage providers must comply with, including what type of information they must provide to consumers. The FCA is therefore responsible for considering how to ensure that mortgage lenders are using the European Standardised Information Sheet (ESIS) or an equivalent by 21 March 2016, and the impact that this could have on UK consumers.

The FCA have published details on the changes they will make to their mortgage rules, including what the impact of the ESIS may be, and these are publicly available on their website.

■ Public Expenditure: Greater Manchester

John Pugh: [211]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the Exchequer's per annum and per capita revenue contribution, excluding welfare payments, to Greater Manchester City Region (a) was in each of the last three years and (b) will be in each of the three years following implementation of the agreement between that city region and the Government.

Mr David Gauke:

With regard to contributions over the last three years, the annual determination of funding to local government is set out in the local government finance settlement which is laid before the house and published on GOV.UK each year.

The final settlement for 2015/16, including the settlement for each local authority, can be found online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/final-local-government-finance-settlement-england-2015-to-2016>.

Determinations for future years will be set as part of the spending review process.

Population estimates for Greater Manchester are provided by the ONS which can be found at the following website:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Population+Estimates>.

With regards to future years, on 3 November 2014, the Government signed an historic deal with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, whereby Greater Manchester will create the first directly elected metro-wide Mayor outside of London with control of a reformed earn back deal totalling £900 million over 30 years and control of a £300 million housing investment fund.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority will also be given new powers to support business growth, skills and employment, transport, and planning. In February, GM and NHS England also agreed to arrangements which will bring together £6bn of NHS and social care budgets so that joint planning of these services can deliver better care for patients.

The government also announced at Budget 2015 that it will, subject to the formal approval of GMCA, pilot a scheme in Greater Manchester and Cheshire East to enable the retention of 100% of any additional business rate growth, starting in April 2015.

■ Public Finance

Paul Flynn: [88]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of progress in eliminating the deficit between 2010 and 2015.

Harriett Baldwin:

The government's long-term plan is working, restoring the public finances to a more sustainable path. The deficit has more than halved as a share of GDP from its post-war peak of 10.2% in 2009-10 to 4.8% by the end of last year. The latest data published jointly by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and HM Treasury shows that public sector net borrowing for April 2015 is £6.8bn, down £2.5bn compared to the same time last year. But the job of fixing the public finances is not yet complete which is why we will continue with our plans to reduce the deficit further and build a more resilient British economy.

■ River Thames: Bridges

Tom Brake: [544]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what process his Department undertook to scrutinise the business case for the proposed Garden Bridge project.

Greg Hands:

The Department for Transport is responsible for reviewing business cases for transport infrastructure projects.

Tom Brake:[\[545\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential benefits of a new Thames pedestrian bridge at alternative locations to that of the proposed Garden Bridge project.

Greg Hands:

The Department for Transport is responsible for reviewing business cases for transport infrastructure projects. The Garden Bridge business case included alternative locations for the project.

Tom Brake:[\[546\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, on what dates he has met Joanna Lumley to discuss the proposed Garden Bridge project in each of the last three years.

Greg Hands:

HM Treasury has no record of the Chancellor meeting with Joanna Lumley to discuss the Garden Bridge in any of the last three years.

Tom Brake:[\[547\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, on what dates officials in his Department have met Joanna Lumley to discuss the proposed Garden Bridge project in each of the last three years.

Greg Hands:

I can confirm that Treasury officials have not spoken to Joanna Lumley about the Garden Bridge project in any of the last three years.

■ Tax Allowances**Mr Gregory Campbell:**[\[302\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the maximum amount is that a higher-rate taxpayer could save in the current financial year only utilising maximum tax reliefs in (a) a personal pension and (b) an ISA.

Mr David Gauke:

Income tax relief is available on individual contributions to registered pension schemes. Contributions are subject to a tax charge on any pension savings in excess of an annual allowance (plus any unused allowance from the previous three years). The annual allowance for the present tax year (2015-16) is £40,000. Contributions may also be subject to the lifetime annual allowance. The lifetime annual allowance for the present tax year (2015-16) is £1,250,000.

Individuals can save up to £15,240 in an ISA (Individual Savings Account) in the 2015-16 tax year. The amount of tax relief that a higher rate taxpayer can receive will depend on the overall returns from the cash and other ISA-eligible assets they hold.

■ Tax Evasion

Paul Flynn: [\[90\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much additional revenue HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) will recoup from new measures to reduce tax evasion by 2020; and what additional resources he plans to allocate HMRC to reduce tax evasion.

Mr David Gauke:

The government will announce the detail and estimated Exchequer impacts of its plans to tackle tax evasion in the usual way, as part of the regular Budget and Spending Review processes.

■ Treasury: Communication

Louise Haigh: [\[192\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, where the post of his Department's director of communications was advertised.

Louise Haigh: [\[193\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the annual salary is of his Department's director of communications.

Harriett Baldwin:

Special Adviser appointments are made in line with the Ministerial Code and Code of Conduct for Special Advisers. Details of Special Advisers appointments and remuneration will be published in due course

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ British Steel: Pensions**

Paul Flynn: [\[843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent discussions he has had with (a) ministerial colleagues and (b) representatives from the steel industry on Tata Steel's plans to close the British Steel pension scheme.

Justin Tomlinson:

I have had no recent discussions with either Ministerial colleagues or representatives from the steel industry with regard to Tata Steel's plans to close the British Steel pension scheme.

■ Electric Cables

Jim Shannon: [\[66\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to ensure that (a) children and young people and (b) the general public are aware of the danger of power lines.

Justin Tomlinson:

Under an Agency Agreement with DECC, HSE leads on the regulation of the public safety aspects of DECC-owned legislation associated with the generation, transmission, distribution and supply of electricity - the Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 (ESQCR). ESQCR 2002 apply only to Great Britain. There is a separate legislative framework in Northern Ireland, the Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012, that are enforced by HSENI.

These regulations place duties on companies involved in electricity generation and distribution to take proactive measures to advise the general public, including children and young people, of the hazards associated with power lines, and to educate them on how to avoid danger. There are no regulations in this area specifically targeted at children and young people.

HSE holds regular meetings with the Energy Networks Association (ENA) that represent the distribution network operators (DNOs) for electricity and gas in the UK. These meetings are to encourage and support the industry's health and safety management including compliance with ESQCR. HSE also has on-going regulatory contact with the individual DNOs to the same effect.

Through such meetings HSE supports the ENA's Public Safety Committee which concentrates on getting the safety message to all people that may get close to power lines. Further information and free public safety leaflets can be found at the following website:

<http://www.energynetworks.org/electricity/she/safety/safety-advice/public-safety-leaflets.html>

HSE also supports individual DNO companies' production and promotion of guidance on these matters, much of which is specifically aimed at school age children.

■ Food Banks**Paul Flynn:****[85]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of recent figures from the Trussell Trust that one million people in Britain will soon be using its food banks; and what assessment he has made of whether there is a link between welfare spending reductions and food bank usage.

Priti Patel:

The Department recognises the extremely valuable work of civil society in supporting local communities. As the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Inquiry noted, the reasons why people use food banks can be complex and overlapping. Their use in this country can't be attributed to a single cause.

As promised the Department for Work and Pensions has done more to raise awareness of Short Term Benefit Advances for those in financial need at the start of a new benefit claim, including providing information on GOV.UK and posters and leaflets in

Jobcentres. Guidance has also been updated and staff reminded of the process for considering STBA requests.

■ Housing Benefit: Southwark

Ms Harriet Harman: [644]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many of the following households in the London Borough of Southwark with (a) dependent children, (b) a single person, (c) pensioners, (d) one or more people employed and (e) a disabled member are claiming housing benefit.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information for those in employment is only available for Housing Benefit (HB) recipients who do not receive: Income Support; Jobseeker's Allowance (Income-Based); Employment and Support Allowance (Income-Based); or Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit).

The information that shows detailed statistics to answer parts (a), (b), and (c) and those in work for HB recipients whose claim is not passported, by local authority, can be found 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/Getting-Started---SuperWEB2.html>

Information on those households containing someone registered as disabled is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Housing Benefit: Young People

Mr Barry Sheerman: [239]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the cost to the public purse was of housing benefit for 18 to 21 year olds who were (a) in employment, (b) unemployed and (c) inactive in (i) 2012-13, (ii) 2013-14 and (iii) 2014-15.

Justin Tomlinson:

The available information is in the table below. Housing Benefit expenditure data for 2014/15 is not yet available.

HOUSING BENEFIT EXPENDITURE FOR 18 TO 21 YEAR OLDS, £MILLIONS, CASH TERMS, GB

	Receiving Jobseeker's Allowance	Employed and not in receipt of DWP benefits	Other	Total18-21
2012/13	209	82	459	750
2013/14	168	81	436	685

HOUSING BENEFIT EXPENDITURE FOR 18 TO 21 YEAR OLDS, £MILLIONS, REAL TERMS, 2014/15 PRICES, GB

	Receiving Jobseeker's Allowance	Employed and not in receipt of DWP benefits	Other	Total18-21
2012/13	218	85	476	779
2013/14	171	82	443	696

Source: Single Housing Benefit Extract, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study and Local Authority subsidy returns

Notes:

1. Benefit expenditure is available for financial years only. Information for 2014/15 full financial year is not yet available.
2. The actual economic status of Housing Benefit claimants is not recorded, so the table uses receipt of other DWP benefits as a proxy, taking receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) as indicating unemployed status.
3. The 'other' category includes claimants in receipt of other DWP benefits (e.g. Income Support). Not all of these will necessarily be economically inactive, as some may be doing very low paid work while in receipt of an out of work benefit, and some may be looking for work, so technically unemployed rather than inactive.

■ Welfare to Work: Scotland

John McNally:

[548]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what organisation his Department has awarded contracts or sub contracts to for the provision of welfare to work programmes in Scotland in each year since 2010.

Priti Patel:

Details of all contracts with a value of £10,000 or over are published on Contractfinder as part of the Government's transparency agenda.

The information requested can be found at the following link:

<https://www.contractfinder.service.gov.uk>

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

DEFENCE

■ Chemical Weapons Convention—Declaration of Protective Programmes

Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Ministry of Defence) (Mr Julian Brazier):

[\[HCWS15\]](#)

The UK's chemical protection programme is designed to protect against the use of chemical weapons. Such a programme is permitted by the Chemical Weapons Convention, with which the United Kingdom is fully compliant. Under the terms of the Convention, we are required to provide information annually to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. In accordance with the Government's commitment to openness, I am placing in the Library of the House a copy of the summary that has been provided to the Organisation outlining the UK's chemical protection programme in 2014.

■ National Employer Advisory Board Appointments

Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Ministry of Defence) (Mr Julian Brazier):

[\[HCWS16\]](#)

Following open competition, I am pleased to advise the House of the appointment of seven new members to the National Employer Advisory Board (NEAB).

They are:

Mr Bagnall

Mr Bird

Mr Carter

Mr McTague

Mr Randeniya

Mr Sproule

Mr Walkinshaw

They join the other seven members of the Board, which is chaired by Mr Richard Boggis-Rolfe. The NEAB provides informed independent strategic advice to the Ministry of Defence and the Reserves community about how they can most effectively develop their relationship with employers across the UK and particularly employers of members of the Armed Forces and veterans. I take this opportunity to thank the NEAB for its work which is greatly valued by the Ministry of Defence.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

■ EU Energy Council, Luxembourg, 8 June 2015

Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (Amber Rudd): [\[HCWS13\]](#)

In advance of the forthcoming Energy Council in Luxembourg on 8 June, I am writing to outline the agenda items to be discussed.

Under the first item on the agenda, the Council will hold a policy debate on implementation of the EU Energy Security Strategy, focussing on achievement in strengthening energy security in Europe since adoption of the strategy in 2014, priorities for next steps to be taken and how to ensure synergies between the various tools that can contribute to energy security in the EU. The UK considers that there have been a number of developments in the EU that will have a positive impact on energy security, including the agreement of the 2030 climate and energy framework and the development of the Energy Union. Looking ahead, the UK considers that delivering a fully functional single energy market, building resilience into the system and diversifying energy supplies should all continue to be priorities.

The Council will then be asked to adopt conclusions on the implementation of the Framework Strategy for the Energy Union focussing on empowering consumers and incentivising investments in the energy sector. The UK agrees that more needs to be done to enhance competitiveness in the internal energy market to deliver benefits for consumers and that particular priority needs to be given to the facilitation of new interconnection and investment projects.

The Commission will then report on developments in external energy relations, including recent tri-lateral talks on energy issues between the EU, Russia and Ukraine, and developments in the Energy Community.

The Czech delegation will update Council on discussions held at the plenary meeting of the European Nuclear Energy Forum (ENEF) which took place in Prague in May.

Finally, the Luxembourg delegation will inform the Council of the priorities for their Presidency in the first half of 2016.

JUSTICE

■ Inquests into the deaths of service personnel on operations and exercises overseas

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Women, Equalities and Family Justice, Ministry of Justice (Caroline Dinenage): [\[HCWS14\]](#)

Together with my Honourable friend the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, I present our latest joint statement on the progress of coroner investigations into the deaths of UK service personnel on active service overseas. Our Armed Forces demonstrate great courage, commitment and self-sacrifice in their service to our country, and it is right that they receive our heartfelt gratitude. Most of all we remember and honour those who have laid down their lives in the service of their country, and the families they leave behind.

This statement sets out the progress of investigations being held by the Senior Coroners for Oxfordshire, for Wiltshire and Swindon and for other coroner areas in England and Wales as at 22 May 2015.

Tables to supplement this report have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. These give details of all cases, including whether there has been or will be a Service Inquiry (known as a Board of Inquiry in the earlier years covered).

The Defence Inquests Unit of the Ministry of Defence continues to work closely with coroners (including the dedicated cadre of coroners with special training in service personnel inquests), to make sure that everything possible is done to progress and complete investigations quickly and thoroughly. There is now provision under Section 12 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 for investigations to be held in Scotland, where appropriate, rather than in England and Wales.

We are thankful to all who are involved in the course of these investigations: to those who provide support and assistance to bereaved families; to the coroners and their staff who seek to conduct thorough investigations which put the bereaved families at their heart; and for the Chief Coroner for his leadership and oversight of the coroner service.

Repatriations of service personnel who have died overseas have mainly taken place at RAF Brize Norton and RAF Lyneham. To enable the Senior Coroners for Oxfordshire and for Wiltshire and Swindon to conduct inquests into these deaths alongside their local caseload, additional funding has been provided to both areas since 2007 by the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice.

Current status of inquests

Since our last statement on 29 January 2015 there have been six inquests into the deaths of service personnel on operations in Iraq or Afghanistan. This brings the total of inquests into the deaths of service personnel who have died on active service in Iraq or Afghanistan or who have died in the UK of injuries sustained on active service to 624. Three deaths of injured service personnel have not led to a formal inquest. Two of these were taken into consideration at inquests into other deaths which occurred in the same incidents. The third case concerned a serviceman in Scotland who made a partial recovery but later died from his injuries, and it was decided not to hold a Fatal Accident Inquiry.

Coroners' investigations which have been opened

As at 22 May, seven coroner investigations are open into the deaths of service personnel in Afghanistan.

The Senior Coroner for Oxfordshire has retained five of these. The other two investigations are being conducted by the Senior Coroners for Gateshead and South Tyneside and for West Sussex, whose courts are closer to the next of kin. A pre-inquest hearing date of 2 November

2015 has been set for one of these inquests. Hearing dates have not yet been listed for the remaining six inquests.

We will continue to inform the House of progress.

Attachments:

1. Tables detailing Inquests into service deaths [WMS tables May 2015 passed by MoD.DOC]