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Notes:

Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.
 Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Central Arbitration Committee

Ian Murray: [\[53852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what (a) correspondence and (b) representations he has received from the (i) Chairman of the Central Arbitration Committee, (ii) hon. Members and (iii) members of the House of Lords on appointments to that Committee.

Ian Murray: [\[53853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the estimated completion date is for appointing Deputy Chairs and Members of the Central Arbitration Committee which commenced in July 2014; and what progress has been made on that appointment process.

Margot James:

Ministers in Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy finalised the appointment of Deputy Chairs and Employer Members to the Central Arbitration Committee in July 2016. The appointment of Worker Members were finalised recently with the successful candidates able to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Central Arbitration Committee on 16 November 2016.

I am not aware that my Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has received any direct representations from either House in respect of these appointments. Sir Michael Burton, the Chair of the Central Arbitration Committee, has been in regular contact with senior officials and Ministers in the Department over the period of the recruitment process.

■ Climate Change Convention

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[53564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to ensure the UK meets its commitments in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (a) nationally and (b) globally.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The UK has ratified the Paris Agreement. The UK is already playing its part in delivering the Paris Agreement through our ambitious domestic climate framework. We have shown our commitment to the UK's Climate Change Act by setting the Fifth Carbon Budget in law. This budget is set in line with the recommendation of the Committee on Climate Change and has been widely welcomed by the business community for the certainty it gives in our move to a low carbon economy. The creation of the new Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will enable a whole economy approach to delivering our climate change ambitions.

I attended COP22 in Marrakech this year. The UK played a significant role in driving forward negotiations and discussions – particularly on mobilising climate finance. At these negotiations, progress was made on how to implement Paris Agreement, setting a clear deadline of 2018 for its finalisation. The UK also announced participation in a number of initiatives, including: supporting developing countries to implement their Paris commitments, tackling air pollution and investing further in research and development. For the first time at a COP, the UK had a Green is GREAT pavilion, showcasing British public and private sector strengths in responding to the challenges of climate change, including innovative commercial solutions and financial expertise.

The UK is supporting vulnerable countries to take action against climate change. The UK will provide at least £5.8bn from the UK aid budget between 2016 and 2020 as climate finance which will continue to provide strong support to help vulnerable developing countries adapt to climate change and take up sustainable, low carbon, resilient and inclusive development. This includes technical assistance and capacity building to help countries implement their national plans under the Paris Agreement. UK climate finance to date has already directly supported 21 million people to cope with the effects of climate change, and improved access to energy for 6.6 million people. The finance has also helped prevent 4.9 million tonnes of CO₂, this is roughly equivalent to emissions from 1 million vehicles driven for one year.

We have also recently seen two significant global climate deals that – although separate from the UNFCCC process – will be important steps towards meeting the Paris goals. The UK played a key role in securing a major deal to combat aviation emissions, the first worldwide scheme to address emissions in any single sector, and also in securing a historic deal to phase down the production and use of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) by 2047, which will avoid 0.5 degrees of global warming by the end of this century. The UK is already phasing down the use of HFCs by 80% by 2030 and now the rest of the world will be following our lead.

■ Company Cars: Taxation

Mary Glendon:

[\[53733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on the UK car manufacturing sector of proposals in the HM Revenue and Customs consultation on salary sacrifice for the provision of benefits-in-kind.

Mr Nick Hurd:

As part of the consultation on salary sacrifice for the provision of benefits-in-kind, the Government has engaged with trade organisations in the car rental, leasing and manufacturing sectors. The consultation closed on 19 October and all responses are being considered carefully.

The Government is committed to encouraging company car drivers to take-up driving of ultra-low emissions vehicles. On 10 August 2016, we published a separate consultation on proposals for incentivising low emission company cars.

■ Employers' Liability: Asbestos

Nusrat Ghani:

[\[52974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support businesses which are threatened with legal action from previous employees affected by asbestosis but which cannot trace any relevant Employer's Liability insurance policy.

Margot James:

The Department does not hold this information. Employer's Liability insurance is a policy matter for the Department for Work and Pensions.

■ Energy: Coventry

Colleen Fletcher:

[\[53521\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the average proportion of household expenditure on energy bills was in (a) Coventry and (b) Coventry North East constituency in the latest period for which figures are available.

Jesse Norman:

[Holding answer 22 November 2016]: The proportion of household expenditure spent on energy bills is not available at a regional level. On average, in the UK in 2014, 4.9% of all household expenditure was spent on energy bills. This data is from the Living Costs and Food Survey by ONS and has been calculated by summing the domestic household expenditure on gas, electricity and other household fuels, divided by the total household expenditure.

■ Energy: Meters

Philip Davies:

[\[53212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that energy companies routinely carry out vulnerability checks with their customers before installing pre-payment meters in accordance with existing codes of conduct.

Jesse Norman:

Ofgem set domestic energy supply licence conditions, and these require energy companies to only install a prepayment meter into a domestic customer's residence where it is safe and reasonably practicable in all circumstances for the customer. Failure to comply with supply licence obligations could result in Ofgem enforcement action against an energy supply company.

■ Energy: Prices

Philip Davies: [\[53114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to ensure that energy consumers with cancer are protected by a price cap.

Jesse Norman:

Energy supply companies must ensure that all domestic customers are on the cheapest tariff that is in line with their preferences: that is in relation to their chosen payment method and whether they prefer a fixed term or variable tariff.

Eligible vulnerable consumers, including cancer patients on Pension Credit Guarantee Credit or other means tested benefits, can receive help with energy bills through the Warm Home Discount.

Dawn Butler: [\[53119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent progress has been made on introducing a cap on the cost of energy supplied through prepayment meters.

Jesse Norman:

The Competition Market Authority has recently consulted on a draft order which set out the technical details of how the safeguard tariff cap for prepayment meters will be calculated and implemented. The consultation closed on 11 November, and the tariff cap is expected to come into force in April next year.

■ EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Susan Elan Jones: [\[53781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of the UK leaving the EU on British businesses that are part of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

Mr Nick Hurd:

There are no immediate changes to UK participation in, and compliance with, the EU Emissions Trading System and we continue to engage in the negotiations on reforms to the System. We are considering the UK's future participation in the EU ETS as part of delivering a wider settlement in the best interests of the UK, in consultation with business and other stakeholders.

■ Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Alex Cunningham: [\[53586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he plans to take to introduce new policies to address industrial greenhouse gas emission reductions.

Mr Nick Hurd:

Government policies to drive industrial greenhouse gas emissions reductions include Climate Change Agreements, UK participation in the EU Emissions Trading System and financial incentives for energy efficiency technologies such as Combined Heat and Power. Government is also working collaboratively with eight energy intensive sectors through the 2050 Industrial Roadmaps Programme on actions needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy efficiency, while improving competitiveness

In addition, we are looking ahead to our emissions reduction plan which will set out how we will reduce our emissions through the 2020s.

■ Post Offices: Franchises

Gill Furniss: [\[53764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many franchised former Crown post offices have closed in each year since 2010.

Gill Furniss: [\[53765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the average number of financial service specialist jobs there are at those (a) Crown post offices and (b) post offices which have been franchised to WHSmith.

Margot James:

The operation and franchising of its Crown post offices is the responsibility of Post Office Limited.

I have asked Paula Vennells, the Chief Executive of Post Office Limited, to write to the Hon Member on this matter and provide the information requested. A copy of her reply will be placed in the libraries of the House.

■ Travel: Insurance

Jim Shannon: [\[52087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what guidance his Department gives to companies selling holiday insurance on safeguarding customer medical data.

Jesse Norman:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has not produced any guidance as we have no policy responsibility for the insurance industry or data protection.

TREASURY■ **Beer: Excise Duties**

Graham Evans: [\[53000\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of reductions in beer duty on (a) the number of jobs and (b) the level of investment in the beer and pub industry.

Jane Ellison:

HM Treasury engages with a wide variety of organisations to understand industry developments, including the beer and pub industry.

This includes considering external reports like that of the British Beer and Pub Association, which estimated that by 2016/17 there will be 21,000 more jobs in the pub industry, than if the duty escalator had continued until 2015.

■ **Business: Registration**

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[53134\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 14 November 2016 to Question 51941, when the new Customs Declaration Service will come into effect; and what estimate he has made of how long an Economic Operator Registration Identification application will take to process under that service.

Jane Ellison:

Full implementation of the new Customs Declaration Service is planned for January 2019. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) currently has a target of processing Economic Operator Registration Identification applications within 3 working days. However, HMRC expects the new service to process the majority of applications within a much shorter time period.

■ **Concentrix**

Caroline Lucas: [\[53117\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to Written Statement of 15 November 2016, HCWS251, Update on HM Revenue and Customs' contract with Concentrix, for what reasons HM Revenue and Customs paid £500,000 towards some of Concentrix's exit costs from its subcontracts; and if he will make a statement.

Jane Ellison:

The costs being paid to Concentrix are, as stated in the Written Statement of 15 November 2016 (HCWS251), in regard to exit from a number of established subcontracts. These costs are only in respect of those subcontract breakage costs that Concentrix will bear as a result of early termination, which would not have been incurred by Concentrix if the subcontracts had continued until expiry and that are unavoidable, proven, reasonable and not otherwise capable of recovery.

Caroline Lucas:

[53118]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to Written Statement of 15 November 2016, HCWS251, Update on HM Revenue and Customs' contract with Concentrix, what the costs have been to HM Revenue and Customs of taking over cases from Concentrix prior to the early close of the contract.

Jane Ellison:

The cost to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), in terms of the existing HMRC staff who have worked cases returned from Concentrix from 12 September to 14 November 2016, is c. £3.7 million. HMRC has absorbed these costs within its existing funding envelope.

Caroline Lucas:

[53144]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Work and Pensions Committee evidence session of 13 October 2016 on Concentrix and Tax Credits Q99, and to the Written Statement of 15 November 2016, HCWS 251, Update on HM Revenue and Customs' contract with Concentrix: Written statement, what the reasons are for the difference between the figure for the estimated saving to the Exchequer from reducing fraud and error as a result of this contract of £270 million given by the Chief Executive of HM Revenue and Customs in the evidence and the figure of £193 million given by the Minister in the written statement; and if he will make a statement.

Jane Ellison:

As part of the process for the 2016 Autumn Statement, as at previous fiscal events, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has revised its estimate for the savings as a result of the contract as new information has become available. The figures given by HMRC's Chief Executive and in the Written Ministerial Statement reflected the latest estimate at the time.

■ Financial Services: Euro

Stephen Timms:

[53855]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 14 November 2016 to Question 52148, if he will make an assessment of the potential implications for his Department's policies of a transfer of jobs related to Euro-dominated clearing from London to Europe.

Simon Kirby:

As previously stated by the Chancellor during Treasury Oral questions on 25 October 2016, the jobs attached to euro-denominated clearing constitute a relatively low part of the total employment in the financial sector. However, the activity forms an important part of the overall financial structure in London. For financial services in particular, securing the best possible deal means recognising the importance of access to EU markets.

■ Married People: Tax Allowances

Tim Farron: [\[53728\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much his Department has spent from the public purse on advertising the marriage tax allowance in each year since it was introduced.

Jane Ellison:

The Marriage Allowance was introduced in April 2015, to recognise the importance of marriage and provide support to those on low incomes, many of whom have little engagement with tax matters. So it is right that the Government has taken action to improve awareness of the positive impact this allowance could have on family finances. Since the introduction of the Marriage Allowance in April 2015, HM Revenue and Customs has spent £1,457,479 (excluding VAT) on targeted campaigns to raise awareness. Families across the UK could be better off by up to £432 if they claim the Marriage Allowance today if their application is backdated to April 2015.

■ Rent a Room Scheme

Stella Creasy: [\[53777\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many applications for the Rent a Room tax relief scheme have been received by HM Revenue and Customs by region in each of the last five years.

Stella Creasy: [\[53778\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much has been claimed in tax relief under the Rent a Room scheme in each region in each of the last five years.

Jane Ellison:

The tables below provide, for each of the last five years for which HM Revenue and Customs has complete annual data: the (a) amount of Rent a Room relief claimed by taxpayers whose gross rental incomes exceeded the reporting threshold of £4,250; and (b) number of taxpayers who reported using the Relief on their tax returns, including those whose gross rental incomes were below the threshold.

The available data does not provide the exact total number of beneficiaries of the Relief nor the total amount of the Rent a Room relief in those years due to rounding and certain exclusions. This is explained in the notes below the tables.

	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	A*	B**	A*	B**	A*	B**	A*	B**	A*	B**
North East	£460,000	500	£438,00	500	£427,00	500	£575,000	500	£566,000	500
North	£1,854,00	1,900	£2,141,00	2,100	£2,273,00	2,200	£2,613,00	2,200	£2,774,00	2,300

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15					
West	0	0	0	0	0					
Yorks & Humber	£1,447,000	1,500	£1,602,000	1,600	£1,772,000	1,700	£1,866,000	1,700	£2,225,000	1,800
East Midlands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Midlands	£1,269,000	1,400	£1,459,000	1,400	£1,604,000	1,500	£1,726,000	1,600	£2,021,000	1,700
East of England	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greater London	£20,638,000	13,400	£23,435,000	14,200	£27,237,000	15,700	£30,669,000	17,000	£36,299,000	18,600
South East	£11,770,000	9,400	£12,889,000	9,900	£14,316,000	10,400	£15,777,000	11,000	£17,498,000	11,400
South West	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wales	£8,237,000	7,300	£8,794,000	7,300	£9,267,000	7,600	£10,100,000	7,900	£11,168,000	8,300
Scotland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Ireland	£268,000	300	£262,000	300	£282,000	300	£251,000	300	£278,000	300
Unclassified	£153,000	200	£206,000	200	£280,000	200	£309,000	300	£460,000	400

***A – amount of Rent a Room relief claimed by taxpayers whose gross rental incomes exceeded the reporting threshold of £4,250**

****B – Number of claims**

Notes:

(1) Figures in column (a) have been rounded to the nearest thousand; and figures in column (b) have been rounded to the nearest hundred.

(2) Figures in column (a) exclude the relief claimed by those whose gross rental incomes were below the threshold.

(3) Figures in column (b) exclude those who benefited from the Relief but did not have to complete tax returns, as their gross rental incomes were below the reporting threshold and they had no other Self Assessment incomes to declare.

■ Taxation

Jim McMahon: [\[52982\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much was raised for the public purse from (a) Vehicle Excise Duty and (b) Fuel Duty in each year since 2011-12.

Jane Ellison:

The table below indicates revenues raised from Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) and fuel duty since financial year 2011-12:

FINANCIAL YEAR	VEHICLE EXCISE DUTY COLLECTED	
	(£BN)	FUEL DUTY COLLECTED (£BN)
2011-12	5.9	26.8
2012-13	6.0	26.5
2013-14	6.0	26.8
2014-15	6.1	27.1
2015-16	5.6	27.6

The Government recognises that fuel costs remain a significant part of business and household costs and at a time when petrol prices are rising and the value of the pound is falling it is important that we focus on the cost of living to ensure we're protecting the public from any additional costs on their fuel. For this reason, at Autumn Statement 2016, the Government announced the main rate of fuel duty will be frozen for the seventh successive year, saving the average driver £130 every year compared to what they would have been paying under pre-2010 escalator plans.

■ Taxation: Self-assessment

Stephen Timms: [\[53751\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many P800 adjustments were issued to individual taxpayers to correct for an over or under payment of income tax in (a) 2013-14, (b) 2014-15 and (c) 2015-16.

Jane Ellison:

At the end of every tax year HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) electronically reviews all individual PAYE records to see whether or not the correct amount of tax and National Insurance Contributions for the year has been paid. Where there is an under or overpayment, HMRC notifies the individual through issuing form P800. The table below

shows the number of accounts reviewed and the number of P800 forms issued for 2013-14 and 2014-15. Final figures for 2015-16 are not yet available.

	ACCOUNTS REVIEWED	P800 FORMS ISSUED
2013-14	45.86 million	5.43 million
2014-15	45.81 million	5.04 million

■ Welfare Tax Credits

Ms Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh: [\[53091\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much on average has been paid to claimants relating to the maladministration of tax credits in the last (a) year and (b) three months.

Ms Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh: [\[53092\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many hardship payments have been (a) offered and (b) withheld following tax credits decisions in 2016.

Ms Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh: [\[53093\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what targets his Department has set for the number of mandatory reconsiderations (a) requested and (b) upheld in relation to tax credits decisions in 2016.

Ms Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh: [\[53094\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, in how many cases relating to the maladministration of tax credits have compensation payments been made in the last (a) year and (b) three months.

Ms Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh: [\[53095\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, in how many cases relating to the maladministration of tax credits have compensation payments been offered in the last (a) year and (b) three months.

Jane Ellison:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) offers redress payments for a variety of reasons, including: poor complaint handling, costs, worry and distress and actual financial loss.

From 1 November 2015 to 31 October 2016 HMRC offered redress in 7,636 cases totalling £403,700.93. From 1 August 2016 to 31 October 2016 HMRC offered redress payments in 2,294 cases totalling £111,944.45. The amount of redress paid varies according to the claimants' individual cases

HMRC have provisions in place to support those customers who are suffering financial hardship. From 1 January 2016 to 10 November 2016 HMRC received 12,750 hardship referrals. Of these 8,351 were paid and 4,399 were not paid.

A claimant can request a mandatory reconsideration if they believe:

1. the decision is wrong;
2. the award does not take into account a change of circumstance;
3. the award is reduced or has stopped;
4. they do not agree with a penalty notice; or,
5. they have been charged interest.

In the majority of cases claimants produce new evidence as part of the mandatory reconsideration which results in the original decision being overturned. HMRC does not have a target relating to Mandatory Reconsideration a) intakes and b) upheld rates.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Communities and Local Government: Sick Leave

Norman Lamb: [\[53064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what number of working days were lost due to mental illness in his Department in each of the last three years.

Mr Marcus Jones:

My Department has had the following working days lost to mental illness in each of the last three years:

WORKING DAYS LOST TO MENTAL ILLNESS		DAYS LOST (SHORT TERM)	DAYS LOST (LONG TERM)	TOTAL WORKING DAYS LOST (12 MONTH PERIOD)	AVAILABLE WORKING DAYS (12 MONTH PERIOD)	% OF WORKING DAYS LOST DUE TO MENTAL ILLNESS
Mar-14	530	1951.5	2481.5	392905.4	0.6%	
Mar-15	753.0	1849.0	2602.0	389052.2	0.7%	
Mar-16	733.5	2959	3692.5	389960.2	0.9%	
Oct-16	588	2986.5	3574.5	365433.4	1.0%	

The department introduced Mental Health First Aid training for staff in February 2015 and has since trained over 100 people. We have an active Mental Health Ambassador Network of staff who offer advice, support and direction to both staff and managers. DCLG also has also a Mental Health Support Group that encourages staff experiencing poor mental health or who caring for someone with a mental health illness to share experiences and offer mutual support and advice.

■ Floods: EU Grants and Loans

Mr Jamie Reed: [\[53823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what recent representations he has made to the European Commission on the progress of the Government's application to the EU solidarity fund for flood damage.

Andrew Percy:

The Government finalised the UK's application to the EU Solidarity Fund on 22 September 2016. The Government has been in regular contact with the European Commission at working level, and we await their decision on the application.

■ Floods: Finance

Mr Jamie Reed: [\[53824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much funding to date his Department has made available to each local authority area affected by flood damage from Storms Desmond, Eva and Frank; and how much of that funding was allocated from (a) the Communities and Business Recovery scheme, (b) the Bellwin scheme and (c) other funding sources.

Andrew Percy:

My Department has paid out £57,237,780 to help local communities recover from Storms Desmond and Eva.

A breakdown of this sum will be provided to the Library of the House shortly.

We have also paid out £8.6 million predominantly match-funding to flood relief charities and community foundations.

Government has paid out over £240 million to help repair infrastructure damaged as a result of Storms Desmond and Eva.

■ Housing: Construction

Jim Shannon: [\[52906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, when his Department plans to publish the report commissioned from AECOM and Fourwalls in 2015 to monitor air tightness in 55 homes and compliance with Approved Document F in the Building Regulations (Contract Number CPD/004/109/132).

Gavin Barwell:

We are currently considering the findings of this latest research and we plan to publish the report in due course.

■ Licensed Premises: Noise

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[53755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government plans to take (a) through guidance to property developers and local authorities

and (b) otherwise to protect the capacity for nightclubs and live music venues to continue to trade when planning permission is being considered for converting existing offices nearby to residential properties.

Thangam Debbonaire: [53756]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 7 November 2016 to Question 51986, what guidance the Government plans to issue to (a) local authorities, (b) nightclubs, (c) residents of existing properties and (d) property developers applying for planning permission to convert offices to residential properties on their respective rights and responsibilities in relation to noise.

Gavin Barwell:

Where permitted development rights apply, in considering the prior approval on noise for a change of use from office to residential (under Class O of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, local planning authorities will have regard to those relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework and supporting planning guidance on noise, as would be the case under a planning application. Prior approval may be refused where any impacts of noise from commercial premises identified are not sufficiently mitigated by the proposed measures, as consistent with national policy. Links to the National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance can be found here - <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>. A local planning authority cannot consider matters other than those for which their prior approval may be given, as listed in Class O.

When determining a planning application for a change of use from office to residential where permitted development rights do not apply, local planning authorities must take into account the policies and guidance listed above, and must determine the application in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Separate regimes apply to licencing and statutory nuisance, which are the responsibility of the Home Office and the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs respectively.

■ Non-domestic Rates: Pharmacy

Diana Johnson: [53127]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much and what proportion of business rate revenue in (a) Hull City Council area and (b) England came from local pharmacies in the last three years.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Department does not hold data on the amount of business rate revenue collected from local pharmacies.

■ Private Rented Housing

Stella Creasy: [\[53779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate his Department has made of the number of (a) people renting rooms and (b) rooms available to rent in each region in each of the last five years.

Gavin Barwell:

This information is not held by the Department.

■ Radioactive Materials: Transport

Jeff Smith: [\[53088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what notice is given to local government emergency services on nuclear warhead convoys and consignments of high level nuclear waste passing through their areas.

Andrew Percy:

Police forces are always notified in advance of a nuclear weapon convoy being routed through their area. Police forces may advise fire and rescue services of the presence of the convoy if it is moving into the vicinity of a fire service operation. I am withholding specific information on the period of notice given to emergency services as its disclosure would prejudice the capability, effectiveness and security of the armed forces.

The Ministry of Defence holds no High Level Waste as part of the Defence Nuclear Programme.

For those movements of civil nuclear and radioactive material that the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is responsible for, the relevant police authorities are involved in the planning stages and are aware of upcoming movements of material. The other emergency services are involved on a case by case basis, but for higher category material, all three emergency services sit in the Multi-Agency Command Centre and will be aware movements are due to take place.

Jeff Smith: [\[53089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much has been spent on training and resources to enable local emergency services to better respond to possible incidents involving transport of nuclear warheads and high level nuclear waste passing through their areas in the last five years.

Andrew Percy:

Data on expenditure for training and resources for local emergency services is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Right to Buy Scheme

Michael Tomlinson: [\[53128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the timetable is for the roll-out of the Right to Buy scheme nationally.

Gavin Barwell:

We remain committed to the Voluntary Right to Buy for housing association tenants. The Government is continuing to work closely with the National Housing Federation and the housing association sector on the implementation of the main scheme and will announce more details in due course.

■ Skilled Workers: North of England

Graham Evans: [\[53016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of devolution of the adult skills budget on reducing the skills shortage in the North of England.

Andrew Percy:

The Government's strategy to better meet the needs of employers, learners and local areas is to establish a skills system that is responsive to local economic needs. For those combined authorities with signed devolution deals this means assuming responsibility for the Adult Education Budget (AEB) in 2018/19, enabling them to commission outcomes which deliver the skills needed locally. Devolution deals in the North of England all include full devolution of AEB from 2018/19, enabling areas of the North to tackle their local skills shortages.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: EU Exit and Trade Committee**

Tom Watson: [\[53718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, on what dates she has been invited to participate in meetings of the EU Exit and Trade Cabinet Committee.

Matt Hancock:

Information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees, including when they met and which Ministers attended, is generally not disclosed.

■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Government Car Service

Tom Watson: [\[53544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, which Ministers of her Department have access to the government car service.

Tom Watson: [\[53545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many civil servants in her Department have access to the government car service.

Matt Hancock:

All DCMS Ministers have access to use the Government Car Service when needed for their work and duties as a DCMS Minister.

■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Sick Leave**Norman Lamb:**[\[53065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many working days were lost due to mental illness in her Department in each of the last three years.

Matt Hancock:

The number of working days lost in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport due to all illness reported under the Mental & Behavioural Disorders category in each of the last three years is shown in the table below:

YEAR	WORKING DAYS LOST
1 March 2013 to 31 March 2014	305
1 March 2014 to 31 March 2015	189
1 March 2015 to 31 March 2016	79

We provide support to help all employees to stay well and manage their health conditions at work. This support includes a variety of programmes like occupational health support, the Employee Assistance Programme and the Civil Service reasonable adjustments service.

We signed up to level 2 of the Disability Confident Scheme and the "Time to Change" pledge and have been actively working with line managers to support individuals with mental health conditions. We introduced Mental Health First Aiders who are trained to recognise the symptoms of mental health and guide the individual towards appropriate professional help.

These actions have led to a continued decrease in the number of working days lost due to mental health sickness absence.

■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Staff**Tom Watson:**[\[53541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many officials of her Department have specific responsibilities for cyber security.

Matt Hancock:

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has 30 full- and part-time staff with specific responsibilities for cyber security, which include promoting the UK cyber security industry, supporting cyber security research & innovation, improving cyber security skills, ensuring the UK's economy and society is cyber secure, engaging with EU & international partners and ensuring the cyber security & resilience of critical national telecommunications and Internet infrastructure. The work described above is part of the of the cross-Government national cyber security strategy and feeds into DCMS's wider remit in promoting the UK's digital economy.

Tom Watson: [\[53626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many civil servants in her Department are working on the competition process for European Capital of Culture 2023.

Matt Hancock:

There are currently 3 civil servants within DCMS focused on the European Capitals of Culture programme, together with others across both DCMS and other Governmental Departments who are involved as part of their wider duties.

■ European Capital of Culture

Tom Watson: [\[53543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment her Department has made of the potential economic effect for the cities and regions in contention for the European Capital of Culture 2023 of being in contention for that award.

Matt Hancock:

To date DCMS have made no assessment of the potential economic impact of the 2023 competition. Previous analysis of Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture in 2008, carried out by the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, can be found here:

https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/impacts08/pdf/pdf/Creating_an_Impact_-_web.pdf.

Tom Watson: [\[53628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how much her Department has spent to date on the preparation for the competition to decide the potential winner of the European Capital of Culture 2023.

Matt Hancock:

To date only existing DCMS civil service resource has been applied to the policy development around the competition for 2023, which is met within the overall DCMS administrative expenditure cap.

■ Film

Tom Watson: [\[53627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 14 November 2016 to Question 51896, who made each of the representations she has received from the film industry on the UK's decision to leave the EU; and on what dates.

Matt Hancock:

Further to our answer to PQ 51896, we have received a range of representations from the film industry on the UK's decision to leave the European Union and we are working with industry to assess the potential impacts and maximise the opportunities that our exit presents for the sector.

However, we do not provide a running commentary on our discussions with individual companies. Ministerial meetings with external organisations are published quarterly on the Gov.uk website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dcms-ministerial-hospitality-overseas-travel-meetings-and-gifts-1-april-2016-to-30-june-2016>

■ Kids Company

Paul Flynn: [53524]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate she has made of the amount of money paid to Kids Company in 2015-16 that went towards fulfilling that charity's objectives.

Mr Rob Wilson:

Kids Company was required to meet a clear set of delivery targets. An independent third party was appointed by Cabinet Office to independently monitor and evaluate the grant and outcomes Kids Company were reporting.

Paul Flynn: [53664]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what value for money assessment the Government made of the first payment to Kids Company of 2015-16 made in accordance with Section 70 of the Charities Act 2001.

Mr Rob Wilson:

Kids Company was required to meet a clear set of delivery targets. These were regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure Kids Company were delivering the outcomes set out in the Grant Agreement.

■ Video Games

Tom Watson: [53622]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 14 November 2016 to Question 51897, who made the representations she has received from the video games industry on the UK's decision to leave the EU; and on what date.

Matt Hancock:

Further to our answer to PQ 51897, we have received a range of representations from the videogames industry on the UK's decision to leave the European Union and we are working with industry to assess the potential impacts and maximise the opportunities that our exit presents for the sector.

However, we do not provide a running commentary on our discussions with individual companies. Ministerial meetings with external organisations are published quarterly on the Gov.uk website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dcms-ministerial-hospitality-overseas-travel-meetings-and-gifts-1-april-2016-to-30-june-2016>

Tom Watson: [\[53654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 14 November 2016 to Question 51897, who attended the roundtable referred to in that Answer.

Matt Hancock:

The attendees of this roundtable came from a broad cross section of the creative industries at a senior level.

However, we do not provide a running commentary on our discussions with individual companies. Ministerial meetings with external organisations are published quarterly on the Gov.uk website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dcms-ministerial-hospitality-overseas-travel-meetings-and-gifts-1-april-2016-to-30-june-2016>

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces: Housing

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[53112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his Department's report, a Better Defence Estate, published in November 2016, what the annual running costs are of each of the 91 most expensive sites planned for disposal.

Mark Lancaster:

The estimated annual running costs for financial year 2016-17 for each of the 91 sites planned for disposal as stated in "A Better Defence Estate" published in November 2016 are shown in the following table:

SITE	RUNNING COSTS IN £ MILLION
ABERCORN BARRACKS	0.84
DBS FINANCE LIVERPOOL	2.58
RAF MOLESWORTH	3.03
RAF ALCONBURY	1.46
ALDERSHOT DISTRIBUTION OUTLET	0.25
AMPORT HOUSE	0.51
JSCS ASHCHURCH (EAST)	3.96
AZIMGHUR BARRACKS	3.24
RAF BARNHAM	0.58

SITE	RUNNING COSTS IN £ MILLION
BRECON BARRACKS	0.69
BEACHLEY BARRACKS	1.38
KINNEGAR LOGISTIC BASE	0.88
BURGOYNE BARRACKS	0.14
CARVER BARRACKS	2.09
CAWDOR BARRACKS	1.51
DSG COLCHESTER	0.35
MOD CALEDONIA	5.31
CHALGROVE AIRFIELD	0.01
DBS CHEADLE HUME	0.74
Chivenor Airfield	0.21
CHIVENOR BARRACKS	3.93
CLARO BARRACKS	1.48
CLIVE BARRACKS	1.17
CLAYTON BARRACKS	0.04
LAND AT COVE	2.62
RAF COLERNE	0.46
COPTHORNE BARRACKS	0.86
CRAIGIEHALL	1.35
COMMANDER AND STAFF TRAINER (NORTH)	0.16
CATTERICK TOWN CENTRE PARCEL	-
THE ROYAL CITADEL	1.26
CHILWELL STATION	3.66
CAVALRY BARRACKS HOUNSLOW	1.42
DIO ALDERSHOT	0.22
DALE BARRACKS	1.67

SITE	RUNNING COSTS IN £ MILLION
DALTON BARRACKS (ABINGDON AIRFIELD)	-
DALTON BARRACKS	4.46
DIO HEAD OFFICE	0.77
DEVERELL BARRACKS	0.44
DISHFORTH BARRACKS (AIRFIELD)	2.49
FORT BLOCKHOUSE	4.29
SOUTHWICK PARK	2.70
FORTHSIDE STIRLING	0.50
MEADOWFORTH BARRACKS (HQ 51 HIGHLAND BRIGADE)	0.43
DSG FORTHSIDE	0.45
FORT GEORGE	1.59
FULWOOD BARRACKS	1.91
GLENCORSE BARRACKS	1.67
HARDEN BARRACKS (DUCHESS OF KENT PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL)	0.48
HARLEY HILL	-
BUCKLEY BARRACKS (HULLAVINGTON AIRFIELD)	1.26
BUCKLEY BARRACKS (HULLAVINGTON BARRACKS)	1.59
IMPHAL BARRACKS	2.81
INVICTA PARK BARRACKS	1.77
KNELLER HALL	0.73
JSCS LONGMOOR	0.62
LEIGHTON HOUSE (AOSB Westbury)	1.01
LODGE HILL	0.15
WETHERSFIELD AIRFIELD	0.13

SITE	RUNNING COSTS IN £ MILLION
MDPGA WETHERSFIELD	2.50
Middlewick Ranges	0.06
MOAT HOUSE	0.04
ATHENA HOUSE	0.76
NELSON WARDROOM	1.22
NEWTONARDS AIRFIELD	0.01
NORTON MANOR CAMP	2.23
SWANSEA AIRPORT	-
Old Dalby	1.35
Defence Geographic Centre, Feltham	2.41
PARSONS BARRACKS DONNINGTON	0.31
1300 PARKWAY	1.36
PRINCE WILLIAM OF GLOUCESTER BARRACKS	2.86
QUEEN ELIZABETH BARRACKS	1.69
HENLOW AIRFIELD	2.73
RAF HENLOW Technical Site	2.24
FITZWYGRAM HOUSE (ROYAL ARMY VETERINARY CORPS CENTRE)	0.02
REDFORD CAVALRY BARRACKS	1.58
REDFORD INFANTRY BARRACKS	1.19
RAF MILDENHALL	4.71
HALTON AIRFIELD	0.16
CONDOR AIRFIELD	0.29
ST DAVIDS BARRACKS	0.99
SIR JOHN MOORE BARRACKS WINCHESTER	3.03
ROBERTSON BARRACKS	2.25
SOMERSET BARRACKS	0.12

SITE	RUNNING COSTS IN £ MILLION
SSG WARRINGTON	0.05
ST GEORGES BARRACKS NORTH LUFFENHAM	3.81
STONEHOUSE BARRACKS	2.20
SENNYBRIDGE TMP COMPOUND	0.72
HMS SULTAN	7.71
TOWTHORPE LINES	0.23
THORNHILL BARRACKS	0.10
TOMLINSON HOUSE	0.05
VAUXHALL BARRACKS	1.02
VENNING BARRACKS	0.18
MOD WOODBRIDGE (Rock Barracks)	2.74
WOOLWICH STATION	2.65
Total	140

■ Armed Forces: Pensions

Nia Griffith: [\[53724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Written Statement of 8 November 2016, Armed Forces Pension Scheme - Advance from the Contingencies Fund, HCWS249, when he was first made aware of the shortfall in the net cash requirement amount for the Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Schemes.

Mark Lancaster:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 16 November 2016 to Question 52701 to the hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr Perkins).

Attachments:

1. 52701 - WQnA on Armed Forces Pensions
[20161116_52701_Armed_Forces_Pensions.docx]

Nia Griffith: [\[53725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Written Statement of 8 November 2016, Armed Forces Pension Scheme - Advance from the Contingencies Fund, HCWS249, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to ensure that shortfalls in the net cash requirement amounts do not arise in the future.

Mark Lancaster:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 16 November 2016 to Question 52704 to the hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr Perkins). Ministry of Defence officials continue to work with their Treasury counterparts to ensure this error does not arise in the future.

Attachments:

1. 52704 - WQnA extract on Public Expenditure [20161116_52704_WQnA_extract_on_Public_Expenditure.docx]

Defence Infrastructure Organisation: Staff**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[53396\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many people, including Strategic Business Partner employees, are employed in the Defence Infrastructure Organisation.

Mark Lancaster:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 24 October 2016 to Question 48724 to the hon. Member for Welwyn Hatfield (Grant Shapps).

In addition, as of 31 October 2016, 27 staff from the Strategic Business Partner are employed in the Defence Infrastructure Organisation.

Attachments:

1. WQnA extract on Defence Estates and DIO Staff [Hansard Extract 24 October 2016, 48724.docx]

Electric Cables: Lake District National Park**Mr Jamie Reed:**[\[53747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of the National Grid's North West Coast Connections project on flight training in and around Cumbria; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Lancaster:

The proposed new overhead power lines included in National Grid's North West Coast Connections project has been evaluated against defence interests in the area including military low flying training activities.

Based upon the information provided by National Grid, the majority of the route for the new overhead power lines will follow that of existing major overhead line routes and it has been determined that the scheme will not impact upon the safe and effective completion of military low flying training in and around Cumbria, subject to details of all new overhead power lines being submitted to the Ministry of Defence for inclusion on relevant aeronautical charts.

Mr Jamie Reed:[\[53748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's input will be to the public consultation on the National Grid's North West Coast Connections project.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has responded to National Grid's consultation on this project and identified that the department has no objections to the proposal, subject to details of all new overhead power lines being submitted to the MOD for inclusion on relevant aeronautical charts.

Hyde Park Barracks

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[53775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has made an assessment of the current and forecast market value of Hyde Park Barracks.

Mark Lancaster:

The Department keeps the value of its estate, including Hyde Park Barracks, under review.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[53782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department will begin accepting bids for Hyde Park Barracks towards the end of 2017.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[53783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether an Intended Reprovision Plan is being assessed for (a) Hyde Park Barracks and (b) the Household Cavalry as part of his Department's Footprint Strategy.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[53785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the expected income derived from the sale of Hyde Park Barracks has already been budgeted for in current defence planning.

Mark Lancaster:

No decision on the sale of Hyde Park Barracks has been made. Options for how best to deliver State Ceremonial and Public Duties are being considered as part of the Department's work on estate optimisation within London.

Military Bases: Greater London

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[53784\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what meetings Ministers or officials of his Department have had with representatives from Bilfinger GVA to discuss the relocation of (a) Hyde Park Barracks and (b) the Household Cavalry in the last 12 months.

Mark Lancaster:

Bilfinger GVA was appointed on 16 August 2016 as the Department's advisor on the property aspects of the Department's work on estate optimisation within London. As part of the formal competitive, commercial process representatives of the Department met with Bilfinger GVA on the 18 July 2016.

Since their appointment, representatives from Bilfinger GVA have participated in a series of workshops to discuss Ministry of Defence (MOD) estate optimisation in London,

attended by representatives of the Department. In addition, there have been five meetings between MOD officials and Bilfinger GVA.

■ Ministry of Defence: Apprentices

Alex Cunningham:

[53388]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 4 November 2016 to Question 50804, what information his Department holds on the number of its apprentices who went on to secure permanent positions within the Civil Service in each year from 2011 to date.

Mark Lancaster:

Since 2011, the Ministry of Defence has created 771 Civil Service apprenticeships. Information on subsequent permanent employment in the Civil Service is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ Ministry of Defence: Sick Leave

Norman Lamb:

[53066]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many working days were lost due to mental illness in his Department in each of the last three years.

Mark Lancaster:

For Ministry of Defence (MOD) Civilians, the number of working days lost due to mental illness in the last three years is set out in the table below:

YEAR PERIOD	NUMBER OF WORKING DAYS LOST (SEE NOTE)
1 October 2015 to 30 September 2016	79,260
1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015	85,410
1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014	86,010

Note: Data regarding the number of days lost is derived from sick absences recorded on the Human Resources Management System under the absence code description "Anxiety, depression, stress".

MOD Civilian Sickness Absence data has been published on the GOV.UK website since January 2016 and the latest available edition can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mod-civilian-sickness-absence-financial-year-201617>.

Data relating to the number of working days lost due to mental illness for Armed Forces personnel is not held.

■ Ministry of Defence: Social Networking

Andy Slaughter: [53223]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department is monitoring content that is publicly available on social networking sites using overt monitoring techniques.

Mark Lancaster:

Social media is monitored by public relations and communications teams across Defence to gauge public reaction to our content and messages and to help us with strategic planning of communications, events and campaigns.

■ Type 26 Frigates

Mrs Flick Drummond: [53478]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with what anti-ship armament the Class 26 frigate will be equipped.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Vertical Launch Silo that will be fitted to the Type 26 Global Combat Ship (GCS) will have the flexibility to utilise a variety of missiles depending on the threat, mission and future Defence decisions.

In addition, my hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Sir Michael Fallon) announced on 4 November 2016 that a £100 million contract has been placed to deliver the Sea Ceptor self-defence missile system for the Type 26 GCS. The Type 26 will be fitted with the Sea Ceptor missile system and a 5" Medium Calibre Gun, both of which can contribute to the anti-ship capability of the maritime task group.

EDUCATION**■ Apprentices**

Stephen Timms: [53750]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many employers in the (a) public and (b) private sector offered apprenticeships in (i) East Ham constituency, (ii) the London Borough of Newham and (iii) England in (A) 2010, (B) 2011, (C) 2012 and (D) 2013.

Robert Halfon:

Numbers of public or private sector employers offering apprenticeships are not counted by the Department. We do publish information on workplaces offering apprenticeships, which counts the number of individual workplaces at site level. However one employer may have multiple sites. This can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/570133/apprenticeships-workplaces-by-region.xlsx

The latest data on apprenticeship starts by constituency and region can be found in the supplementary tables accompanying the Statistical First Release SFA/SFR36, published on 17 November 2016:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/570129/earner-participation-outcomes-and-level-of-highest-qualification-data-tables-November16.xls

■ Children: Day Care

Thangam Debbonaire:

[53754]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding was provided from the public purse for early years (a) childcare, (b) children's centres, (c) nurseries and (d) other provisions in Bristol West constituency in 2015-16; how much such funding is allocated for (i) 2016-17 and (ii) 2017-18; and what estimate her Department has made of how many full-time equivalent places such funding supports.

Caroline Dinenage:

Funding for the free early years entitlements is allocated on a local authority basis through the Dedicated Schools Grant. This funding covers childcare, nurseries and other early years provisions, including childcare via children's centres. Local authorities have the freedom to determine how to fund other services delivered via their networks of children's centres, including via the Business Rate Retention Scheme. Local authorities have the freedom to decide what children's centre services are appropriate to meet local needs and statutory duties.

In 2015-16, the City of Bristol received £29.16m from central government for the early years entitlements (three- and four-year olds and two-year olds but not including the Early Years Pupil Premium). This funding supported 5,161 full-time equivalent places.

In 2016-17, the City of Bristol received a provisional £28.71m from central government for the early years entitlements (three- and four-year olds and two-year olds but not including the EYPP). This funding supported a provisional 5,082 full-time equivalent places.

The Government consulted earlier this year on proposals to ensure that early years funding is allocated efficiently and fairly across the country from 2017-18. Under such proposals the City of Bristol would have been allocated a provisional £32.56m from central government for the early years entitlements (three- and four-year olds including 30 hours childcare for working parents; two-year olds; and supplementary funding for maintained nursery schools). This funding would have supported a provisional 5,666 full-time equivalent places.

Government will announce a response to the consultation shortly, including 2017-18 funding for the City of Bristol.

■ Higher Education: Finance

Gordon Marsden:

[53835]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the Higher Education and Funding Council's progress in delivering the support for part-time and flexible higher education as set out in the Government's Higher Education Funding for 2016-17 letter of March 2016.

Joseph Johnson:

The Higher Education Funding Council for England is supporting our ambition in supporting part-time and flexible learning.

They have retained additional funding for part-time undergraduate and postgraduate taught students as part of their teaching funding method to recognise the additional costs of supporting these students, and from 2017 this will be allocated as a separate student premium.

Higher Education: Part-time Education

Gordon Marsden: [\[53834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she plans to take to reverse the decline in the number of 31 to 60 year olds studying in part-time higher education in England since 2006-07.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government is committed to supporting learners who study part-time. We have already extended higher education tuition fee loans to part-time students, and from 2018/19, subject to the outcomes of our consultation, we intend to do the same with maintenance loans.

In our February 2016 guidance to the Director of Fair Access (DfA) we asked the DfA to give a renewed focus on part-time study. We are also reviewing our recent call for evidence on credit transfer, which provides support for part-time learners.

Pre-school Education: Finance

Tulip Siddiq: [\[53734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department takes to ensure that funds allocated to local authorities to fund support for early years is spent (a) in the year for which it is allocated and (b) on early years activities.

Caroline Dinéage:

We are currently considering all responses to our recent consultation on proposals to ensure that early years funding is allocated efficiently and fairly across the country.

One of our proposals is to require local authorities to pass 95% of their early years funding through to frontline providers every year. This will ensure that the vast majority of funds allocated to local authorities are used for early years provision, and in the year for which they are allocated.

As we implement our proposals, we will closely monitor and review the impact of our reforms to ensure that local authorities and providers are able to deliver the childcare entitlements in a sustainable way.

■ Students: Loans

Gordon Marsden:

[\[53836\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential contribution which loans for students studying second degrees will make towards closing the higher level skills gap in England.

Joseph Johnson:

Part-time students starting a second degree course in any Science, Engineering, Technology and Maths (STEM) subject will be eligible for student support from the 2017/2018 Academic Year. We expect that that these changes will reduce barriers to people studying and help fill the high-level skills gaps that hold back parts of the economy.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture: Subsidies

Conor McGinn:

[\[53341\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the level of inaccurate Common Agricultural Policy payments.

George Eustice:

The RPA introduced new features to enable farmers and agents to apply for 2016 BPS online, as well as view their land and transfer land and entitlements to others. With over 80% of claims received online, this means the number of cases requiring manual data-entry this year was significantly reduced.

Tim Farron:

[\[53729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much in payments due to have been made in 2015 by the Rural Payments Agency have not yet been paid to commons farmers.

Tim Farron:

[\[53822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many cases are outstanding for commons payments from the Rural Payments Agency under the 2015 Basic Payment Scheme.

George Eustice:

By 16 November, in addition to claims which the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) cannot pay due to legal reasons such as probate, all but 6 claimants had received a payment. This figure is an increase of 1 compared to the previously reported figure because the agency is completing routine final checks on nil value claims.

The RPA said it would investigate BPS 2015 claims where there is a discrepancy between the claim information and that held on the Rural Payments Service through a planned reconciliation process. This started after the BPS 2016 application window and looked at

an initial stock of 13,607 claims for England. The agency continues to review new queries and has identified around 1,200 claims relating to common land. The total value of top up payments due will only be available once these claims have been reviewed.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Sick Leave**

Norman Lamb: [\[53068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many working days were lost due to mental illness in her Department in each of the last three years.

George Eustice:

The number of working days lost in Defra due to mental illness in the last three years is as follows:

YEAR	TOTAL
June to July 2013/14	1519.40
June to July 2014/15	1966.91
June to July 2015/16	2374.62

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Social Networking**

Andy Slaughter: [\[53225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department is monitoring content that is publicly available on social networking sites using overt monitoring techniques.

George Eustice:

We routinely monitor social media networking sites to evaluate the effectiveness of our online messages when making announcements or sharing advice during an incident.

■ **Environment Protection: Public Consultation**

Cat Smith: [\[53770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how she plans that members of the public will be able to contribute to the upcoming consultation on the 25 Year Natural Environment Plan.

Jim Fitzpatrick: [\[53771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when she plans to publish the details of the public consultation on the 25 Year Natural Environment Plan.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

In line with its manifesto commitment, the Government is committed to improving the environment within a generation. We are developing a 25 Year Environment Plan to deliver this.

The first step towards developing the plan will be to publish soon a consultative document open to all to contribute either online or by mail. We will use the feedback from this to help develop the full plan itself next year.

■ **Rural Payments Agency: Performance Related Pay**

Tim Farron: [\[53821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether any part of the Rural Payments Agency's senior management payment package is performance related.

George Eustice:

Senior Civil Service (SCS) pay awards in core-Defra and the Executive Agencies, including RPA, are based on a framework set by Cabinet Office following the Government response to the Senior Salaries Review Body recommendation. Both consolidated awards and end-year non-consolidated performance payments are determined by the performance markings the SCS receive as part of the SCS performance management process.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ **Democratic Republic of Congo: Homicide**

Dr Paul Monaghan: [\[53002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his international counterparts on reports of recent massacres in Beni and the North Kivu region in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Government is deeply concerned by the reports of mass killings in Beni. During my visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in August, I raised the ongoing violence in eastern DRC with Maman Sidikou, Head of the UN Peacekeeping Mission in eastern DRC (MONUSCO). In addition, our Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, regularly discusses the Beni situation with the MONUSCO leadership and the DRC Government. The EU Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of 17 October reiterated the EU's profound concern at the situation in Beni and reminded all involved of the UN sanctions regime for those responsible for serious human rights violations. Most recently, our representative on the UNSC visited eastern DRC last week to explore what more MONUSCO can do to prevent future killings.

■ **Ethiopia: Female Genital Mutilation**

Helen Goodman: [\[52971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Ethiopia has made representations on the practice of female genital mutilation to the government of Ethiopia.

Helen Goodman: [\[52993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Djibouti has made representations to the government of Djibouti on the practice of female genital mutilation.

Helen Goodman: [\[52994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Eritrea has made representations to the government of Eritrea on the practice of female genital mutilation.

Helen Goodman: [\[52995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Somalia has made representations to the government of Somalia on the practice of female genital mutilation.

Helen Goodman: [\[52996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Sudan has made representations to the government of Sudan on the practice of female genital mutilation.

Helen Goodman: [\[52997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Guinea has made representations to the government of Guinea on the practice of female genital mutilation.

Helen Goodman: [\[52998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Burkina Faso has made representations to the government of Burkina Faso on the practice of female genital mutilation.

Helen Goodman: [\[52999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Mali Faso has made representations to the government of Mali on the practice of female genital mutilation.

Helen Goodman: [\[53152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK ambassador to Egypt has made representations to the government of Egypt on the practice of female genital mutilation.

Helen Goodman: [\[53252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Tanzania has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Tanzania.

Helen Goodman: [\[53253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Uganda has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Uganda.

Helen Goodman: [\[53254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Kenya has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Kenya.

Helen Goodman: [\[53255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Yemen has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Yemen.

Helen Goodman: [\[53256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to the Central African Republic has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of the Central African Republic.

Helen Goodman: [\[53257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Chad has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Chad.

Helen Goodman: [\[53258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Benin has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Benin.

Helen Goodman: [\[53259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Ghana has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Ghana.

Helen Goodman: [\[53260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Niger has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Niger.

Helen Goodman: [\[53261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Nigeria has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Nigeria.

Helen Goodman: [\[53262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to the Ivory Coast has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of the Ivory Coast.

Helen Goodman: [\[53263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Liberia has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Liberia.

Helen Goodman: [\[53264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Sierra Leone has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Sierra Leone.

Helen Goodman: [\[53266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Mauritania has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Mauritania.

Helen Goodman: [\[53267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Cameroon has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Cameroon.

Helen Goodman: [\[53268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Indonesia has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Indonesia.

Helen Goodman: [\[53269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Togo has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Togo.

Helen Goodman: [\[53295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Iraq has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Iraq.

Helen Goodman: [\[53496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Guinea Bissau has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Guinea Bissau.

Helen Goodman:

[\[53497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Senegal has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Senegal.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Ambassadors and High Commissioners have raised Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) with the governments of Chad, Cameroon, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The Secretary of State for International Development raised it with the President of Sierra Leone during her visit earlier in November. The UK does not shy away from raising FGM with governments as part of our wider human rights dialogue.

The UK is committed to working with governments and international and local partners to eradicate the abusive practice of female genital mutilation. Our ongoing commitment is demonstrated through the 2014 UK-hosted Girl Summit, our flagship £35 million regional programme and bilateral work in many countries.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Scotland**

Dr Paul Monaghan:

[\[53001\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many times he has met Ministers of the Scottish Government since July 2016.

Sir Alan Duncan:

I met the Scottish Government Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe in the context of the Joint Ministerial Council (Europe Negotiations) on 9 November. The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) has not yet met any Minister in the Scottish Government in his official capacity, but is committed to do so as part of the FCO's continued engagement and cooperation with each of the Devolved Administrations.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Sick Leave**

Norman Lamb:

[\[53069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many working days were lost due to mental illness in his Department in each of the last three years.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The number of working days lost due to mental illness in the last three years (1st April to 31st March) was as follows:-

	WORKING DAYS LOST
2015/16	909
2014/15	712
2013/14	393

■ Gambia: Female Genital Mutilation

Helen Goodman: [\[53265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the UK Ambassador to Gambia has raised the issue of female genital mutilation with the government of Gambia.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Ambassadors and High Commissioners have raised Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) with the governments of Chad, Cameroon, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The Secretary of State for International Development raised it with the President of Sierra Leone during her visit earlier in November. The UK does not shy away from raising FGM with governments as part of our wider human rights dialogue.

The UK is committed to working with governments and international and local partners to eradicate the abusive practice of female genital mutilation. Our ongoing commitment is demonstrated through the 2014 UK-hosted Girl Summit, our flagship £35 million regional programme and bilateral work in many countries.

■ Indonesia: British Petroleum

Mr Andrew Smith: [\[53120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that BP operations in the Bintuni Bay area in West Papua recently authorised by the Indonesian government are undertaken in accordance with (a) UK and international human rights law and (b) the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

Alok Sharma:

We are not aware of any human rights complaints or allegations relating to BP's Bintuni Bay operation. BP is a member of the UN Global Compact and has an extensive Corporate Social Responsibility programme in Papua that supports education, healthcare and economic development in the local community. The British Ambassador to Indonesia has personally visited BP's Tangguh project and a village in Bintuni Bay to discuss the impact of BP operations and their community development programs in the region.

■ Indonesia: Demonstrations

Mr Andrew Smith: [\[53007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has made representations to the Indonesian government on the reported arrest and detention of protestors this summer in West Papua.

Alok Sharma:

The British Ambassador to Indonesia regularly discusses both human rights and economic development in the Indonesian provinces of West Papua and Papua with the Indonesian government. We will continue to make representations about historical cases and highlight any human rights concerns.

■ Indonesia: Public Appointments**Mr Andrew Smith:**[\[53004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will raise with his counterpart in Indonesia the appointment of General Wiranto as that country's security minister.

Alok Sharma:

Decisions on appointments to the Indonesian President's cabinet are a matter for the Indonesian President.

■ Islamic State: Military Intervention**Dr Paul Monaghan:**[\[53003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his international counterparts on improving diplomatic co-ordination against Daesh.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Global Coalition continues to coordinate closely as we reach a key phase of the campaign against Daesh. All five of the Coalition's Working Groups have met in the last two months, including Communications which I co-chaired. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, My Right Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson) and the Secretary of State for Defence, my Right Hon. Friend the Member for Sevenoaks (Sir Michael Fallon), attended meetings in Paris in October shortly after the operation to take Mosul began. Most recently, the Small Group of Coalition senior officials met in Berlin on 17 November.

■ Kashmir**Jim McMahon:**[\[53737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he and his Department have had with the (a) Indian and (b) Pakistani governments on the situation in Kashmir.

Alok Sharma:

We are aware of an escalation of incidents between India and Pakistan along the Line of Control dividing Kashmir. The Government has had conversations with Indian and Pakistani counterparts and urged calm and restraint on both sides.

The UK's long-standing position, held by successive Governments, is that it is for India and Pakistan to find a lasting resolution to the situation, taking into account the wishes

of the Kashmiri people. It is not for the UK to prescribe a solution or to act as a mediator. We encourage both sides to maintain positive dialogue, but the pace and scope of this is for them to determine.

■ Libya: Terrorism

Andrew Rosindell: [\[53441\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what response he has received from the Libyan government of National Accord to the request that it should compensate the UK victims of Gaddafi-sponsored IRA terrorism.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have raised the issue of compensation with the Government of National Accord on many occasions, most recently during the visit of Prime Minister Serraj and a Libyan delegation to the UK on 31 October 2016. The Libyan Government is aware of the importance we attach to this matter.

Andrew Rosindell: [\[53483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when the Government most recently requested that the Libyan Government of National Accord compensate the victims of alleged Gaddafi-sponsored IRA terrorism.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK Government frequently raises this matter with the Libyan Government of National Accord. The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson) and I most recently did so in the margins of the Ministerial meeting in London on 31 October 2016.

■ MV Seaman Guard Ohio

Sir Greg Knight: [\[52963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions the Government has had with the Indian government on the continued imprisonment of six UK ex-servicemen who had been working on an anti-piracy ship; and if he will make a statement.

Alok Sharma:

During my visit to India in October, I raised the case with the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Sushma Swaraj, and the Indian Foreign Secretary, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, and requested a time-bound appeals process. The Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), also raised the case with Indian Prime Minister Modi during her visit to India earlier this month, making clear the importance of seeing progress. We continue to follow this case closely.

However, this is a legal process and we cannot interfere in the Indian legal system, just as we would not allow another country to interfere in an ongoing court case in the United Kingdom. Our focus is the men's welfare and the support we can provide to their families.

■ Occupied Territories: Housing**Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[52976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the building of settlements on Palestinian land since he took office.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson), raised our concerns over new settlements with the Israeli authorities when he met Prime Minister Netanyahu in Jerusalem on 30 September. I also raised the issue of settlements with Israeli Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman during a meeting on 7 September. Our Embassy in Tel Aviv continue to express our strong concerns to the Israeli authorities on the continued expansion of settlements and the retroactive "legalisation" of outposts in the West Bank.

As you may be aware, the UK's position on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is clear: they are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace and take us further away from a two-state solution. In November, I issued two statements about Israeli settlement announcements, expressing deep concerns about the development of new Israeli settlement units in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Israel's systematic policy of settlement expansion is undermining the chances of achieving a two-state solution.

Mr Jim Cunningham:[\[53085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will estimate the number of Palestinian people displaced from their homes through Israeli settlement building in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We condemn the continued demolitions of Palestinian property by the Israeli authorities. According to the UN, since the start of 2016, 1010 Palestinian-owned structures were demolished in Area C and in East Jerusalem, displacing 1476 people, including 696 children. Demolitions and evictions of Palestinians from their homes cause unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians; call into question Israel's commitment to a viable two-state solution; and, in all but the most exceptional of cases, are contrary to International Humanitarian Law.

The UK's position on settlements is clear. They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace, and take us further away from a two-state solution. We strongly urge the Government of Israel to reverse its systematic policy of settlement expansion which distances Israel from its international partners and undermine peace.

Thangam Debbonaire:[\[53730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the press release issued by the Minister for the Middle East of 3 November 2016, what further steps he plans to take in respect of the approval by the Israeli government of permits for constructing new homes in the illegal settlement of Gilo, East Jerusalem.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We strongly condemn Israeli settlement advancement, including recent plans for new settlements deep in the West Bank, and moves to retroactively approve unauthorised settlement outposts. These proposed actions call into question the commitment of the Israeli government to the two-state solution. We continue to raise our grave concerns about Israeli settlements with the Israeli Government. I raised our concerns about settlements with Israeli Defence Minister Lieberman during our meeting in London on 7 September 2016. The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson), also raised our concerns over new settlements with Prime Minister Netanyahu when he met him in Jerusalem on 30 September. I issued a further statement on 16 November expressing our deep concern about the land regulation bill in the Israeli Knesset proposing to 'legalise' settlement outposts across the West Bank. Such outposts are currently illegal under both Israeli domestic law and international humanitarian law and should be removed entirely.

■ Turkey: Capital Punishment**Chris Elmore:**[\[52957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the Turkish government on the death penalty.

Sir Alan Duncan:

We regularly discuss a range of human rights issues with the Turkish Government including, where appropriate, the death penalty. Suggestions that the death penalty may be reinstated in Turkey are of serious concern. UK policy on the death penalty is very clear – we oppose it in all circumstances.

■ USA: British Nationals Abroad**Jim McMahon:**[\[53148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that British Muslims wishing to travel to the US can do so within normal terms applied to non-Muslims and not prescribed by the comments of President-Elect Trump on 7 December 2015.

Sir Alan Duncan:

US immigration policy is a matter for the US.

I note that US Customs and Border Protection states that "the religion, faith, or spiritual beliefs of an international traveller are not determining factors about his/her admissibility into the US".

■ USA: NATO**Jim McMahon:**[\[52992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions are taking place with the US administration on its continuing role in NATO; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Alan Duncan:

We continue to work closely with the US Administration to ensure the implementation of the commitments Allies made at the July NATO Warsaw Summit.

HEALTH■ **Accident and Emergency Departments: Mental Illness**

Luciana Berger:

[\[53719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of attendances at accident and emergency departments resulted in primary diagnosis of a mental health condition in each of the last six years.

Nicola Blackwood:

Information on the proportion of accident and emergency (A&E) attendances resulting in a primary diagnosis of psychiatric condition in each of the last six years is available from NHS Digital's (formerly the Health and Social Care Information Centre) Hospital Episode Statistics (HES). The information is shown in the table below, and covers the period 2010-11 to 2015-16.

A HES diagnosis code relating to psychiatric conditions has been used as this is the mental health code available in the A&E HES data set. The data provided shows counts of A&E attendances not counts of patients as the same patient may have attended more than once during the time period.

Data from 2010-11 to 2014-15 is final published data. Data for 2015-16 are provisional and subject to change. Final data will be published in January 2017.

Counts of all A&E attendances (excluding planned attendances) and A&E attendances (excluding planned attendances) where there was a primary diagnosis of a psychiatric condition for 2010-11 to 2015-16

Year	A&E ATTENDANCES (EXCLUDING PLANNED ATTENDANCES) ¹		
	All	With a primary diagnosis of a psychiatric condition ²	Proportion of all attendances (excluding planned attendances) with a primary diagnosis of a psychiatric condition
2010-11	15,818,846	93,176	0.59%
2011-12	17,286,648	112,173	0.65%
2012-13	18,005,435	124,012	0.69%

	A&E ATTENDANCES (EXCLUDING PLANNED ATTENDANCES) ¹		
2013-14	18,197,530	142,265	0.78%
2014-15	19,254,853	145,926	0.76%
2015-16 ³	20,211,920 ³	166,040 ³	0.82% ³

Source : HES, NHS Digital

Notes :

¹ A&E attendances (excluding planned attendances). Planned attendances have been excluded from these figures.

² A&E diagnosis – psychiatric condition. The recording of the diagnosis field within the A&E data set is not mandatory. It is not known to what extent changes over time are as a result of improvements in recording practice. The diagnosis code used was 35 = Psychiatric conditions.

³ Provisional data – these data are provisional and may be incomplete or contain errors for which no adjustments have been made. Final data will be available from January 2017.

■ Cancer: Palliative Care

Jim Shannon:

[\[53494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with GPs and cancer charities on the use of palliative chemotherapy for cancer patients as part of end of life care.

David Mowat:

The Department is in regular contact with cancer charities and health professionals about improving end of life care so everyone approaching the end of life receives high quality care that reflects their individual needs, choices and preferences.

The decision to treat cancer patients in the last days of life is quite rightly for clinicians, with patients fully involved and their views and wishes taken into account. Last year the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence published new guidelines on 'The Care of Dying Adults in the Last Days of Life' which set out how clinicians should review prescribed medicines, and after discussion and agreement with the dying person and those important to them (as appropriate), stop any previously prescribed medicines that are not providing symptomatic benefit or that may cause harm.

■ Capita: Department of Health

Julie Cooper:

[\[53828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much his Department's contract with Capita for moving medical records has cost to date.

David Mowat:

The Department does not have a contract with Capita for moving medical records.

■ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Kelvin Hopkins:

[53645]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the PACE trial, Pacing, graded Activity and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, if he will ask NICE and the NHS to revise their approach to treating myalgic encephalomyelitis to removing references to Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Graded Exercise Therapy.

Nicola Blackwood:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is an independent body and is responsible for ensuring that its guidance remains up to date. NICE has advised that it has brought forward the next review date for its guidance on the diagnosis and management of chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis from 2019 to 2017 to coincide with the expected publication of relevant new evidence.

NICE's aim is to make a decision on whether an update of the guideline is required by the end of 2017.

■ Dementia: Cumbria

Tim Farron:

[53186]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average waiting time for people accessing psychological and specialist neuropsychological assessments for the diagnosis of dementia through Cumbria Partnership NHS Trust has been in the last 12 months.

David Mowat:

The data requested is not centrally collected.

■ Department of Health: Departmental Responsibilities

Jim Shannon:

[53493]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to monitor the outcomes of his objectives to ascertain whether they have been successful.

David Mowat:

The Department Shared Delivery Plan sets out the strategic plan for the health and care system for this Parliament, 2016/17 to 2020/21. The published document is available via:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-of-health-shared-delivery-plan-2015-to-2020>

This Plan sets out the deliverables and metrics by which objectives of the health and care system are monitored and assessed. The Departmental Board and Executive Committee supports the Secretary of State in reviewing progress against the Plan on an ongoing basis.

■ Department of Health: Social Networking

Andy Slaughter: [\[53229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department is monitoring content that is publicly available on social networking sites using overt monitoring techniques.

David Mowat:

The Department routinely and overtly monitors content that is publically available in social networking sites to inform communications and policy making work.

■ Exercise: Disadvantaged

Julie Elliott: [\[53789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to tackle physical inactivity in areas with high levels of economic deprivation.

Nicola Blackwood:

Tackling physical inactivity is a major priority for this Government. The Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action published on 18 August, sets out the actions we are taking to support children and young people to meet the United Kingdom Chief Medical Officers' daily recommended levels of at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity. Actions include doubling the Primary PE and Sport Premium from September 2017, provision of an interactive online tool to help schools identify gaps in existing provision and recommend ways of increasing opportunities for children to be active, and access to high quality sports and physical activity programmes for all primary schools in England. This year, the Department has been also investing a further £1 million in the Change4Life Sports Clubs programme which targets the least active children.

These measures are additional to the measures announced in the last year by Government and Sport England in our respective strategies to encourage more participation in sport and wider physical activity.

Both strategies highlight the importance of focusing on groups that are less likely to take part in sport and physical activity including those from lower socio-economic groups. Sport England will invest over £250 million in the next four years to tackle inactivity. This funding will include measures to specifically engage under-represented groups.

■ General Practitioners

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[53629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect on patient satisfaction with GP consultations of the practice of being limited to discussing one health concern per consultation.

David Mowat:

There has been no national policy to limit general practitioner (GP) consultations to the discussion of one health concern per consultation. As such, national data on patient satisfaction with GPs cannot be interpreted as reflecting this issue in any way.

■ General Practitioners: Compensation

Julie Cooper:

[\[53829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to ensure compensation is paid to GPs who are affected by payment delays related to the Capita contract.

David Mowat:

NHS England is working with Capita to explore what can be done to support stakeholders affected by delayed payments. My hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Nicola Blackwood) is holding regular meetings with NHS England (who own the contract) and Capita to assure progress.

■ Health Services: Kirklees

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[52908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the level of future funding for local health services in Kirklees.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department has made no such assessment. Future funding for local health services in Kirklees is a matter for NHS England. Funding increases for Greater Huddersfield Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) until 2020/21 are shown in the table below.

NHS GREATER HUDDERSFIELD CCG	FINAL ALLOCATION AFTER PLACE BASED PACE-OF-CHANGE (£000)	FINAL GROWTH (%)	FINAL PER CAPITA ALLOCATION (£)	FINAL PER CAPITA GROWTH (%)	FINAL CLOSING DISTANCE FROM TARGET (%)
2016/17	367,114	3.63%	1,491	2.95%	3.22%
2017/18	375,636	2.32%	1,515	1.66%	3.04%
2018/19	384,226	2.29%	1,540	1.62%	2.90%
2019/20	393,625	2.45%	1,568	1.81%	2.80%
2020/21	408,844	3.87%	1,619	3.23%	2.69%

■ Health Services: Older People

Mr George Howarth:

[\[53389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that all older people who need support on leaving hospital receive such support.

David Mowat:

It is the responsibility of individual hospitals to put local discharge planning arrangements in place, including for older people who need support. Patients should only be discharged from hospital when there has been an assessment of the support they need to be discharged safely. This requires local health and care organisations to work together to ensure transfers between care settings are centred around patients and their carers.

The Government is investing billions over the course of this Parliament to improve the integration of health and social care services through its Better Care Fund.

NHS England is leading a national programme to improve discharge of older people from hospital, building on successful local and national initiatives already in place such as "discharge to assess".

■ Home Care Services**Teresa Pearce:**[\[53192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that local authorities do not commission 15-minute homecare visits for personal care in the circumstances set out as not appropriate for such a length of visit in paragraph 4.101 of the Department of Health's Care and Support Statutory Guidance.

David Mowat:

The statutory guidance to the Care Act 2014 is clear that local authorities should commission services to meet the needs of individuals and that very short home care visits would not normally be compatible with high quality care.

Local authorities are responsible for commissioning decisions, accountable to their local populations through elected members. The Government does not routinely intervene in individual decisions, but both the Government and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) agree that inappropriately short home care visits are unacceptable.

The Department has worked with local government and the care sector to develop and encourage good practice in commissioning and managing local markets. A suite of guidance is now available at the online Hub that is now published on GOV.UK under market shaping and commissioning.

In particular, the guidance 'Commissioning for Better Outcomes' (under Resources for Commissioners) is being actively used in the sector to improve commissioning and directly asks commissioners to review how short home care visits are used.

We are working with the Local Government Association (LGA) and ADASS through a sector-led improvement approach to encourage best practice and improve local commissioning skills. Specifically, the Department funds the LGA to deliver the Care Health Improvement Programme.

■ Hospital Beds

Helen Goodman: [\[53146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the number of delayed transfers of care attributable to patients awaiting a care package in their own home; and what steps he is taking to reduce the number of such delays.

Helen Goodman: [\[53149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of delayed transfers of care attributable to patients awaiting either a nursing or residential care placement; and what steps he is taking to reduce the number of such delays.

David Mowat:

NHS England publishes a snapshot of the number of patients ready for transfer but still occupying a hospital bed on the last Thursday of each month, and the total number of delayed days during the month for all patients delayed throughout the month. The data show the reasons for these delays, including how many were attributable to patients awaiting a care package in their own home, awaiting nursing home placement or availability, and awaiting residential home placement or availability. A national time series of the data from August 2010 is available at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/delayed-transfers-of-care/2016-17-data/>

The organisation level data, also available at this link, shows that there is considerable variation between local authorities in the number of delayed transfers.

The Department is working closely with NHS England, NHS Improvement and local government to support local areas reduce delayed transfers of care. This includes nationally mandated interventions to support discharge processes and patient flow during the winter months.

■ Hospital Beds: Kirklees

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[52909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department has taken to ensure a sustainable level of hospital bed provision in Kirklees.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The provision of health services is a matter for the local National Health Service.

■ Intensive Care: Liverpool City Region

Rosie Cooper: [\[53732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many (a) women and (b) babies have been transferred from Liverpool Women's Hospital to intensive care units in each of the last 10 years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

This data is not centrally collected.

■ Medical Records: Databases

Julie Cooper: [\[53811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many instances have been recorded of Medical Record Envelopes arriving at GP surgeries damaged or with files missing.

Julie Cooper: [\[53827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many medical record envelopes have been received by GP surgeries during April to September 2016.

Julie Cooper: [\[53830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many patient medical records are held on paper.

David Mowat:

The movement of medical records between general practitioner (GP) practices and long term storage is managed by Primary Care Support England (PCSE), provided by Capita. PCSE moves an average of 90,000-100,000 Medical Record Envelopes each week. Historically there has been no end to end tracking facility in place to provide information on the volumes of medical records that are received by GP practices. GP surgeries have their own clinical systems where they may record receipt of medical record envelopes however NHS England does not have access to those systems so is unable to provide data which shows numbers received.

There have been two incidents of Medical Record Envelopes arriving damaged or with missing files recorded by PCSE using the Information Governance Toolkit. NHS England has received some emails from practices indicating damage to the sacks which contain records. These do not constitute Information Governance incidents as there has been no disclosure of patient information. However, they could be considered as a 'near miss' and reported as such.

Any patient who has ever registered with a GP practice in England has a paper primary care medical record held in a Lloyd George envelope.

Julie Cooper: [\[53826\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many staff are employed to process medical record envelopes in GP surgeries.

David Mowat:

The number of staff employed to process medical record envelopes in general practitioner surgeries is not collected by the Department or NHS England.

■ Mental Health Services

Luciana Berger: [\[53608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many referrals completed treatment for each mental health cluster by clinical commissioning group in each year since 2010.

Luciana Berger:

[\[53612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many patients were assigned to each mental health cluster by clinical commissioning group in each year since 2010.

Nicola Blackwood:

The number of people in adult mental health services assigned to a care cluster at the end of the financial year reporting period, March 2016 is included in the attached table. It is not possible to provide this analysis for previous financial years as the data is not available.

The referrals for completed treatment for each mental health cluster by clinical commissioning group in each year since 2010 is not held centrally.

Attachments:

1. PQ53612 table 1 Final [PQ53612 table 1 Final.xlsx]

■ Mental Health Services: Expenditure

Luciana Berger:

[\[53657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the oral contribution of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health in the House of Lords on 16 November 2016, what the evidential basis is for his statement on the proportionate increase in spending on mental health services in 2015-16 relative to the spending in 2014-15.

Nicola Blackwood:

The increase in mental health spending of 8.4%, as given in the House of Lords on 16 November, represents an increase in clinical commissioning groups mental health spending between 2014/15 (£8.3 billion) and 2015/16 (£9.0 billion). As part of the 2016/17 planning round the reporting of mental health spend, NHS England added the objective of improving consistent reporting across clinical commissioning groups.

■ NHS Property Services

Karin Smyth:

[\[52961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations have been made by health bodies to NHS Property Services on the quality of the services its provides.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Property Services actively encourages communications from its tenants and National Health Service customers. The Company offers a number of routes through which customers are encouraged to contact them; the Company's larger customers now have dedicated Account Managers, whose role it is to liaise with customers on property or service issues.

Over 20 events have been held around the country during the last year to meet with customer organisations, and these events have encouraged customers to raise issues and queries, including questions on service quality. All formal complaints are recorded and handled by a central team; the number of complaints for the year 2015-16 was 197.

■ NHS Property Services: Debts

Karin Smyth: [\[52960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress NHS Property Services has made on reducing its level of debt to his Department in the last two years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Property Services borrowed £241 million against its original £350 million flexible loan facility with the Department during 2013/14, which was repaid in full by April 2015. The Company has since borrowed £100 million against its current £160 million flexible loan facility, which the Department provides to assist with the Company's working capital requirements.

■ NHS: Company Cars

Mary Glendon: [\[53726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the value in recruiting and retaining staff of salary sacrifice company cars to employers in the NHS.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS employer organisations are responsible for the recruitment and retention of their staff and, therefore, individual National Health Service employers rather than the Department would assess the value of any such schemes they use in helping recruitment and retention.

■ NHS: Drugs

Jim Shannon: [\[52905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much the NHS spent on branded drugs after the rebate from the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme as a proportion of total expenditure in (a) 2010-11 and (b) 2015-16.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department is unable to provide an accurate split of expenditure on branded and generic drugs.

Total drug spend as a proportion of total departmental expenditure in 2010-11 was 12.5%.

Total drug spend net of Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme payment in 2015-16 was 12.4% of total departmental expenditure.

■ NHS: Liverpool City Region

Frank Field: [\[53671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people working for the NHS in the Liverpool City Region on a (a) directly employed, (b) agency or (c) outsourced basis are paid

less than the living wage as defined by the Living Wages Foundation; and how many such people are employed on zero-hours contracts.

Mr Philip Dunne:

This information is not collected by the Department.

From April 2016, all employers in the United Kingdom were required to pay a new National Living Wage of £7.20. Minimum National Health Service pay, in line with the Staff Council's agreement on Agenda for Change, is currently greater than the National Living Wage.

■ NHS: Migrant Workers

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[52967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect of recent currency exchange rate changes on the ability of the NHS to attract overseas workers.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Currency exchange rates change on a frequent basis and the Department has not made any assessment of the effect of these on the ability of the National Health Service to attract overseas workers.

■ NHS: Procurement

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[52966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect of recent currency exchange rate changes on the import costs of (a) medicines and (b) equipment for the NHS.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Currency rates constantly fluctuate, and this is one of many commercial risks we would expect suppliers to manage when bidding to join a National Health Service framework. The Department is working with the NHS Business Services Authority to make sure suppliers keep to the prices set out in contracts for the full length of those contracts in order to help mitigate the impact of fluctuation.

The price of branded medicines is controlled through the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme and statutory medicines pricing scheme, and so we do not anticipate any increase in prices as a result of currency fluctuations. For generic medicines not supplied through an NHS framework, we expect competitive forces in the market to continue to ensure prices are kept low.

■ NHS: Sustainable Development

Justin Madders: [\[53717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations he has received from local government leaders on sustainability and transformation plans.

David Mowat:

As locally led plans, it is vital that engagement with local government is driven by Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) themselves. We expect that different STPs will engage with local authorities in different ways, depending on what is appropriate for their area. The successful delivery of STPs will also require a close partnership between the National Health Service and local government.

A number of STPs are led by local government leaders including Norfolk and Waveney; Nottinghamshire; Manchester; and, Birmingham and Solihull.

National bodies, including NHS England and NHS Improvement, have also been working alongside the Local Government Association.

■ Nurses: Training

Dr Sarah Wollaston: [\[52962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if the Nursing and Midwifery Council will include mandatory bowel and bladder care training for pre- and post-registration nurses in the new revised curriculum.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is the independent body responsible for the regulation of nurses and midwives in the United Kingdom. It is responsible for the way it discharges its statutory duties including setting standards of education, training, conduct and performance, so that nurses and midwives can deliver high quality healthcare throughout their careers. Accordingly, it is for the NMC to decide what it will include in its standards of proficiency. Its role as a professional regulator does not include developing or revising a curriculum. That is the role of education institutions.

The Code for nurses and midwives requires that they must prioritise people, practise effectively, preserve safety and promote professionalism and trust. This includes practising in line with the best available evidence. The Code also states that nurses and midwives must treat people as individuals and uphold their dignity by delivering the fundamentals of care effectively. The fundamentals of care include nutrition, hydration, bladder and bowel care, physical handling and making sure that those receiving care are kept in clean and hygienic conditions.

■ Pharmacy

Tom Brake: [\[53472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many times each minister of his Department met representatives from (a) Boots, (b) Lloyds Pharmacy and (c) the National Pharmacy Association between 1 October and 31 December 2015.

Tom Brake: [\[53473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many times each minister of his Department met representatives from (a) Boots, (b) Lloyds Pharmacy and (c) the National Pharmacy Association between 1 January and 31 March 2016.

David Mowat:

My Rt. hon. Friend the then Minister of State (Alistair Burt) met with representatives of the pharmacy sector on a number of occasions during this period. This included a meeting with the Company Chemists' Association, with representatives from Boots and LloydsPharmacy, on 26 October 2015; a meeting on 17 November 2015 with Pharmacy Voice, attended by the National Pharmacy Association; and a meeting on 17 December 2015 with a number of key stakeholders including the National Pharmacy Association. The then Minister of State also met with the National Pharmacy Association on 23 March 2016.

■ Pharmacy: Negligence**Oliver Colvile:**[\[53474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will bring forward legislative proposals to decriminalise dispensing errors by pharmacists.

David Mowat:

We have consulted on our proposals to put in place a defence to the criminal sanction for inadvertent dispensing errors and received good support from patients, carers, healthcare professionals, pharmacy organisations and other bodies. We are working through the necessary processes to change the law. We are in the final stages of clearance and hope to lay the Order shortly.

■ Strokes**Maggie Throup:**[\[53167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the expiry of the National Stroke Strategy in 2017 on stroke patient outcomes.

Maggie Throup:[\[53170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what objectives the National Stroke Strategy has remaining before its expiry in 2017.

David Mowat:

No formal assessment has been made of the potential effect of the expiry of the National Stroke Strategy in 2017 on stroke patient outcomes. However the quality of stroke care is continually monitored by the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme.

The National Stroke Strategy remains valid and implementation of it continues. Action is being taken to ensure the progress made on stroke continues. This includes;

- ongoing work in virtually all parts of the country to organise acute stroke care to ensure that all stroke patients, regardless of where they live or what time of the day or week they have their stroke, have access to high quality specialist care;
- publication of the Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Outcomes Strategy in 2013, which includes many stroke specific strategic ambitions;

- a CVD collaborative group is being established to bring together relevant stakeholders in the field of CVD and provide a forum where relevant work being undertaken in this area and potential new initiatives can be discussed and responsibilities for action determined;
- NHS England's National Clinical Director for Stroke is working with Clinical Networks, Urgent and Emergency Care Networks, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Sustainability and Transformation Plan footprints on how stroke care is best delivered to local communities;
- services for the management of transient ischaemic attack (TIA) are changing in many areas to meet the new standard that all TIA patients should be seen and assessed within 24 hours, not just high risk patients; and
- CCGs are being encouraged to increase the geographical coverage of early supported discharge services.

Prevention of stroke and CVDs is also a priority for NHS England, particularly attempting to reduce the very high prevalence of CVD in patients with mental health illness.

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[53721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions his Department has had with clinical commissioning groups on the reorganisation of acute stroke services.

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[53722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions his Department has had with sustainable transformation plan leaders on the reorganisation of acute stroke services.

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[53723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to encourage more effective acute stroke services through their reorganisation.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS England's National Clinical Director for stroke continues to work with Clinical Networks, Urgent and Emergency Care Networks, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Sustainable Transformation Plan (STP) areas on how stroke care is best delivered to their local communities.

Plans are at various stages of development for reorganisation of acute stroke services around the country but nearly all areas have work ongoing to address the major issues which are to continue to provide high quality specialist stroke care 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These plans have involved CCGs, STP areas, urgent and emergency care networks, clinical networks and providers.

Different parts of the country will need different models of care because of geographical differences and the current structure of services. Major reconfiguration of services will always require careful planning and consultation with the local community and the providers and these processes are taking place.

In some places, this is 'the London type model' of focussing care in a small number of centres and equipping these to be able to deliver specialist care 24/7. In other parts of the country, centralisation of care into specialist centres is not feasible for geographical reasons and in these cases alternative solutions, such as the use of telemedicine, will need to be considered. Whatever the case, NHS England is fully committed to ensuring that all patients receive the best quality of care and the most up to date treatments.

■ Suicide

Luciana Berger:

[\[53720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of local suicide prevention plans.

Nicola Blackwood:

Public Health England (PHE) is currently undertaking a survey of local authorities' suicide prevention action plans and local multi-agency suicide prevention groups across England. This survey is aligned to the guidance for developing local authority suicide prevention action plans which PHE published in October. We will have the results of this shortly.

The Department will undertake work from 2017 to quality assure local multi-agency suicide prevention plans.

HOME OFFICE

■ Fire and Rescue Services: Fireworks

Jessica Morden:

[\[51762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of incidents attended by the Fire and Rescue Service related to fireworks in each year since 2010 in (a) the UK, (b) Wales, (c) Newport and (d) Newport East constituency.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office has ministerial responsibility for the 45 FRSs in England only, with responsibility for the FRSs in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland being devolved to the relevant administrations in each nation.

■ Freezing of Assets

Mr Dominic Raab:

[\[53659\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people suspected by UK law enforcement of involvement in (a) organised crime, (b) financial crime or (c) serious human rights abuses have been subject to (i) asset freezes or (ii) asset recoveries by the Government in each of the last eight years.

Mr Dominic Raab:

[\[53660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Russian nationals suspected by UK law enforcement of involvement in (a) organised crime, (b) financial crime

or (c) serious human rights abuses have been subject to (i) asset freezes or (ii) asset recoveries by the Government in each of the last eight years.

Mr Dominic Raab: [\[53661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people, by nationality, suspected by UK law enforcement of involvement in (a) organised crime, (b) financial crime or (c) serious human rights abuses have been subject to (i) asset freezes or (ii) asset recoveries by the Government in each of the last eight years.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Home Office does not hold information on the number of people who have had assets frozen or asset recovered by the categories described in the question.

Furthermore, the nationality of the individual is not routinely recorded.

■ Freezing of Assets: Russia

Mr Dominic Raab: [\[53854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people from the alleged Klyuev organised crime group her Department has subjected to an (a) asset freeze and (b) asset recovery in each of the last eight years.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Home Office is responsible for the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 but does not itself have powers to freeze or recover assets. The powers in the Proceeds of Crime Act may be exercised by law enforcement agencies such as the National Crime Agency, Serious Fraud Office, constables and HM Revenue and Customs.

■ Hezbollah

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[53381\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will proscribe the political wing of Hezbollah under section 13 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

Mr Ben Wallace:

Whilst we keep list of proscribed groups under review, we do not routinely comment on whether an organisation is or is not under consideration for proscription.

■ Home Office: Social Networking

Andy Slaughter: [\[53230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department is monitoring content that is publicly available on social networking sites using overt monitoring techniques.

Sarah Newton:

The Home Office does seek to monitor or access information published on social media, where relevant and available, to support specific investigations and conduct research. Such activity is only conducted where there is an identified business need, in line with Home Office objectives.

Open source data, including information publically available online, is of increasing importance and it is right that the Department seek to take account of all available relevant information.

■ Law and Order

Julie Elliott: [\[53508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effect of the UK's decision to leave the EU on law enforcement and security in the UK.

Brandon Lewis:

The UK will in due course be leaving the EU but the importance of law enforcement co-operation with our EU and global allies has not changed. We are exploring options for cooperation arrangements once the UK has left the EU. We will do what is necessary to keep people safe, but it would be wrong to set out unilateral positions on specific measures in advance of negotiations.

■ Missing Persons

Chris Elmore: [\[53624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the next review of the Missing Children and Adults strategy.

Sarah Newton:

The Government plans to publish a refreshed version of the 2011 Missing Children and Adults Strategy early next year.

■ Mobile Phones: Proof of Identity

Amanda Solloway: [\[52575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of introducing mandatory identification checks for people purchasing pay-as-you-go SIM cards to assist in tackling terrorism and crime.

Sarah Newton:

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I given to the hon. Member for Twickenham on 7 September 2016, UIN 44233.

■ Money Laundering

Tom Brake: [\[53291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether any UK citizens has been prosecuted for acting as a nominee director for a company which has been found to have laundered illicit funds.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not maintain a central record of the nationality or occupation of defendants. This information could only be obtained by examining CPS case files, which would incur disproportionate cost. The number of

people prosecuted, convicted and given a custodial sentence for money laundering offences, in England and Wales, from 2010 to 2014 (the latest data available), can be viewed on the Ministry of Justice website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2014>

under "Criminal justice statistics outcomes by offence data tool".

■ Money Laundering: Russia

Tom Brake: [\[53292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many suspicious activity reports have been filed by UK financial institutions in relation to suspected money laundering conducted from Russia since 2006.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The database of Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) is operated by the UK Financial Intelligence Unit, in the National Crime Agency (NCA).

It is not possible, without further significant analysis which would incur a disproportionate cost, to determine the number of reports in relation to suspected money laundering from Russia.

The total number of suspicious activity reports filed by sector are listed in the SARs Annual Reports. These are available on the NCA website and the latest report can be found at:

www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/677-sars-annual-report-2015/file.

■ Police Custody: Children

Christina Rees: [\[53546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many times children have been detained overnight in police custody for non-payment of fines in each of the last five years.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office does not hold data centrally on the number of detentions of children made for non-payment of fines. The Home Office collect and publish data on the number of persons detained for more than 24 hours under part IV of the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act broken down by the length of detention and police force area.

These data cannot be broken down by age or to identify those arrested or detained for non-payment of fines. The available data are published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-powers-and-procedures-england-and-wales>

■ Police: Bahrain

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[53668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 October 2016 to Question 46877, whether UK police advice and assistance has included training in human rights.

Brandon Lewis:

All training and assistance provided by or on behalf of Her Majesty's Government complies with our international human rights policies and obligations.

■ Police: Termination of Employment

Justin Madders: [\[53579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the total spent by police forces on compensation, legal fees and other expenses related to the termination of the employment of chief constables since the introduction of police and crime commissioners.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office does not hold data centrally on these costs. It is a matter for Police and Crime Commissioners to make decisions around appointing, suspending and removing chief constables.

■ Prosecutions

Andrew Stephenson: [\[51725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how long on average the Victims' Right to Review process took to reach a conclusion in (a) England, (b) each region and (c) each police area in each of the last five years.

Andrew Stephenson: [\[51726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that reviews under the Victims' Right to Review process are concluded swiftly.

Andrew Stephenson: [\[51727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what other types of complaint can be made by someone who has requested a review under the Victims' Right to Review process while that process is ongoing.

Brandon Lewis:

The Police 'Victims' Right to Review' scheme is non-statutory and was introduced by the National Police Chiefs' Council in April 2015 in respect of charging decisions made by the police. It sits alongside the scheme introduced by the Crown Prosecution Service in June 2013 and works in a similar way.

Decisions under the police scheme are operational matters for police forces. As a result, the Home Office does not hold data on the operation of the scheme or issue guidance on its use.

■ Security Industry Authority

Lady Hermon: [\[51665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons the Security Industry Authority has been unable to process promptly online applications for its licences; and if she will make a statement.

Lady Hermon: [\[51666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Security Industry Authority's online application processing of licences; and if she will make a statement.

Brandon Lewis:

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) launched a new IT system in July 2016 which is experiencing some difficulties due to system defects which are being resolved. Some applications are therefore taking longer to process than anticipated.

We are closely monitoring the performance of the SIA, and are working with them to ensure a return to expected service standards.

■ Slavery

Alison McGovern: [\[53319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the proportion of businesses with a turnover of £36 million or more which are complying with the provisions of section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Sarah Newton:

The Government has not estimated what proportion of businesses have complied so far. We published guidance in October 2015 advising that businesses should report as soon as reasonably practicable after their financial year end, which in practice should mean within six months of an organisation's financial year end.

Alison McGovern: [\[53337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to promote the guidance, Transparency in supply chains: a practical guide, issued under section 54(9) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Sarah Newton:

Ministers and officials promote the guidance at events on transparency in supply chains and in response to a range of queries from businesses, trade bodies and non-governmental organisations. We have also promoted transparency in supply chains legislation to other governments, both in bilateral meetings and through multilateral fora, including at G7, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe events.

■ Stun Guns

Jim Shannon:

[51075]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many tasers have been used by the police in the UK in each of the last five years.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office publish police use of TASER ® X26 statistics annually on GOV.UK. These releases contain statistics on police use of TASER ® X26 from the 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales up to 2015.

The current TASER publications can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/use-of-taser-statistics>

■ Vetting

Julian Knight:

[53188]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average waiting time for a Disclosure and Barring Service check has been with the (a) Metropolitan Police and (b) West Midlands Police in the last six months; and what steps she is taking to reduce those waiting times.

Sarah Newton:

The average time taken for each police force to process the applications they receive is published on the DBS website each month and can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/dbs-performance>

Most police forces including the West Midland Police are meeting timeliness expectations but a small number of forces, including the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) are not. DBS are working closely with the MPS to resolve this. I continue to maintain close oversight of the progress being made.

■ Violence against Women and Girls Ministerial Group

Kate Green:

[53769]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 17 November 2016 to Question 52462, on which dates the Inter-Ministerial Group on Violence against Women and Girls met in 2016.

Sarah Newton:

The Violence Against Women and Girls Inter Ministerial Group met on 12 May and 13 October. Both meetings discussed cross-Government progress on the delivery of the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION**■ Parliamentary Digital Service**

Sir Greg Knight: [\[53378\]](#)

To ask the Rt. hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington, representing the House of Commons Commission, if the House of Commons Commission will undertake a value for money review of the effectiveness of the Parliamentary Digital Service.

Tom Brake:

In January of this year the Director of the Digital Service commissioned Deloitte to conduct an independent efficiency review of the Digital Service 10 months after its formation. The top level finding of the review was that: "Parliamentary Digital Service (PDS) is not failing in terms of efficiency for the budget it is allocated and systems it operates, however, it is failing to meet its potential."

The review identified eight key themes to improve efficiency and effectiveness: benefits & outcomes, culture, governance, asset management, talent, infrastructure, contracts and strategy. The Digital Service has fully accepted that these are areas for improvement and senior Digital Service staff are taking ownership of these areas.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Aid Financed Trade**

Tom Brake: [\[53293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will take steps to ensure that her Department does not link trade deals to aid projects; and what her policy is on her Department's use of aid to encourage trade deals.

Rory Stewart:

We champion economic development, which is the only way to lift huge numbers of people in poor countries out of poverty. Trade is an important part of economic development. Our economic development work will include support for countries to take advantage of trading opportunities and will not be tied.

■ Department for International Development: Social Networking

Andy Slaughter: [\[53231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department is monitoring content that is publicly available on social networking sites using overt monitoring techniques.

Rory Stewart:

The communications division in Department for International Development monitors content relating to departmental business that is publicly available on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. DFID also receives media monitoring

services from Precise which incorporate some social media monitoring as part of the package.

■ Developing Countries: HIV Infection

Stephen Doughty:

[\[53776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 31 October 2016 to Question 50607, what assessment her Department has made of HIV drug resistance in the countries that her Department operates in; and what steps her Department is taking to tackle HIV drug resistance in those countries.

James Wharton:

Our HIV and AIDS work has focused on multilateral instruments (Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, UNITAID and UNAIDS), given their greater reach and scale. The Global Fund helps countries avoid stock outs of drugs and supports patients to sustain treatment, which are two key factors in preventing drug resistance.

UNITAID has also played a key role in tackling HIV drug resistance by building the market for second-line antiretroviral treatment. Over 100,000 patients a year now have access to UNITAID-supported second-line HIV medicines.

We and our partners make use of reports such as the Global Report on Early Warning Indicators of HIV Drug Resistance published by WHO earlier this year.

■ Developing Countries: Renewable Energy

Helen Jones:

[\[53738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 16 November 2016 to Question 907183, what support the Government plans to give to improve investment in renewable energy to benefit people in developing countries; and if she will make a statement.

James Wharton:

The UK Government is playing a leading role in improving energy access in developing countries through on-grid and decentralised renewable energy. DFID has a range of programmes to increase investment.

For example, programmes in Kenya and Tanzania aim to stimulate investment in community scale, renewable energy mini-grids, increasing electricity access for millions of people, and our Renewable Energy and Adaptation to Climate Technologies challenge fund provides seed finance for renewable energy businesses. CDC, the UK's Development Finance Institution, has committed US\$330m of investment to renewable energy supporting five gigawatts of capacity generation.

Through the Energy Africa campaign the UK Government is also working with a range of African countries and businesses to accelerate the expansion of markets in Africa so that people can buy affordable solar energy systems.

■ Pakistan: Education

Jim Shannon: [\[53324\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many of her Department's education projects in Pakistan focus on girls from religious minorities.

Rory Stewart:

DFID Pakistan has a range of education projects with elements that support girls from religious minorities. The Punjab Education Support Programme enrolls Hindu and Christian girls into non-governmental organisation schools in Muzaffargarh and Rahim Yar Khan in Punjab. The Punjab Education Foundation subsidises schools which prioritise the enrolment of children from minorities. The Sindh Education Non State Actors Programme is reaching children from minority religious communities. DFID's national education campaign, Alif Ailaan, highlights key issues such as girls' education and better education for the most marginalised, including minorities. DFID Pakistan's education portfolio is designed to provide inclusive education to all children, regardless of their location, gender, religion, or socioeconomic background.

Jim Shannon: [\[53325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what mechanisms her Department uses to (a) target and (b) support education of girls from religious minorities in Pakistan.

Rory Stewart:

DFID has a range of mechanisms which support girls from religious minorities. DFID liaises with the Pakistan Minorities Teachers Association to understand the needs of teachers and students from minority religions and address them through its various work streams. DFID supports a quota for children from minority religions for higher education scholarships through the Punjab Educational Endowment Fund. The Sindh Education Non State Actors Programme is also building partnerships with non-government schools which aim to reach children from marginalised and minority communities, with a special focus on girls.

Jim Shannon: [\[53326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of her Department's education projects in Pakistan in identifying and targeting girls from religious minorities.

Rory Stewart:

DFID Pakistan's education portfolio is designed to provide inclusive education to all children, regardless of their location, gender, religion, or socioeconomic background. DFID has a range of mechanisms which support girls from religious minorities. Through these mechanisms we target girls from religious minorities amongst other groups. DFID liaises with the Pakistan Minorities Teachers Association to understand the needs of teachers and students from minority religions and address them through its various work streams. DFID supports a quota for children from minority religions for higher education scholarships through the Punjab Educational Endowment Fund. The Sindh Education

Non State Actors Programme is also building partnerships with non-government schools which aim to reach children from marginalised and minority communities, with a special focus on girls.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Airbus SAS: Export Credit Guarantees

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[52852]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to Airbus Group's press release, entitled Airbus Group announcement on UK Export Credit Financing, published on 1 April 2016, if UK Export Finance will take steps to review its anti-corruption procedures to take account of the findings by Airbus that there were inaccuracies relating to applications for export credit financing for Airbus customers.

Greg Hands:

UK Export Finance (UKEF) is currently working with Airbus and the French and German export credit agencies to understand and seek assurances around Airbus's practices and procedures with regard to overseas agents.

UKEF's policy with regard to anti-corruption due diligence is guided by the OECD Recommendation on Bribery and Officially Supported Export Credits (2006 OECD Bribery Recommendation), which it applies to its fullest extent.

UKEF's role is to take reasonable precautions, including by making reasonable enquiries, to avoid financial loss by becoming involved in transactions that may be tainted by corruption. However, responsibility for detection, prevention and suppression of criminal offences resides with law enforcement bodies with investigatory powers.

All UK companies must abide by the 2010 Bribery Act and any relevant local law.

■ Arms Trade: Saudi Arabia

Tim Farron:

[53727]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the value of arms sales from the UK to the Saudi government was in 2015.

Mark Garnier:

The Government publishes Official Statistics (on a quarterly and annual basis) on the value of export licences granted and those refused on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/strategic-export-controls-licensing-data>

■ Department for International Trade: Commonwealth

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[53083]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many meetings he has had with representatives from Commonwealth countries since his Department was created; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

The Government is currently reviewing its trade policy as the UK prepares to leave the EU. This offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world: to negotiate and design, in time, our own trade arrangements, including with our 52 Commonwealth partners. We recognise the need for a smooth transition which minimises disruption to our trading relationships.

My Rt Hon Friend has held meetings with representatives of a wide range of Commonwealth countries.

Overseas Trade: Occupied Territories

Mr George Howarth: [\[53322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what guidance his Department provides to UK companies who want to trade with illegal Israeli settlements in the Palestinian Occupied Territories; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade refers businesses who wish to trade with illegal settlements to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. The Government's position is clear that it is up to individual businesses whether they undertake business dealings with companies involved in the illegal settlements. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office provides advice to businesses online on the risks of undertaking such dealings and advises that businesses seek their own legal guidance.

Overseas Trade: Palestinians

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[53731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the Government's press release of 14 October 2016 on the visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territories of the UK trade envoy for that region, what further steps he plans to take in order to facilitate trade by (a) people in the Palestinian Business Women's Forum and (b) other Palestinian women.

Mark Garnier:

The Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) Baroness Morris, visited the market in October. Following this there are plans to reactivate the Palestinian British Business Council to facilitate and develop trade links between the UK and the OPT including members of the Palestinian Business Women's Forum (PBWF).

The PBWF in Ramallah, with the UK government's help, aims to host specialised speakers from the UK to educate forum members and other beneficiaries about the import and export regulations and the business environment in the UK for start-up businesses.

Further to this, the DFID-EU's Palestinian Market Development Programme (PMDP) is a high performing programme which has helped 283 companies to develop new products and/or enter new markets. Approximately 50% of the companies assisted are women owned/managed companies.

■ Trade Agreements: Israel

Fiona Mactaggart:

[\[53395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 8 September 2016 to Question 906162, what steps he plans to take in a future trade agreement with Israel to make that deal contingent on preventing illegal occupation of Palestinian land.

Mark Garnier:

The UK is clear that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are illegal under international law. We firmly believe that the occupation is unacceptable and unsustainable. We are determined to see a just and lasting resolution that ends the occupation and delivers peace for both Israelis and Palestinians. The UK remains focused on achieving a two-state solution and we continue to believe that the best way to achieve this is through negotiations between the parties.

The UK and Israel have a strong and important trading relationship. We are supportive of the current EU-Israel Association Agreement. Whilst it would be wrong to set out unilateral positions on trade deals at this stage, we are committed to working towards a smooth transition for businesses to minimise disruption to exports and investment as we leave the EU.

JUSTICE

■ Employment Tribunals Service

Philip Davies:

[\[53113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many cases before employment tribunals were from claimants with cancer in each of the last three years.

Sir Oliver Heald:

This information is not held centrally.

■ Legal Profession: Training

Ann Clwyd:

[\[52912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions she had with the (a) Law Society and (b) Bar Council before those organisations introduced training for their members on improving the courtroom experience for (i) vulnerable witnesses and (ii) children who have experienced sexual abuse.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The Government is committed to making the process of going to court simpler, easier and more sympathetic to victims. That is why we will roll out recorded pre-trial cross-examination in the Crown Court, to ensure vulnerable victims and witnesses are spared the trauma of reliving events at trial.

All publicly-funded advocates in sexual offences cases will be required to undertake specialist training on working with vulnerable victims and witnesses. Only advocates

who have had the specialist training will be able to be instructed in and undertake sexual offences cases.

The Law Society and Bar Council are working together to deliver a national training programme, Advocacy and the Vulnerable, which has been developed by the Inns of Court College of Advocacy. Officials engaged with the Inns of Court College of Advocacy during development of the training, and also regularly engage with them to support the development of toolkits for lawyers on the general good practice when dealing with vulnerable witnesses made available on the Advocate's Gateway which they host.

■ Prisons: Unmanned Air Vehicles

Lucy Powell:

[\[52984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to her oral contribution of 3 November 2016, Official Report, column 1071, what the (a) remit, (b) membership and (c) date of the last meeting is of the Government taskforce to address the issue of drone use and prisons.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

We remain vigilant to all incidents involving drones and take the threat they pose to prison security very seriously. A range of methods to counter the threat posed by drones are being trialled and evaluated for their effectiveness across the prison estate. We have already introduced new legislation to further strengthen our powers, making it illegal to land a drone in prison or to use a drone to drop in contraband. We take a zero tolerance approach to smuggling of contraband into prisons and work closely with the police and Crown Prosecution Service to ensure those caught are prosecuted. Anyone found using a drone in an attempt to get contraband into prisons can be punished with a sentence of up to two years imprisonment.

However, I want to do more, specifically by setting up a government taskforce to challenge industry to help in this crucial area with Ministerial colleagues in the Department for Transport, Home Office, Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Ministry of Defence. We will work with drone manufacturers to challenge them to do more to stop the illegal use of drones in prisons.

■ Youth Custody: Travellers

Rehman Chishti:

[\[53135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 11 November 2016 to Question 51837, what steps her Department plans to take to reduce the difference between Gypsy, Romany or Traveller understanding of written English in young offender institutions and that of other young males.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The learning programmes and the Curriculum in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) are built on a foundation of literacy and numeracy in line with expectations set out in the National Curriculum.

In March last year we introduced new education contracts in all public-sector YOIs, which significantly increased the amount of education provision available to young people.

All children on arrival go through a comprehensive assessment of their education needs, building on any available information from their time in the community. These assessments shape their education programme, if they identify significant literacy issues these will be targeted.

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) and HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) publish an annual report on 'Children in Custody' that monitors gypsy, traveller and Romany (GRT) children in YOIs and secure training centres (STCs). There is also a direct measure within the education contract which reports on the progress young people make, which is an analysis of the performance and achievement of minority groups against the performance and achievement of wider YOI population. We recognise the importance of improving the literacy of young offenders and will monitor the findings of the latest 'Children in Custody' report for 2015-16, including how it relates to GRT children and their ability to understand written English.

PRIME MINISTER

■ Devolution

Natalie McGarry:

[\[53831\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what discussions she has had with the (a) Scottish Government, (b) Welsh Government and (c) Northern Ireland Executive on the (i) European Social Funds, (ii) European Regional Development Fund and (iii) access and membership of the single market.

Mrs Theresa May:

I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave, on 16 November, to the hon. Member for West Dunbartonshire (Mr Docherty-Hughes), Official Report, column 237, the hon. Member for Ynys Môn (Mr Owen), Official Report, column 240, the right hon. Member for Islington North (Mr Corbyn), Official Report, column 229, the right hon. Member for Moray (Mr Robertson), Official Report, column 232 and the hon. Member for North East Fife (Mr Gethins), Official Report, column 236.

SCOTLAND

■ Space Technology: Scotland

Stephen Metcalfe:

[\[907328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the potential merits of locating a space port in Scotland.

Margot James:

Ministers routinely discuss matters of shared interest.

A spaceport brings exciting opportunities to grow the UK's space sector and the Government is acting now to support interested operators and sites, including in Scotland.

In particular, we intend to introduce legislation next year to enable commercial spaceflight from the UK.

TRANSPORT■ **Buses: Exhaust Emissions****Craig Williams:**[\[52919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many applications from bus companies based in Wales were submitted for the low emission bus scheme; and how many of those applications were successful.

Andrew Jones:

The £30m Low Emission Bus Scheme (LEBS) was the first time operators and local authorities in Wales were eligible to apply for funding for low emission buses. We were overbid by four times the amount of funding available, and we were unable to fund the majority of the bids received due to the strong competition. The scheme received four Welsh bids, one of which was successful. Unfortunately, due to reasons entirely separate from the fund, the bidder had to withdraw their application.

■ **Department for Transport: Impact Assessments****Ian Mearns:**[\[53753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will detail all policies or guidance which his Department has developed or issued which have been subject to an equality impact assessment since 2010; and what the outcome of those assessments was.

Andrew Jones:

Being able to analyse the impact of our policies on particular groups is a fundamental part of good policy-making which the Department undertakes. However, collating information on all the policies and guidance which the Department has developed or issued which have been subject to an equality impact assessment since 2010, could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ **Department for Transport: Research****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[53080\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many full-time equivalent civil servants employed by his Department work in support of research projects funded by his Department; and if he will make a statement.

Mr John Hayes:

It is estimated that between 6 April 2015 to 5 April 2016 51.5 full-time equivalent civil servants were employed by the Department for Transport in support of research projects funded by the Department.

■ Department for Transport: Sick Leave**Norman Lamb:**[\[53076\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many working days were lost due to mental illness in his Department in each of the last three years.

Mr John Hayes:

Stress is the biggest contributor to the category of 'mental health' illness. Whilst it affects relatively few members of staff compared to other categories for sickness absence, by its nature a significant number of working days can be lost by those with mental health illness.

The Department for Transport and its agencies have lost the following number of working days due to mental health illness in the last three financial years:

2013/14 – 27908

2014/15 – 32946

2015/16 – 28895

■ Railway Stations: Torbay**Kevin Foster:**[\[52538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether progress has been made on plans to build a new railway station in Edginswell, Torbay.

Paul Maynard:

It is for local bodies who are responsible for local transport planning, in conjunction with the Local Enterprise Partnerships to determine if opening a new station and funding passenger rail services is the best way to address local public transport needs and economic growth opportunities. In this case the Department understands that plans for a new station at Edginswell are currently being considered locally.

We are keen to support new railway stations and have made up to £20m of New Stations funding available. Bids need to be received by 25 November and need to be reasonably well developed with at least 25% third party funding contribution by 2019/20.

■ Railways: Disability**Ian Mearns:**[\[53752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of which train operating companies are fully compliant with the Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2010; and if he will make a statement.

Paul Maynard:

Compliance with the standards of the Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2010 (RVAR) is a mandatory duty placed on an operator. Operators are required to maintain a safety management system that has been accepted by the Office of Rail and Road, and this includes procedures for ensuring that new vehicles comply with statutory requirements. For older vehicles, the Regulations contain a compliance deadline of 1 January 2020. The Department is working closely with owners and operators of older rolling stock to which RVAR applies to ensure that the deadline is met.

Ian Mearns:[\[53786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has received reports of any train operating companies that are not compliant with the Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2010.

Paul Maynard:

When approached by a train operator, the Secretary of State has the power to grant exemptions under section 183 of the Equality Act 2010 for areas of minor non-compliance, which cannot be rectified for technical or operational reasons, that are identified by the operator. All applications for exemption are subject to stakeholder and public consultation, including scrutiny from the Disabled Person's Transport Advisory Committee, the Office of Rail and Road, Transport Focus and (if applicable) London TravelWatch. The Secretary of State has a duty to publish an annual report to parliament on all exemptions he grants.

Ian Mearns:[\[53787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which body is responsible for ensuring that train operating companies are compliant with the that Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2010.

Paul Maynard:

The operator bears the legal responsibility for ensuring that the vehicles it operates are compliant with Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2010 if those Regulations apply to its operations. The Office of Rail and Road is the enforcing body for the Regulations.

■ Severn River Crossing: Tolls**Jessica Morden:**[\[53757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, at what level tolls at the Severn Bridge will be set from January 2017.

Mr John Hayes:

Tolls are set by the Severn Bridges Act 1992. The prices that will apply will be confirmed shortly.

■ Transport: Expenditure

Jim McMahon:

[\[53103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much has been spent on (a) highway maintenance and (b) transport infrastructure in each year since 2011.

Mr John Hayes:

a) Highway Maintenance

Just over £9 billion has been invested in highway maintenance since 2011:

£M	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	TOTAL
Local Highways Network Maintenance	1006	779	1073	950	1156	4964
Highways England Maintenance	809	708	792	981	955	4245
Total	1815	1487	1865	1931	2111	9209

(b) Transport infrastructure in each year since 2011

Investing in transport infrastructure to support a strong economy is at the heart of what the Department does. We have invested over £50 billion in the rail network, strategic road network and local transport since 2011:.

£M	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	TOTAL
Total Capital DEL	7,777	7,934	8,537	9,389	5,961	39,597
Total Capital AME	-33	-61	13	6,695	6,544	13,158
Total Capital	7,744	7,873	8,549	16,084 ¹	12,505 ¹	52,755

¹ Since Network Rail was reclassified in 2014 the Department for Transport has been funding Network Rail through a loan facility (previously Network Rail had borrowed from the Private Sector). In 2014-15 Network Rail was not consolidated within the Departmental Accounts and therefore the Accounts show that we funded them not only through the Network Grant but also this loan, which were budgeted for in CDEL and CAME respectively. For 2015-16, both of these items scored outside of budgets and

instead we fully consolidated Network Rail's income and expenditure in the Accounts. This is reflected in the change in capital spend figures in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

■ Unmanned Air Vehicles: Risk Assessment

Lucy Powell: [\[52972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2016 to Question 40015, if he will now place in the Library a redacted summary of the risk assessments commissioned by the Cross-Government Working Group on remotely piloted aircraft system on the use of drones for criminal purposes.

Mr John Hayes:

A redacted summary of the risk assessments report has been placed in the Library.

WALES

■ Brexit: Wales

Jo Stevens: [\[53816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what work his Department is undertaking with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the process for the UK leaving the EU since July 2016.

Alun Cairns:

The Department for Exiting the European Union has responsibility for overseeing preparations for the withdrawal of the UK from the EU and conducting these withdrawal negotiations in support of the Prime Minister. In doing this it is working very closely with other Government departments, including the Wales Office.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Employment and Support Allowance

Stephen Timms: [\[53749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much was spent from the public purse through the Work Choice programme on employment support for claimants of employment and support allowance in each of the last six years.

Penny Mordaunt:

The spend on Work Choice is not broken down to benefit level and is therefore not available at the level of detail requested.

■ Members: Correspondence

Alex Salmond: [\[53143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he plans to respond to the letter dated 23 September 2016 from the hon. Member for Gordon on toilet facilities in Ebury House, Aberdeen.

Caroline Nokes:

A reply was sent to the Rt Hon member by the Department's Work Services Director for Scotland, Denise Horsfall, on behalf of the Secretary of State on 16 November 2016.

■ National Insurance Credits: Armed Forces

Julian Sturdy: [\[53512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reasons the entitlement of spouses of armed forces personnel posted overseas to claim class three national insurance credits only applies to those who reach the state pension age on or after 6 April 2016.

Richard Harrington:

This credit only applies to those who reach state pension age on or after 6 April 2016 because entitlement to the new State Pension, introduced on 6 April 2016, is based on a person's **own** National Insurance contribution record, unlike the old State Pension scheme where it is possible to 'derive' a State Pension based on a spouse or civil partner's contributions.

Under our state pension reforms, introduced on 6 April 2016, over three million women will gain an average of £11 per week more State Pension by 2030. Around 75 per cent of women (and 70 per cent of men) who reach State Pension age under the new system in the first fifteen years will have a higher value State Pension when compared to the value of the State Pension they would have received under the old system.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disqualification

Ann Clwyd: [\[52913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of social security claimants who were sanctioned for late arrival to advisory meetings in the last 12 months.

Damian Hinds:

No estimate has been made as this information is not available.

Information on Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance sanction decisions, by referral reason, is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/jobseekers-allowance-sanctions>

■ State Retirement Pensions**Andrew Stephenson:**[\[53189\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many deceased people are under investigation for overpayment of the state pension; and how long on average such an investigation has taken to conclude in each of the last five years.

Richard Harrington:

The Department's policy is to recover all debt where it is reasonable and cost effective to do so. Therefore, action is taken to try to recover any outstanding recoverable debt from the estate of a deceased debtor. I have assumed for the purposes of answering your questions that by the term 'investigation' you are referring to cases where the Department is seeking to recover overpayments from a deceased claimant's estate as described below.

I can confirm that after a holding period of 14 days from recording the date of death, the system will automatically check to see if it holds a correspondent (e.g. next of kin or former appointee). If a correspondent exists, the system will auto issue a request for repayment of the outstanding balance.

If no correspondent details are held (i.e. where the deceased person was the previous correspondent), the system will start its weekly search of probate records for a legal estate. I am unable to give an average time for this process but if probate is granted within 2 years of the date of death, a claim letter will be issued to the Executor / Solicitor dealing with the estate – this is done automatically once probate details have auto-downloaded from the Probate Office. If probate is not granted within 2 years of the date of death, no claim will be made and the balance of the debt will automatically be written off.

The current number of State Pension cases for which a search of probate records is being taken forward is not available, as we do not hold validated data that is specific to State Pension.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

TREASURY

■ Autumn Statement

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Philip Hammond): [\[HCWS278\]](#)

Today I have published a draft updated Charter for Budget Responsibility, a copy of which has been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses. Copies are also available in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office. The draft sets out the new fiscal framework and changes to the operation of the welfare cap.

The draft Charter includes modified guidance to the Office for Budget Responsibility and has been published in line with Section 6(4) of the Budget Responsibility and National Audit Act. This requires that if the Treasury proposes to modify the guidance to the Office for Budget Responsibility included in the Charter, a draft of the modified guidance must be published at least 28 days before the modified Charter is laid before Parliament. The updated Charter will be laid before Parliament, and a debate and vote scheduled, after the Christmas recess.

■ Autumn Statement 2016: Measures with immediate effect

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Jane Ellison): [\[HCWS277\]](#)

As part of Autumn Statement 2016, the government has announced that the legislation for the following measures will have immediate effect.

Petroleum Revenue Tax: cutting administration costs for the oil industry

The government is introducing legislation to change the returns process for Petroleum Revenue Tax (PRT) in order to reduce administrative burdens for the oil and gas sector. This will allow participators to opt fields out of the PRT regime completely. Operational changes will also simplify the reporting requirements for PRT. The changes will be effective from 23 November 2016 using HM Revenue and Customs' collection and management powers. This will ensure participators can take advantage of the changes as soon as possible.

First year allowances for charge point infrastructure

The government is introducing legislation to incentivise investment in Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEVs). The 100 per cent first-year allowance will allow businesses to deduct charge-point investments from their pre-tax profits in the year of purchase. The relief is designed to encourage the use of electric vehicles by increasing charge-point availability. The changes will take effect from 23 November 2016 to avoid delays to planned investments.

Employee Shareholder status

The government is introducing legislation to remove the Capital Gains Tax exemption and Income Tax reliefs associated with shares awarded under Employee Shareholder status. This is in response to evidence suggesting that the status is primarily being used for tax planning. The legislation will have effect in relation to Employee Shareholder agreements entered into on or after 1 December 2016 in order to prevent forestalling, whilst allowing outstanding

agreements to be finalised. Due to the requirement that 7 days must pass between an employee receiving independent advice on an offer and becoming an employee shareholder, this will allow any individual who has received advice before 23 November 2016 the opportunity to finalise the outstanding arrangement. The effective date is to be 2 December where advice is received on 23 November prior to 1.30pm. Existing Employee Shareholder agreements will not be affected.

Further details on the measures listed above are contained in the draft legislation, explanatory notes and tax information and impact notes published on the gov.uk website.

As part of Autumn Statement 2016, the government has announced that the legislation for the following measures will take effect before the introduction of Finance Bill 2017.

Enterprise Investment Scheme share conversions

The government is introducing legislation to amend the qualifying requirements for the Enterprise Investment Scheme and the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme to clarify the application of the rules to share conversion rights. This change will be effective for shares issued on or after 5 December 2016. This is a wholly relieving measure to enable the government to provide customers with certainty of treatment and enable the processing of a backlog of cases. Further detail on this measure will be contained in the draft legislation, explanatory note and tax information and impact note to be published on the gov.uk website on 5 December 2016.

Hybrids and other mismatches

The government is issuing a technical note in relation to legislation that was passed as part of the Finance Act 2016, in order to improve the new hybrid mismatch regime. Following consultation with stakeholders, it was agreed that further technical modifications were required in two areas of the legislation. These were with regard to financial sector timing claims and the rules concerning deductions for amortisation. The technical note will set out the detail of the changes required and will be published on the gov.uk website on 5 December 2016. These modifications will take effect along with the new regime on 1 January 2017. Corresponding legislation will be introduced in Finance Bill 2017.

As part of the Autumn Statement 2016, the government has made an amendment to Public Notice 733: Flat rate scheme for small businesses.

VAT Flat Rate Scheme

To counter abuse of the VAT Flat Rate Scheme (FRS), the government is introducing a new 16.5% rate for businesses with limited costs. The new rate will be introduced by Statutory Instrument and will come into effect on 1 April 2017 with draft legislation published on 5 December 2016. In order to prevent forestalling, HM Revenue and Customs has amended Public Notice 733: Flat rate scheme for small businesses. The relevant sections (sections 8.2 and 9.7) have force of law and ensure that businesses cannot avoid the new rate by arranging to issue invoices, or receive payments, before 1 April 2017 for services to be

performed on or after that date. The amended Public Notice will be published on 23 November 2016 on the gov.uk website and the relevant rules will take effect from 24 November 2016.