

## Daily Report

Tuesday, 17 January 2017

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 17 January 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:41 P.M., 17 January 2017). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Carbon Capture and Storage

**Tom Blenkinsop:** [\[59722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much money the Government invested in carbon capture and storage projects in each year between 2010 and 2015.

**Jesse Norman:**

In each year between 2010 and 2015, the Government has invested the following in carbon capture and storage projects:

- £1.39 million between 2011 and 2012
- £ 4.87 million in 2012/13;
- £ 15.45 million in 2013/14;
- £ 50.60 million in 2014/15; and
- £ 33.87 million in 2015/16.

Figures for the 2015/16 financial year are provisional.

**Tom Blenkinsop:** [\[59747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the value for money of carbon capture and utilisation technology.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government recognises the potential of carbon capture and utilisation (CCU) technologies, even though many are still at an early stage of development. The Department has commissioned further analysis to help assess the commercially-viable technologies and the CCU carbon abatement opportunities for the UK.

#### ■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: EU Law

**Kirsty Blackman:** [\[59840\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which EU directives relating to his Department's responsibilities are awaiting transposition into UK law.

**Margot James:**

Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. During this period the government will continue to negotiate, implement and apply EU legislation.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is responsible for transposition of the following agreed Directives: 2013/30/EU, 2013/53/EU, 2014/34/EU, 2014/53/EU, 2014/104/EU, 2015/2302/EU, 2015/2436/EU, 2016/2037, 2014/87/EU, 2013/59/EU.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Policy**

**Dan Jarvis:**

**[59866]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will provide a comprehensive list of the public policy targets established by his Department (a) between 2010 and May 2015 and (b) since May 2015.

**Margot James:**

The Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) was created on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016 bringing together the Department of Energy and Climate Change and the Department of Business Innovation and Skills.

During the period in question, high-level public policy targets for the Departments in 2010 were outlined in the Coalition Agreement. The plan can be found here:

**Coalition agreement**

( Published 20 May 2010)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-coalition-documentation>

For the period 2011-2015, the predecessor Departments produced Business Plans outlining their public policy targets. The plans can be found here:

**DECC Business Plan 2011-2015**

(Published 8 November 2010) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-plan-2011-to-2015-department-for>

**DECC Business Plan 2012-2015**

(Published 31 May 2012 – refreshed annually to 23 April 2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-plan-2012-to-2015>

**BIS Business Plan 2011-2015**

(Published 8 November 2010) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-plan-2011-2015-department-for-business-innovation-and-skills--3>

**BIS Business Plan 2012-2015**

(Published 31 May 2012 – refreshed annually to 23 April 2015)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/31960/12-p58-bis-2012-business-plan.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/31960/12-p58-bis-2012-business-plan.pdf)

From 2015 the public policy targets for the predecessor Departments were published in the Single Departmental Plans. The plans can be found here:

**DECC Single Departmental Plan 2015-2020**

(Published 19 February 2016)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/decc-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020>

### **BIS Single Departmental Plan 2015-2020**

(Published 19 February 2016)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bis-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020>

A new Single Departmental Plan for BEIS, outlining the joint public policy targets for the Department will be published in due course.

## ■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Re-employment**

**Mr David Lammy:** [59170]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many members of staff who ceased to be employed by his Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies in the last three years have subsequently been re-employed by his Department on a temporary basis or as a third-party contractor or consultant.

**Margot James:**

From the data available fewer than 5 individuals have been identified as having ceased employment by the Department and its partner organisations in the last three years and subsequently re-employed by the Department on a temporary basis.

## ■ **Energy: Meters**

**Dr Poulter:** [59766]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what information his Department holds on the number of SMETS 1 (a) electricity and (b) gas smart meters that have subsequently been replaced with another SMETS 1 meter because the customer changed supplier to date.

**Jesse Norman:**

Large energy suppliers reported that a total of approximately 2,200 electricity and gas smart meters were replaced with a new smart meter when they gained a customer with a smart meter over the period from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015.

SMETS1 meters comply with suppliers' roll-out obligations and do not need to be replaced. However, for commercial reasons some energy suppliers may choose to replace a gained SMETS1 meter with another SMETS1 meter so that it can be used within their system requirements.

**Dr Poulter:** [59767]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what information his Department holds on the number of SMETS 1 (a) electricity and (b) gas smart meters installed to date.



**Jesse Norman:**

The Government publishes quarterly reports on the number of smart electricity and gas meters installed in Great Britain as part of its Smart Meters statistics collection, which is available here: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/smart-meters-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/smart-meters-statistics).

The latest report was published on 22 December 2016 and shows that, at the end of September 2016, across the domestic and non-domestic sector, approximately (a) 2,534,000 electricity and (b) 1,829,500 gas smart meters had been installed.

**Dr Poulter:****[59768]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what information his Department holds on the number of (a) electricity and (b) gas smart meter installations that have required at least one additional visit to a property because the meter did not work as envisaged.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Department does not hold this information. Energy suppliers are required as part of their licence conditions to take all reasonable steps to roll out smart meters to all their domestic and non-domestic customers by the end of 2020.

**Dr Poulter:****[59769]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what information his Department holds on the number of (a) electricity and (b) gas smart meters that have been installed and subsequently failed to send readings due to poor signal coverage.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government does not hold information on the adequacy of the signal coverage of the communications systems currently used by energy suppliers for sending and receiving information from smart meters to their business systems. More than 4.9 million smart and advanced meters were operating across homes and business in Great Britain at the end of September 2016, using these communications systems as part of the Foundation Stage of the roll-out of smart metering.

**Dr Poulter:****[59789]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the total cost of the smart meter programme has been to date; and if his Department will publish a detailed breakdown of those costs.

**Jesse Norman:**

A detailed breakdown of the estimated costs of the rollout by year and type is available in the recently published cost-benefit analysis, which is available here: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/smart-meter-roll-out-gb-cost-benefit-analysis](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/smart-meter-roll-out-gb-cost-benefit-analysis).

The rollout of smart meters is estimated to deliver an overall net benefit of £5.7bn between 2013 and 2030 (2011 prices, discounted to 2016).

**■ Green Investment Bank****Caroline Lucas:** [\[59863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government's preferred bidder for the Green Investment Bank submitted the highest bid for that bank.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

One of the main objectives of the sale is to achieve value for money for the taxpayer. Decisions on the sale price of the Green Investment Bank is commercially confidential and will depend on the outcome of discussions with potential investors.

**■ Green Investment Bank: Assets****Callum McCaig:** [\[59777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government plans for a golden share in the Green Investment Bank will enable it to influence decisions on the (a) sale of existing assets and (b) reinvestment of capital in green projects after the disposal of those assets.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The special share will be held by an independent company – the Green Purposes Company Limited, with trustees who have been selected independently of Government and of the Green Investment Bank (GIB). The independent trustees will have the right to approve or reject any proposed change to the green purposes of GIB, as set out in the company's Articles of Association, if such a change were ever proposed.

GIB is being sold as a going concern and potential investors will be buying into the company's green business plan and forward pipeline of projects.

**■ Green Investment Bank: Privatisation****Ian Murray:** [\[59250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of the proposed privatisation of the Green Investment Bank on the Government's new industrial strategy.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

Moving the Green Investment Bank (GIB) into the private sector will enable GIB to have greater access to capital and be free of the constraints of Government ownership including State aid restrictions.

This means GIB will be able to play more of a role in supporting green investment, which complements the Government's industrial strategy.

**Michelle Thomson:**

[\[59367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what safeguards his Department has put in place to prevent the immediate sale of assets by a new owner of the Green Investment Bank after its planned privatisation.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The Government has been clear that one of the reasons we are moving the Green Investment Bank (GIB) into the private sector is to enable the business grow and continue as an institution supporting investment in the UK green economy.

GIB is being sold as a going concern and potential investors will be buying into the company's green business plan and forward pipeline of projects.

**Michelle Thomson:**

[\[59368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government plans to maintain any control or stake in the new ownership structure of the Green Investment Bank after its planned privatisation.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The Government has always been clear about our plans to sell a majority of the Green Investment Bank (GIB) in order to achieve one of our key objectives, which is for GIB to be re-classified to the private sector once sold.

The decisions on the final size of stake of GIB to be sold will depend on the outcome of confidential discussions with bidders; driven by what best achieves our objectives for the sale, and, most importantly, what is in the best interests of the taxpayer.

**Michelle Thomson:**

[\[59388\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what safeguards his Department has put in place to protect the focus of the Green Investment Bank on green investment after the planned privatisation of that bank.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The Government has set out its plans for the sale of the Green Investment Bank (GIB) in the document "Green Investment Bank: sale of shares" laid before Parliament on 3 March 2016.

As stated in that document, the Government has asked potential investors to confirm their commitment to GIB's green values and investment principles and how they propose to protect them, as part of their bids for the company. In addition, the Government has approved the creation of a special share to protect GIB's green purposes in future.

## ■ Green Investment Bank: Scotland

**Callum McCaig:**

[\[59829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his most recent estimate is of the value of the Green Investment Bank's assets in Scotland.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The Green Investment Bank (GIB) publishes a full details of the value of its assets on the GIB website. The following links will provide the Hon Member with the information he requires:

<http://www.greeninvestmentbank.com/news-and-insights/2016/investing-in-a-greener-scotland/>

[http://www.greeninvestmentbank.com/media/155175/gib\\_tt\\_2212.pdf](http://www.greeninvestmentbank.com/media/155175/gib_tt_2212.pdf)

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions****Barry Gardiner:****[59376]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he will report progress against actions as set out in the 2011 Carbon Plan and publish it on the Number 10 website; and for what reason no such progress has been reported since 2012.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

We report progress against carbon budgets through the annual statement of emissions, our energy and emissions projections, and the Government's response to annual progress reports from the Committee on Climate Change, fulfilling our statutory requirement. Taken together these documents set out an assessment of the actions Government is taking to meet carbon budgets, independent advice on potential further action and the Government's response to that advice.

We are now looking ahead to our emissions reduction plan, which will set out how we will decarbonise all sectors of the UK through the 2020s.

**Minimum Wage****Caroline Lucas:****[59536]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Answer of 4 May 2016 to Question 36447 and pursuant to the Answers of 1 June 2016, corrected on 8 September, 7 October and 7 December 2016, to Questions 38139, 46899 and 56533, what the reasons are for the (a) increase in employer investigations resulting in the identification of minimum wage arrears from 964 in the whole of 2015-16 to 1,420 in the first half of 2016-17 and (b) apparent growth in the number of workers for whom arrears were recovered from 58,080 in 2015-16 to 48,154 in the first half of 2016-17.

**Margot James:**

In 2015/16 we increased the National Minimum Wage (NMW) enforcement budget allocated to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) by £7m to £20m. These additional funds have allowed the recruitment of additional NMW compliance officers, so in addition to responding to every worker complaint, HMRC has been able to conduct more proactive, risk-based investigations into sectors where workers are more at risk of being underpaid.

The increasing numbers of successful cases closed by HMRC show that our continued investment in minimum wage enforcement has had a real and positive impact on the lives of some of our most vulnerable workers.

■ **Ports: Scotland**

**Ian Blackford:**

[\[59287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support his Department provides to Scottish ports that wish to engage in oil and gas decommissioning.

**Jesse Norman:**

Offshore decommissioning is a significant UK-wide opportunity, with Oil and Gas UK estimating that \$1 - \$1.5 billion is likely to be spent each year on decommissioning for the next 5 years. Government and the Oil and Gas Authority are working with industry and industry bodies to support UK content.

Last year Government committed to supporting an Aberdeen City Deal which includes an Aberdeen Harbour expansion to compete for more decommissioning work.

The Oil and Gas Authority's Decommissioning Board is working with industry to forecast future demand and opportunities. As part of this work the Oil and Gas Authority engages with ports to discuss decommissioning priorities, work opportunities and future decommissioning-related plans.

■ **Post Offices: Closures**

**John Nicolson:**

[\[59386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many sub-post offices have been closed for more than four weeks in the last year.

**Margot James:**

The provision of its post office branches 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.

■ **Post Offices: Retail Trade**

**Gill Furniss:**

[\[59754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment his Department has made of the extent to which the remuneration package offered to retail businesses that host post offices takes account of the costs of (a) the national living wage, (b) business rates revaluations, (c) auto-enrolment pensions and (d) the apprenticeship levy; and if he will make a statement.

**Margot James:**

The negotiations on benefit packages for retail businesses that host post office branches into their stores 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.

**Renewable Energy****Barry Gardiner:**[\[59315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to put into domestic law protection for the new rights for energy consumers on self-consumption of renewable energy and selling power back to the grid set out in the EU's Renewable Energy Directive and Electricity Directive.

**Jesse Norman:**

Formal negotiations on the Commission's proposals for a revision of the Directive on renewable energy and the Directive on common rules for the internal market in electricity have not yet started. While we remain in the EU, the UK will play a full role in the negotiations, considering all implications for the UK, including for energy consumers who generate renewable energy.

As the formal negotiations have not begun, it would be premature to consider the extent to which any additional rights might be introduced in the UK.

**Technology****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[59332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to promote the technology sector in (a) Manchester, (b) Birmingham and (c) Edinburgh.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

We are investing in new scientific infrastructure on a record scale by delivering on the £6.9 billion science capital commitment in our manifesto, and at Autumn Statement 2016 we announced that we will make the UK the global go-to nation for scientists, innovators and tech investors, by investing an extra £2 billion a year in R&D by the end of this Parliament.

As part of this, there will be a new Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund (ISCF) to back priority technologies - such as robotics and biotechnology - where the UK has the potential to turn strengths in research into a global industrial and commercial lead.

Examples of Government investment in the technology sector in the three cities in question are set out below.

In Greater Manchester, the Citylabs development is a flagship redevelopment of Manchester's former Royal Eye Hospital into 94,000 sq ft of bespoke-built biomedical facilities. Located on Oxford Road, it sits within Europe's largest clinical and

academic campus, made up of Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the University of Manchester. Citylabs opened in September 2014 and is the first phase of a health innovation campus. The second phase will include a private hospital and health/well-being centre. The Citylabs project received just under £1million ERDF for enabling works and £3.75million ERDF for the main works.

In Birmingham, Growth Deal funding will be used to create a Virtual Reality and Robotics Development Centre, developing the skills required to create and work within virtual reality environments, as well as the programming languages used in robotics. Growth Deal funding has also supported an extension of the incubator building at the Innovation Birmingham Campus providing an state of the art enterprise space enabling local universities to collaborate with business start-ups, many of which work in the technology sector.

In Edinburgh, the EPSRC has funded The Li-Fi R&D Centre, which conducts internationally leading research in collaboration with, and on behalf of industry. It aims to accelerate society's adoption of Li-Fi and emerging wireless technology through engagement with major industrial partners, to fully harness the commercial and innovative potential of Li-Fi, and to help establish a major new £5 billion (\$8.5 billion) Li-Fi industry by 2018.

## CABINET OFFICE

### ■ Business: Procurement

**Tom Blenkinsop:**

[\[59719\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether he plans to take further steps to allow local authorities to make procurement decisions which favour local economies and businesses.

**Ben Gummer:**

Whilst contracting authorities may not favour suppliers on purely geographical grounds, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 allow them to consider incorporating social, ethical and environmental aspects into specifications, contract conditions and award criteria if they relate directly to the subject matter of a contract from the point of view of the contracting authority.

Furthermore, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 places a requirement on commissioners to consider the economic, environmental and social benefits of their approaches to procurement before the process starts, at the pre-procurement stage.

### ■ Cabinet Office: Re-employment

**Mr David Lammy:**

[\[59171\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many members of staff who ceased to be employed by his Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies in the last

three years have subsequently been re-employed by his Department on a temporary basis or as a third-party contractor or consultant.

**Ben Gummer:**

In my Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies, eight individuals have been identified as having left in the last three years and subsequently re-employed on a temporary basis or as a third-party contractor or consultant.

Whilst it is not normal practice to re-employ former employees on such terms, it is sometimes beneficial for the Department to be able to draw on the previous experience and skills of ex-employees in this way for short periods of time

■ **Government Departments: Pay**

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[59299]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the (a) entry level and (b) top level annual salary for the grade of Higher Executive Officer is in each government department; and if he will make a statement.

**Ben Gummer:**

Remuneration for all grades below Senior Civil Service, including that of Higher Executive Officer, is delegated to each individual department.

■ **Iron and Steel: Procurement**

**Tom Blenkinsop:**

[59721]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the changes made to the steel procurement guidelines in the last two years are being adhered to by (a) local authorities and (b) central government departments.

**Ben Gummer:**

Central government departments are required to report on a regular basis, alongside the collection of forward pipeline information, to confirm that they are compliant with the steel procurement guidance and provide evidence on how they are applying this guidance on their projects.

Local Authorities and other parts of the wider public sector are not currently required to provide this information, given their separate legal nature.

This information is published in the guidance on *Procuring steel in major projects*, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-1116-procuring-steel-in-major-projects-revised-guidance>.

■ **Pay: Females**

**Jake Berry:**

[59712]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what proportion of full-time equivalent employees are women in the gross salary bands (a) £150,000 to £155,000, (b) £155,000



to £160,000, (c) £160,000 to £165,000, (d) £165,000 to £170,000, (e) £170,000 to £175,000, (f) £175,000 to £180,000, (g) £180,000 to £185,000, (h) £185,000 to £190,000, (i) £190,000 to £195,000, (j) £195,000 to £200,000 and (k) £200,000 and above.

**Chris Skidmore:**

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

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Letter to Member - Women Salary [PQ 59712 FINAL.pdf]

## TREASURY

### ■ Annuities

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

[\[59247\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department made of the viability of the secondary annuities market, before its announcement of a scheme to enable pensioners to sell their annuities.

**Simon Kirby:**

Prior to announcing proposals for a secondary market in annuities, the Government consulted a broad evidence base to understand how this market might operate. This includes modelling estimates of how many annuity holders might sell their annuity, and a consideration of the views expressed by annuity providers and other potential market participants.

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

[\[59248\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions his Department had with representatives of the annuities industry before taking the decision to (a) allow the sale of annuities and (b) revoke that policy; and when did such discussions take place.

**Simon Kirby:**

Following the Chancellor's announcement of pension freedoms at Budget 2014, several organisations contacted the Government to suggest ways these flexibilities could be extended to existing annuity holders. These suggestions led to HM Treasury having discussions with a range of potential market participants, including annuity providers, about the prospect of a secondary market in annuities. These discussions culminated in the announcement at March Budget 2015 that the Government would create the conditions to allow a secondary market in annuities to develop.

Throughout the development of the policy the Government continued to engage extensively with the pensions and investment industry, consumer groups and financial regulators on how to create a competitive secondary market in annuities.

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

[\[59249\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his policy is on enabling pensioners who were obliged to buy annuities to transfer their investment into alternative financial vehicles; and if he will make a statement.

**Simon Kirby:**

In April 2015, the Government introduced the pension freedoms to give individuals greater flexibility in how they access their pension savings (from the age of 55) by removing the obligation for people to buy an annuity upon retirement. However, these flexibilities did not apply to those individuals who had already purchased an annuity.

In order to extend the flexibilities to these individuals, at the March Budget 2015 the Government announced its intention to remove the restrictions on the sale of existing annuities and to create the conditions for a secondary market in annuities to develop. The Government expected that for most people continuing to hold their annuity would be the right decision, but wanted to give people choice over how they use their money.

However, as the policy developed it became increasingly clear that consumers would have received poor value for their income streams and the conditions to allow a vibrant and competitive market to emerge, with multiple buyers and sellers of annuities, could not be created with sufficient consumer protections. In these circumstances the Government concluded that it would not be in consumers' interests to continue with this policy. The Government announced in October 2016 that it would no longer be continuing with proposals for a secondary market in annuities.

## ■ Average Earnings

**Stuart C. McDonald:**

[\[908221\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on wage growth of recent trends in the Office for Budget Responsibility's economic forecasts.

**Mr David Gauke:**

Wage growth has now outstripped inflation for 25 consecutive months, the longest period of real wage growth since before the recession. In their November Economic and Fiscal Outlook, the Office for Budget Responsibility forecast wage growth of 2.2% for 2016, and that this would rise to 2.4% in 2017, 2.8% in 2018 and above 3% per annum from 2019 onwards.

## ■ Development Aid

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[908220\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, which government departments' budgets included expenditure counted towards UK Official Development Assistance in 2016.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The Official Development Assistance rules, governed by the OECD Development Assistance Committee, state that spending by all departments on eligible activities can be counted towards UK Official Development Assistance. Therefore, we will count expenditure in 2016 from the following Departments:

The Department for International Development, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, HM Treasury, the Department of Health, the Home Office, the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department for Education, The Department of Work and Pensions, the Department for Transport, The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Ministry of Defence, HM Revenue and Customs and the Office of National Statistics. The Scottish Government and Welsh Government also undertake activity for which expenditure is counted as UK Official Development Assistance.

Provisional spending on ODA for 2016 will be published in Statistics on International Development in Spring 2017.

**■ Economic Growth: South East****Rehman Chishti:**[\[908215\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to support economic growth in (a) Medway and (b) the South East.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The investments the government announced at the 2016 Autumn Statement will support a country that works for everyone, no matter where they live. We want to drive up the productivity and growth of every region by investing in their infrastructure, developing the skills of their people and supporting their companies.

At the 2016 Autumn Statement, the government also announced that Local Enterprise Partnerships in London and The South East will also benefit from £492 million of Local Growth Fund money backing local projects, growth and jobs.

**■ Employment****Jeremy Quin:**[\[908216\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of recent trends in the Purchasing Managers' Index as an indication of future trends in the level of employment.

**Simon Kirby:**

Recent business surveys show that momentum in the economy has continued. The PMI surveys show a broad-based pickup in activity in late 2016, with output growth reaching a 17-month high in December. This is also reflected in the employment level which currently stands at a historically high level of 31.8m, and has increased by 342,000 over the past year.

**David T. C. Davies:**

[\[908217\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of recent trends in the level of employment.

**Simon Kirby:**

The employment level currently stands at a historically high level of 31.8m, and has increased by 342,000 over the past year. This increase has been driven by full-time workers and by high and medium skill occupations, showing the recovery has been producing high quality employment helping to boost productivity and raise living standards across the country.

## ■ Fiscal Policy: Females

**Mr Gavin Shuker:**

[\[908218\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that women are not disproportionately affected by the Government's fiscal policies.

**Jane Ellison:**

It is equally important for the future finances of both women and men that we remain committed to tackling the deficit and strengthening the economy.

Recent government decisions have also been of benefit to women. Around two thirds of those benefitting from the National Living Wage are estimated to be women. And of the 680,000 people who will be lifted out of income tax by 2017/18 as a result of increases in the personal tax allowance, over 60% will be women.

## ■ Infrastructure

**James Berry:**

[\[908222\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what fiscal steps he is taking to support the development of long-term infrastructure.

**Mr David Gauke:**

We recognise the need to increase public spending on infrastructure. That's why, at Autumn Statement 2016, the Chancellor committed additional capital to fund new high-value economic infrastructure through the National Productivity Investment Fund. Coupled with the commitments made at Spending Review 2015, this means annual central government investment in economic infrastructure will now rise by almost 60% between 2016/17 and 2020/21, from £14bn to £22bn.

## ■ Merchant Shipping: Tax Allowances

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[59749\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will list the value of tax reliefs granted to each merchant shipping company in each of the last five years; and for what purposes those tax reliefs were granted.

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[59751\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will list the value of tax reliefs on tonnage tax granted to merchant shipping companies who are members of the SMarT Funding scheme in each of the last five years.

**Jane Ellison:**

The purpose of the Tonnage Tax relief is to promote the success and effectiveness of UK strategically and commercially managed shipping fleets in a market highly exposed to international competition and whose management is highly mobile. The table below shows the estimated tax liabilities due to Tonnage Tax for each year from 2010 to 2014 (the latest year for which full data is currently available) and the estimated tax liabilities due to Tonnage Tax for companies registered in the SMarT Funding scheme. This relates to companies who reported a Tonnage Tax Profit in the relevant year:

CALENDAR YEAR	NUMBER OF COMPANIES	TOTAL TAX LIABILITIES DUE TO TONNAGE TAX (£M ROUNDED)	TAX LIABILITIES DUE TO TONNAGE TAX FOR COMPANIES
			REGISTERED IN THE SMART FUNDING SCHEME (£M ROUNDED)
2010	450	16	2.5
2011	460	17	5.1
2012	450	17	3.5
2013	420	17	3.3
2014	340	15	3.3

Data cannot be broken down to reflect relief given to individual companies for reasons of confidentiality. Tax liabilities due to Tonnage Tax for individual companies ranged from £0 to £1.4 million for each year in the five year period.

## ■ Motor Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions

**Andrew Selous:**

[\[908219\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what fiscal steps he is taking to support the further take-up of ultra low-emission vehicles.

**Jane Ellison:**

Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) benefit from lower first-year VED rates and lower Company Car Tax rates.

Companies are able to access 100% first-year capital allowances when they install electric chargepoints, and employees will continue to have access to salary sacrifice schemes in order to purchase ULEVs.

The Government is providing approximately £975 million between 2015 and 2020 to support uptake and ULEV manufacturing in the UK.

## ■ Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

**Mark Durkan:**

[\[59192\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether discussions between Ministers of his Department and Ministers of the Northern Ireland Executive on budgetary challenges facing the Executive during 2015 included the escalated spending exposure under the Northern Ireland non-domestic renewable heat incentive scheme.

**Mr David Gauke:**

Treasury ministers did not discuss the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme with Ministers of the Northern Ireland Executive in 2015. The Treasury's role is to set a budget allocation for renewable heat schemes in Northern Ireland proportionate to the budget provided to the department which manages similar schemes in Great Britain. It is for the Executive to meet any costs in excess of that budget from its block grant or the other resources available to it.

**Mark Durkan:**

[\[59200\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions the then Chief Secretary to the Treasury had with Ministers of the Northern Ireland Executive on (a) the Autumn Statement 2015 and (b) his subsequent Settlement Letter referring to the costs of Northern Ireland's non-domestic renewable heat incentive scheme.

**Mr David Gauke:**

Chief Secretaries to the Treasury regularly discuss matters of mutual interest, including annual fiscal events, with Northern Ireland Finance Ministers. However, no such discussions took place on the costs of Northern Ireland renewable heating schemes, including in the context of the settlement letter which followed the 2015 Spending Review and Autumn Statement.

## ■ Pensions

**Maggie Throup:**

[\[59110\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the reduction to £4,000 in the Money Purchase Annual Allowance referred to in paragraph 4.20 of the Autumn Statement 2016, Cm 9362, will apply to people who had already accessed their savings flexibly.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Money Purchase Annual Allowance applies to anyone who has accessed their pension savings flexibly and makes further money purchase savings. It applies at the level in force at the time of making those subsequent savings.

The Government has proposed a reduction in the allowance to £4,000 from 6 April 2017 and launched a consultation on the detail surrounding this, which ends on 15 February and is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reducing-the-money-purchase-annual-allowance>

## ■ Sanitary Protection: VAT

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[59771\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2016 to Question 55090, on sanitary protection: VAT, (a) on which dates, (b) with which EU institutions and (c) which Ministers raised this specific issue at EU level.

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[59772\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2016 to Question 55090, on sanitary protection: VAT, if he will release all written Ministerial correspondence with EU institutions on the abolition of VAT on sanitary products.

**Jane Ellison:**

Treasury Ministers have continued to press the issue of sanitary protection during EU meetings with opposite numbers, with the European Commission, and most recently with the incoming European Council Presidency in late December 2016. It would not be appropriate to publish correspondence that relates to ongoing policy development.

## ■ Solar Power

**Catherine McKinnell:** [\[908224\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of changes to the rateable value of solar panels on business rates for SMEs and community organisations using that technology.

**Jane Ellison:**

Property valuations for business rates are carried out independently by the Valuation Office Agency and are determined by a number of factors, of which the value of solar panels is just one.

From April 2017, nearly three quarters of all businesses will see no change or a fall in their rates bill, with 600,000 set to pay no business rates at all.

A £3.6bn transitional relief scheme will support the minority of businesses who do face an increase in bills.

## ■ Treasury: Labour Mobility

**Tom Brake:** [\[59155\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many civil servants in each unit of his Department are in the redeployment pool.

**Simon Kirby:**

The number of departmental staff who are in the redeployment pool are fewer than five. It is the Treasury's policy for reasons of confidentiality not to release full details relating to numbers of staff fewer than five, where to do so might lead to the identification of individual cases.

■ **Treasury: Re-employment****Mr David Lammy:**[\[59177\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many members of staff who ceased to be employed by his Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies in the last three years have subsequently been re-employed by his Department on a temporary basis or as a third-party contractor or consultant.

**Simon Kirby:**

The information requested is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

**COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ **Communities and Local Government: Policy****Dan Jarvis:**[\[59867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will provide a comprehensive list of the public policy targets established by his Department (a) between 2010 and May 2015 and (b) since May 2015.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The public policy targets for DCLG for 2010-2015 and since May 2015 are available on the gov.uk website.

■ **Community Assets: Public Houses****Craig Whittaker:**[\[59655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to support local community pubs.

**Andrew Percy:**

*[Holding answer 13 January 2017]:* We are proud to support the community pubs sector wherever possible. That is why we are co-funding the £3.6m More Than a Pub programme to support communities aspiring to own their local pubs. Yesterday I announced a further £50,000 for Pub is The Hub to help them to continue with their excellent work in helping pubs to provide an ever-expanding range of new community-focussed services and meaning that, since April 2013, we have provided Pub is the Hub with £320,000.

In addition the Government cut beer duty and scrapped the beer duty escalator in 2013, with beer duty then being cut again in successive budgets before being frozen



at Budget 2016. The sector has stated this is a major factor in helping to stimulate growth.

We have also removed permitted development rights for the change of use or demolition of pubs the community has nominated as an Asset of Community Value. This allows for a local decision on any planning application and provides an opportunity for the community to comment on any proposals.

## ■ Council Tax and Non-domestic Rates: Dorset

**Mr Christopher Chope:**

[\[59686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the level of (a) council tax arrears and (b) non-domestic rate arrears was on 31 March 2016 in (i) Bournemouth Borough Council, (ii) Christchurch Borough Council, (iii) Poole and (iv) East Dorset District Council.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

*[Holding answer 16 January 2017]:* The figures are in the table below.

	COUNCIL TAX ARREARS £000	NON-DOMESTIC RATE ARREARS £000
Bournemouth Borough Council	12,363	3,693
Christchurch Borough Council	1,594	554
Poole Borough Council	4,021	1,119
East Dorset District Council	2,019	709

Please note that this is only the second time we have collected non-domestic rate arrears data so they must be regarded as experimental data and could be revised in subsequent data collections.

## ■ Council Tax: Arrears

**Mr Mark Hendrick:**

[\[58938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to the ruling of *Leeds City Council v Broadley* on 6 December 2016, what plans he has to amend Guidance to local councils on good practice in the collection of council tax arrears, published in June 2013; and what steps he is taking to enable district and unitary councils in England and Wales to obtain council tax payments from tenants who have vacated periodic tenancies without notice.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The guidance "*Good practice in the collection of Council Tax arrears*" sets out clear advice for councils to use in the collection and enforcement of council tax debt. The Government has no plans at present to update this, but as with all guidance will keep it under review in conjunction with local authorities and other interested parties.

**Flood Control: EU Grants and Loans**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[59817\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2016 to Question 56007, when he expects to receive a decision from the EU Solidarity Fund on assistance with recovery from flood damage.

**Andrew Percy:**

*[Holding answer 16 January 2017]:* I refer the honourable Member to the statement I made on 16 January 2017.

**Green Belt**

**Graham Stringer:** [\[59812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what proportion of greenbelt land in (a) Greater Manchester, (b) the North West and (c) England the public has access to.

**Gavin Barwell:**

*[Holding answer 16 January 2017]:* The Government does not collect this information, but our National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that local authorities should seek to enhance public access and to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation on Green Belt land. Relevant local authorities should have information on public footpaths and rights of way, on registered commons, and on the playing fields, parks and other open spaces they own or manage within their Green Belt. However, most Green Belt land is agricultural and privately owned.

**Hospitals: Non-domestic Rates**

**Justin Madders:** [\[59822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will exempt NHS hospitals from business rates.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Government has no plans to exempt NHS hospitals from business rates. Hospitals, like almost all other buildings occupied by public bodies, have been subject to non-domestic rates since they were introduced.

**Local Government Finance: Bristol**

**Karin Smyth:** [\[59512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make an assessment of the effect of recent changes to government funding to Bristol City Council on local council services in Bristol South constituency.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

*[Holding answer 13 January 2017]:* On 15 December we announced the second year of a four year settlement, which will provide Bristol City Council with over £1.3 billion to spend on local services between 2016-17 and 2019-20. As a democratically

elected organisation, Bristol City Council is independent of central government and is responsible for managing its budget in line with local priorities. We are giving the council the funding it needs to plan responsibly.

■ **New Homes Bonus Scheme: Peterborough**

**Mr Stewart Jackson:**

[\[59641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much New Homes Bonus funding Peterborough City Council has received in each year since 2011; and if he will make a statement.

**Gavin Barwell:**

*[Holding answer 16 January 2017]:* Allocations from the New Homes Bonus to Peterborough City Council since 2011 are set out below:

YEAR	NEW HOMES BONUS ALLOCATION
2011-12	£1,112,997
2012-13	£2,303,400
2013-14	£3,438,807
2014-15	£4,743,491
2015-16	£6,335,270
2016-17	£7,901,640
2017-18 (provisional)	£6,547,501

Figures in 2017/18 are provisional and will be confirmed once any representations on housing statistics submitted by local authorities have been considered.

■ **Parking**

**Mr Gavin Shuker:**

[\[59487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what recent assessment he has made of the (a) prevalence and (b) environmental and social impact of residents making their private parking spaces available for hire; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

*[Holding answer 13 January 2017]:* The Department does not assess the extent to which individual members of the public rent out their driveways. The Department has given local authorities the tools through the planning system to take action if there are significant planning concerns such as public nuisance to the local residents and community.

**■ Parking: Unfair Practices****Daniel Zeichner:** [\[58287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many civil servants are working on his Department's response to the consultation, Parking reform: tackling unfair practices.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

*[Holding answer 13 January 2017]:* Parking policy is shared between DfT and DCLG. 72 people in my Department work on cities and local growth as part of a joint Cities and Local Growth Unit with BEIS. These are DCLG posts. The unit covers a range of policy areas including devolution, regeneration and reforms to off-street car parking.

The discussion paper last year entitled 'Parking reform: tackling unfair practices', sought thoughts and comments on the private parking sector. A summary of the responses was made available on 11 May 2016 by my Department. I am considering responses to the discussion paper, and options for further reform.

**■ Planning Permission: Fees and Charges****Craig Whittaker:** [\[59554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to allow local authorities to charge different rates to those set nationally for processing planning applications.

**Gavin Barwell:**

*[Holding answer 13 January 2017]:* We have consulted on future options for planning application fees. We will announce a way forward shortly.

**CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT****■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Credit Unions****Gareth Thomas:** [\[58447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department permits its employees to join a credit union through payroll deductions; and if she will make a statement.

**Matt Hancock:**

DCMS staff can make arrangements to contribute to a credit union via direct debit.

**■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Labour Mobility****Tom Brake:** [\[59140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many civil servants in each unit of her Department are in the redeployment pool.

**Matt Hancock:**

My department does not have a redeployment pool.

## ■ Horse Racing: Betting

**Philip Davies:**

[\[59583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with the Gambling Commission on the application of Tattersalls Rule 4 deductions.

**Tracey Crouch:**

One of the three licensing objectives that underpin the regulation of gambling in Great Britain is that it must be conducted in a fair and open way.

Earlier this month I wrote to the Gambling Commission to ask for their views on the application of Tattersalls Rule 4 deductions and I will consider the Commission's response carefully.

## ■ Mental Health Services: Finance

**Luciana Berger:**

[\[59891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health of February 2016, how much money from the Life Chances Fund has been allocated; to which contracts that money has been allocated; in which local authority each contract is located; and how much has been allocated to each contract.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

Applications to the £80m Life Chances Fund go through a two-stage process. In the first phase, applicants submit an expression of interest. If successful, applicants are then invited to develop a full application for funding. Final decisions on the allocation of the outcomes fund will be taken between July 2017 and July 2018 as applications are received and assessed.

## ■ Sports: Listed Events

**Mrs Helen Grant:**

[\[59903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will update the qualifying criteria for television channels to broadcast sport under the listed events regime to ensure that coverage of major sporting events remains available to all television viewers.

**Matt Hancock:**

The government has been clear that the system is working, but that it will keep this area under review to ensure that the nation's most-loved sporting events remain available on free-to-air television.

**DEFENCE**■ **Aircraft Carriers****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[59336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with his French counterpart on the continued collaboration of aircraft carrier capabilities after HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales are commissioned.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

France and the UK enjoy a close Defence relationship, spanning a diverse set of capabilities. As the only two European nations capable of fielding credible carrier strike into the future, we already collaborate strongly on carrier capabilities and interoperability, and this will endure and strengthen once HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH and HMS PRINCE OF WALES are commissioned.

The next UK-France Naval Staff talks, this spring, include Carrier collaboration as one of the headline agenda items.

■ **Armed Forces: Northern Ireland****Tom Blenkinsop:**[\[59720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he has taken to protect members of the armed services who served in Operation Banner from persistent legal claims.

**Mike Penning:**

Members of the Armed Forces, including veterans, who face legal action as a result of their service in Northern Ireland during Operation BANNER are offered and helped with legal and pastoral support, by the Ministry of Defence and the chain of command.

■ **Army****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[59886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans for (a) 1 Armoured Infantry Brigade and (b) 2 Armoured Infantry brigade to reach initial operational capacity; and when he plans for (i) 1 Armoured Infantry brigade and (ii) 2 Armoured Infantry brigade to reach full operational capacity.

**Mike Penning:**

The British Army currently has three armoured infantry brigades: 1st Armoured Infantry Brigade; 12th Armoured Infantry Brigade; and 20th Armoured Infantry Brigade. Under the refinements to the Army 2020 structures announced by written ministerial statement on 15 December 2016 (HCWS367), the Army will modernise its ability to fight at divisional level. It will be re-organised to consist of four brigades: two armoured infantry brigades (retaining 12th Armoured Infantry Brigade and 20th Armoured Infantry Brigade in this role) and the two new innovative Strike brigades

## ■ Army: Hotels

**Tim Farron:**

[\[59163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much his Department spent on hotel accommodation for soldiers in the UK, by each hotel, in 2016.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The total cost of hotel accommodation booked by Army personnel for detached duty between 1 January 2016 - 31 December 2016 was £8.04 million. This figure does not include hotel costs incurred for temporary substitute living accommodation (i.e. in situations where suitable military or substitute rental accommodation was not available). Such accommodation is provided through a contract and hotel costs incurred by the contractor are not available.

I am withholding the breakdown of the provided cost as its disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the security and safety of the Armed Forces.

## ■ Astute Class Submarines

**Sir Nicholas Soames:**

[\[59193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the construction period was for (a) HMS Astute, (b) HMS Ambush and (c) HMS Artful.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

All aspects of the construction period of a submarine are encompassed within the build period, measured from the start of manufacture to operational handover to the Royal Navy.

Using this metric the build time for HMS Astute was 170 months, HMS Ambush was 149 months, and HMS Artful was 137 months.

## ■ Clyde Naval Base: Military Police

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[59112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Ministry of Defence Police officers are deployed to patrol in the civilian areas beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport.

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[59113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, by how much Ministry of Defence Police have increased in the civilian areas beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport in the last (a) 12 and (b) 24 months.

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[59114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the Ministry of Defence Police first patrolled the civilian areas beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department consulted Police Scotland before the Ministry of Defence Police began patrolling beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, under whose command Ministry of Defence police officers are when on operational duty in the civilian areas beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Ministry of Defence police officers carry firearms when on duty beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what extra training Ministry of Defence police officers receive before going on duty beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, who allocates what duties are to be performed by Ministry of Defence police officers before they go on duty beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to expand the role of Ministry of Defence police officers in the civilian areas beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what changes in circumstances made it necessary that the Ministry of Defence Police should start patrolling in the civilian areas beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what role the Ministry of Defence Police fulfil in the civilian areas beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport that Police Scotland currently (a) do not and (b) cannot.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Ministry of Defence (MOD) Police officers have historically routinely undertaken external unarmed patrols in the vicinity of Her Majesty's Naval Base Clyde, which includes the Royal Naval Armaments Depot Coulport. In 2003, as part of the overall protective security arrangements for both establishments, MOD introduced armed



external patrols following full consultation with the then Strathclyde Police and local community stakeholders. This agreement remains extant with the Police Service of Scotland.

The extent of MOD Police patrol activity is determined as part of the Naval Base security arrangements and are covered by an agreement with Police Scotland. MOD Police officers are trained to national police standards and remain under the operational command of the Chief Constable of MOD Police whilst on external patrols. Responsibility for the maintenance and enforcement of the law in Scotland rests with the Chief Constable of Police Scotland.

There has been no increase to routine MOD Police patrols outside the two establishments during the last 24 months although the MOD keeps security at all of its establishments under review and there are no current plans to expand these external patrols. Any proposals to increase external MOD Police patrols would be agreed with Police Scotland.

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[59116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what formal arrangement is in place between Police Scotland and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Police regarding the division or delegation of responsibilities when the MoD Police goes on patrol in the civilian areas beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot At Coulport.

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[59117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what formal coordination and communication mechanisms are in place between the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Police and Police Scotland for during and after an incident when the MoD Police goes on patrol in the civilian areas beyond the perimeter of HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport.

**Mark Lancaster:**

All Ministry of Defence (MOD) Police activities that take place in areas beyond the perimeter of Her Majesty's Naval Base Clyde, which includes the Royal Naval Armaments Depot Coulport, are covered by a joint agreement between the MOD Police and Police Scotland. This agreement includes details of the command and control arrangements that would apply in the event of an incident and is supported by regular dialogue at both local and Force Headquarters levels.

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[59123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what change there has been in the number of police officers at HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport in the last 12 months.

**Mark Lancaster:**

There has been no change to the total number of Ministry of Defence Police officers required at these establishments in the last 12 months.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department has plans in place to increase the number of Ministry of Defence police officers at HMNB Clyde and the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport in the next 12 months.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Our security arrangements are frequently tested and kept under continual review. We do not comment on specific site security arrangements.

## ■ Defence Academy

**Tom Brake:** [\[59348\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the total annual expenditure of the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom was in each year from 2010 to 2016.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The total annual expenditure of the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom for the financial years (FY) 2010 to 2016 is as follows:

FY	NET EXPENDITURE (£MILLION)
2009-10	137.6
2010-11	132.3
2011-12	130.2
2012-13	137.4
2013-14	141.6
2014-15	142.8
2015-16	135.5

**Tom Brake:** [\[59485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what proportion of expenditure by the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom was classified as official development assistance between 2010 and 2016.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Prior to 2013, the Department did not routinely collate details of Official Development Assistance (ODA) activity to enable a detailed breakdown of ODA spend; consolidated figures for 2016 are not yet available. ODA-eligible Defence Academy activity funded from the Conflict Security and Stabilisation Fund (CSSF) is included from 2014 onwards.

The proportion of Defence Academy expenditure classified as ODA for the period 2013 to 2015 is circa:

2013 - 1.7%

2014 - 2.3%

2015 - 2.5%

## ■ Defence: Policy

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[59887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Government plans to publish a defence industrial strategy.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The Ministry of Defence is actively involved in cross-government work on industrial strategy. We do not plan a separate defence industrial strategy. However, we are developing a National Shipbuilding Strategy, which will be informed by Sir John Parker's independent report, and we are making a significant long-term investment in the UK's defence nuclear enterprise. There are no plans for further sector strategies, but we will keep this position under review, noting that we already have a substantial amount of work under way to encourage the growth and competitiveness of UK industry, including as part of the commitment in the Strategic Defence and Security Review to refresh defence industrial policy.

## ■ European Defence Agency: Staff

**Conor McGinn:**

[\[59896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many UK citizens are (a) employed by and (b) on secondment to the European Defence Agency.

**Mike Penning:**

The European Defence Agency currently employs 11 British Citizens with a further two British Citizens working as Seconded National Experts.

## ■ HMS Lancaster

**Sir Nicholas Soames:**

[\[59197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when HMS Lancaster is planned to commence her refit; and what her duties are planned to be until that refit commences.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

On current plans, the refit for HMS LANCASTER will commence in mid-2017. She is presently alongside in Portsmouth and is maintained with a minimal ship's company until her refit.

## ■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[59884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions his Department has had with (a) Lockheed Martin, (b) BAE Systems and (c) the US Department of Defense on maintaining the current level of UK-build content for the F-35 Lightning II programme.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The UK build content on F-35 remains stable and unchanged, with UK industry building around 15% by value of each of an estimated 3,000 F-35 aircraft. The F-35 production programme and its supply chain was established a number of years ago and we hold regular discussions with the US Department of Defense and others on all aspects of the programme. Separately, the UK has been selected as a global repair hub for F-35 components which also provides significant F-35 support work for the UK.

**■ Military Bases: Religious Buildings****Nia Griffith:**[\[59184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 9 May 2016 to Question 35843 to the hon. Member for Bridgend, what the outcomes were of the pilot project implemented to explore registering Ministry of Defence sites for civil marriages and partnerships including same-sex unions.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The pilot project identified a number of sites that may be suitable for registration to carry out civil marriages and partnerships.

Officials visited these sites to identify those which would be most likely to meet the requirements for licensing for civil marriages without impacting Ministry of Defence (MOD) operations or Security.

Officials are in discussion with the Registrar General regarding how best to implement their Guidance on the approval of sites for use for civil marriages and partnerships to MOD sites, after which the shortlisted sites will be taken through the local authority run licencing process which can take up to 12 weeks per site.

In addition sites in Scotland can also be used for civil marriages and partnerships without registration. Any request to use Scottish sites for civil marriages and partnerships would be dependent on security and ongoing MOD training use.

If the initial registration of sites through the pilot project is successful, and once MOD has a clear understanding of the process, other sites will be considered for submission as suitable venues.

**■ Ministry of Defence Police: Recruitment****Brendan O'Hara:**[\[59183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department is on target to recruit sufficient Ministry of Defence Police officers to ensure that the force is at no less than 95 per cent of its agreed strength by 31 March 2017.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Yes.

**■ Ministry of Defence Police: Vacancies**

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many vacancies there are within the Ministry of Defence Police.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The total number of vacancies across the Ministry of Defence Police as at 31 December 16 was 175.

**■ Ministry of Defence: Labour Mobility**

**Tom Brake:** [\[59141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many civil servants in each unit of his Department are in the redeployment pool.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The number of civil servants in the Ministry of Defence Redeployment Pool, broken down by their employing Top Level Budget, is set out below.

TOP LEVEL BUDGET	NUMBER
Air Command	3
Army	42
Defence Infrastructure Organisation	0
Defence Equipment and Support	5
Head Office and Corporate Services	6
Joint Force Command	8
Navy Command	9
Total	73

**■ Ministry of Defence: Re-employment**

**Mr David Lammy:** [\[59172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many members of staff who ceased to be employed by his Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies in the last three years have subsequently been re-employed by his Department on a temporary basis or as a third-party contractor or consultant.

**Mark Lancaster:**

A total of 51 staff who ceased to be employed by the Department between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2016 were re-employed subsequently as civil servants on a temporary basis.

Data relating to the number of staff who ceased to be employed by the Department during the last three years, and have subsequently been re-employed as a third-party contractor or consultant, is not held.

■ **Nuclear Weapons: Transport**

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** [\[59203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with the (a) Scottish Government and (b) local authorities in Scotland on the safety framework for nuclear convoys travelling through Scotland.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

A wide range of safety and contingency measures are in place to ensure the safe movement of Defence Nuclear Materials throughout the UK. These are regulated and assessed by the Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator. Ministry of Defence officials have regular discussions with all relevant agencies including local authorities and emergency services, the Police and National Traffic Information Services, including those in Scotland.

■ **Police: Ministry of Defence**

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to increase its funding for non-Ministry of Defence policing in 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[59263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department plans to increase its funding for community policing in 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Our community Policing arrangements are kept under continual review.

■ **USA: Military Alliances**

**Lucy Powell:** [\[59577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 10 March 2016 to Question 30085, on unmanned air vehicles: deployment, whether the UK-US Memorandum of Understanding remains valid; and whether the provisions of that Understanding have been enacted by either party since 10 March 2016.

**Mike Penning:**

The UK-US Memorandum of Understanding that enables interoperability of UK and US Reaper aircraft by both nations remains valid but has not been enacted since 10 March 2016.

## ■ Veterans: Military Decorations

**Stephen Kinnock:**

**[59502]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent meetings he has had with campaign groups on the potential introduction of the National Defence Medal to recognise the contribution of veterans.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Defence Ministers and officials have had no recent meetings with National Defence Medal campaign groups.

For details of our position on this matter I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 14 December 2015 to Question 19127 to the hon. Member for Great Grimsby (Melanie Onn).

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2015-12-08/19127/>

**Attachments:**

1. 19127 - WQnA extract on Veterans Military Medals  
[20151214\_19127\_WQnA\_extract\_on\_Veterans\_Military\_Decorations.docx]

## ■ Warships

**Sir Nicholas Soames:**

**[59194]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when construction is planned to commence on the new Fleet Solid Capital Support ships; how many such ships there are planned to be; and when those ships will enter service.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The programme for three Fleet Solid Support Ships was announced in the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015. It is currently in its Assessment Phase.

The date from which the ships will enter service will be determined at the main investment decision point.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Department for Education: Buildings

**Angela Rayner:**

**[59824]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answers of 13 December 2016 to Question 56731 and of 12 January 2017 to Question 58008, on the Skills Funding Agency, which jobs her Department plans to relocate to which location from each of the three offices due to be closed by 31 March 2017.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

There were 70 staff affected by the three office closures at the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) – 34 in Birmingham, 24 in Reading and 12 in Plymouth. 10 members of staff opted to take voluntary exit. The 60 remaining staff are from the range of functions

across the SFA and are across the whole range of grades. The office based staff will move to the Bristol, Coventry or London offices, or become homeworkers. Geographical workers will be linked to Coventry but remain working more flexibly across their area.

## ■ Department for Education: Policy

**Dan Jarvis:**

**[59868]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will provide a comprehensive list of the public policy targets established by her Department (a) between 2010 and May 2015 and (b) since May 2015.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The Department has established a range of public policy targets as a commitment to delivery of our priorities. For the current period to 2020, these include establishing 500 new free schools, delivering 3 million new apprenticeships and rolling out 30 hours' free childcare each week for working parents of three-and four-year-olds.

A list of existing commitments can be found in the Department's business plans, and Single Departmental Plan . These are published online, and are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dfe-business-plans>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-education-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020>

## ■ Disability: Children

**Catherine McKinnell:**

**[59757]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what safeguards her Department has in place to ensure that all local authorities commission short breaks for disabled children; and if she will make a statement.

**Edward Timpson:**

Since 2011, local authorities have been under a duty to provide a range of short breaks services and to publish a local Short Breaks Duty Statement showing what services are available, how they are responding to the needs of local parent carers, and how short breaks can be accessed, including any eligibility criteria. Local authorities are responsible for funding this short breaks provision.

The Department's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Advisory Team is offering support and challenge to local authorities to help make sure they meet all of their statutory requirements on SEND, and that quality continues to improve. There are also opportunities through the new Ofsted/Care Quality Commission SEND inspections framework for local areas to consider how well they are providing for the education, health and care needs of those with SEND, including their need for short breaks services.

Between April 2015 and March 2016, we awarded £250,555 to the Short Breaks Partnership (a consortium made up of Contact a Family, the Council for Disabled



Children, Action for Children, and KIDS) to provide information and advice to those involved in designing, commissioning, providing, and taking up short breaks for disabled children. The Department for Education has allocated £200m funding over the next four years to support innovation and improvement to children's social work practice. We are currently considering how we could potentially use some of this funding to support local innovative approaches to short breaks for disabled children and their families and for making services more accessible.

## ■ Educational Psychology

**Ian Austin:**

**[59084]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many educational psychologists were employed in all local authorities in each year since 2010.

**Nick Gibb:**

The head count of educational psychologists reported as employed by all local authorities in England in November each year since 2010 is provided in the table below. Because not all local authorities provide the information requested (only 68-74%) these figures will understate the actual number of educational psychologists in each year.

2010	1,900
2011	1,750
2012	1,700
2013	1,700
2014	1,750
2015	1,650

Source: School Workforce Census. Figures are rounded to the nearest 50.

## ■ English Language: Education

**Paul Scully:**

**[58660]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an assessment of the value to the economy of the teaching of English as a second language.

**Robert Halfon:**

Findings from a 2016 study of the economic benefits of learning maths and English in Further Education,[1] show that adults who achieve ESOL qualifications secure an average wage premium of 6%.

[1][https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/522300/bis-16-180-maths-english-learning.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/522300/bis-16-180-maths-english-learning.pdf)

## ■ GCSE: Disadvantaged

**Lucy Powell:**

**[59689]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what (a) proportion and (b) number of children eligible for free school meals who achieved five A to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics in each of the last three years attended a (i) maintained and (ii) grammar school.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department's main measures of secondary school performance are now Progress 8, Attainment 8, Ebacc achievement and entry and pupils achieving a Good Pass in mathematics and English. Progress 8 will be used to identify schools beneath the floor. The latest statistics are available in the 'GCSE and equivalent results: 2015 to 2016 (provisional) in England' National Statistics release[1], although breakdowns by pupil characteristics including free school meals is not available until 19 January 2017.

The table below provides the information for the last three years:

PUPILS KNOWN TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR FSM ACHIEVING 5+ A*-C GRADE GCSEs						
	2012/13		2013/14[2]		2014/15[3]	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Selective schools	574	92.6	556	93.9	510	92.4
All state-funded mainstream schools	32,286	39.8	27,007	35.3	25,332	34.9

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gcse-and-equivalent-results-2015-to-2016-provisional>

[2] In 2013/14, two major reforms were implemented which affect the calculation of key stage 4 performance measures data: 1) Professor Alison Wolf's Review of Vocational Education recommendations which: restrict the qualifications counted; prevent any qualification from counting as larger than one GCSE; and cap the number of non-GCSEs included in performance measures at two per pupil, and 2) an early entry policy to only count a pupil's first attempt at a qualification, in subjects counted in the English Baccalaureate. Consequently, the numbers supplied prior to 2013/14 are not comparable with those from 2013/14 onwards.

[3] In 2014/15, early entry policy, under which only a pupil's first attempt at a qualification is counted in performance measures, was extended to all subjects.

## ■ Politics: Education

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**

[59129]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of 11 to 16 year olds are studying compulsory politics in (a) grammar, (b) comprehensive, (c) academy and (d) all schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

We do not collect data on the curriculum provision of individual schools. Schools have the freedom to teach any subject or topic within their wider school curriculum.

Maintained schools, including grammar schools and comprehensive schools operating in the maintained schools sector, are required to teach the National Curriculum which includes the subject of Citizenship for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4.

The Citizenship programmes of study are designed to ensure pupils have the knowledge to enable them to play a full and active part in society, and are organised around core knowledge about democracy, government, and how laws are made and upheld. Citizenship education should equip pupils with the knowledge to explore political and social issues, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments.

## ■ Pre-school Education

**Lucy Powell:**

[59688]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the gross local authority expenditure was on Sure Start Children's Centres and early years provision in each local authority area in each year since 2010.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

Since April 2010 local authorities have reported expenditure on children's centres (combined with early years) through annual Section 251 returns. This information is published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-local-authority-school-finance-data#local-authority-and-school-finance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/section-251-materials>.

Planned expenditure on early years provision in each local authority is published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-local-authority-school-finance-data#planned-local-authority-and-school-spending->

Early years expenditure was not separately recorded until 2013-14, therefore data is not available for 2010 to 2013. Prior to 2013-14, early years funding was part of the total dedicated schools grant allocated to each local authority.

**Lucy Powell:**

[59690]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many two, three and four year olds in state-funded 15 hours' early education are in settings which are rated (a) requires improvement and (b) inadequate.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The data requested is published in Tables 14LA and 15LA of the 'Provision for Children Under 5 years of age' Statistical First Release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/education-provision-children-under-5-years-of-age-january-2016>.

■ **Skills Funding Agency**

**Helen Goodman:** [59755]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what skills, knowledge and experience is required to hold a senior manager post in the Skills Funding Agency.

**Helen Goodman:** [59756]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the job description is for a senior manager in the Skills Funding Agency.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The attached job description highlights the skills, knowledge and experience required to hold a senior manager position within the Skills Funding Agency.

**Attachments:**

1. Skills Funding Agency - G7 Senior Manager [SFA - G7 Senior Manager Job Description.docx]

■ **Students: Disability**

**Mr George Howarth:** [59179]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government plans to take to ensure that steering groups include an assessment of the provision of support for disabled students in final area-based review reports; and what steps it plans to take where such provision is not covered in those reports.

**Robert Halfon:**

The Joint Area Review Delivery Unit which supports the individual reviews and works with the local steering groups, including local authorities as commissioners, oversee the reviews to make sure that the learning needs of all residents, including those with additional learning needs or disabilities are considered. A summary of the steering group consideration is included in each report. We will amend all of the published reports where required to properly reflect that disability as well as additional learning needs has been considered in each of the reviews.

In some cases the consideration of need may result in recommendations for the development of additional learning provision or structural change and this will be reflected in the reports.

## ■ Students: Finance

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

[\[59865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the White Paper, Educational Excellence Everywhere, published in March 2016, what progress has been made on establishing a fund to help the brightest students in state schools to fulfil their potential.

**Nick Gibb:**

In the Educational Excellence Everywhere White Paper, the Government committed to 'investigate, fund and evaluate approaches to help the brightest students in state schools to fulfil their potential'.

The Government is currently consulting on plans which will help to create more opportunities for all pupils, including the most able, through proposals to increase the number of good schools places, including selective places. In addition, Departmental officials are assessing the best ways to support the most academically able pupils across the full range of state schools, particularly those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. We will announce our plans in due course.

## ■ Teachers: Greater London

**Stephen Timms:**

[\[59832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to (a) attract and (b) retain newly-qualified teachers in (i) disadvantaged schools and (ii) deprived areas in Greater London.

**Nick Gibb:**

Improving teacher quality is vital to improving educational outcomes for pupils wherever they are in the country; high-quality teachers are the single most important factor determining how well pupils achieve in schools.

At a national level we are retaining and recruiting the teachers we need. We recognise, however, that the strengthening economy and growth in pupil numbers have made the situation more challenging and that this is more acute in certain subjects and particular schools or areas of the country. We are therefore spending over £1.3bn in the five years to 2020 to attract high-quality new entrants to the profession; and we are actively addressing issues that lead teachers to consider leaving the profession, such as unnecessary workload and poor pupil behaviour.

Furthermore, we are funding the expansion of Teach First, getting top graduates into schools facing the most challenging circumstances; this year over 280 Teach First trainees are training in London schools. Many schools are now participating in programmes that allow them to train their own new teachers, including School Direct programmes, which are training over 10,600 postgraduates this year – including over 1,800 through teacher training providers in London. School Direct Lead Schools are encouraged to work with at least one partner school that requires improvement. We

are also continuing to fund targeted leadership programmes that develop high-potential middle and senior leaders working in challenging schools and areas.

■ **Teachers: West Yorkshire**

**Craig Whittaker:**

[\[59652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to (a) attract and (b) retain newly-qualified teachers in (i) disadvantaged schools and (ii) deprived areas in West Yorkshire.

**Nick Gibb:**

Improving teacher quality is vital to improving educational outcomes for pupils wherever they are in the country; high-quality teachers are the single most important factor determining how well pupils achieve in schools.

At a national level we are retaining and recruiting the teachers we need. We recognise, however, that the strengthening economy and growth in pupil numbers have made the situation more challenging and that this is more acute in certain subjects and particular schools or areas of the country. We are therefore spending over £1.3bn in the five years to 2020 to attract high-quality new entrants to the profession; and we are actively addressing issues that lead teachers to consider leaving the profession, such as unnecessary workload and poor pupil behavior.

As part of the recently published Northern Powerhouse Strategy, we will design, fund and test a range of approaches to attracting and retaining high-quality teachers in the North, including West Yorkshire. We will look to engage the regions and the sector as we work up plans. We will provide more details on this in spring 2017.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ **Agriculture and Environment: Public Consultation**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[59821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will publish (a) an environment and (b) a food and farming green paper before Article 50 is triggered.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Government will publish these two Green papers soon. This is not connected to the timetable of triggering Article 50.

■ **Agriculture: Regulation**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[59898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to her Department's press release of 4 January 2017, Environment Secretary pledges cuts to farming red tape, which regulations she plans to end after the UK has left the EU; and what plans she has to consult on those plans.

**George Eustice:**

Leaving the EU provides a unique opportunity to deliver policy outcomes more efficiently and release farmers from red tape.

Defra will publish a Green Paper shortly, which will set out a new vision for the food and farming industry outside of the EU. Through this we will consult widely in order to develop a clear strategy with a focus on a common sense approach that works for our farmers.

**■ Agriculture: Subsidies****Rachael Maskell:**[\[59825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 20 December 2016 to Question 57962, on agricultural subsidies, how many 2015 Basic Payment Scheme claims have not yet been paid due to (a) probate and (b) other legal proceedings.

**George Eustice:**

As of the 12<sup>th</sup> January, for BPS 2015 there are 24 claims waiting on the completion of probate and a further 52 claims waiting on the resolution of other proceedings

**Rachael Maskell:**[\[59899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 20 December 2016 to Question 57962, on agricultural subsidies, how many new queries on unpaid 2015 Basic Payment Scheme claims were received by the Rural Payments Agency in 2016; and how many such claims are under investigation.

**George Eustice:**

Claimants were asked to contact the Rural Payments Agency with any queries on their Basic Payment Scheme 2015 payments throughout 2016. As of 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017 there are 2,397 claims still under review.

**■ Beef: Prices****Ms Margaret Ritchie:**[\[59900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the average price of beef is in (a) Northern Ireland and (b) the UK.

**George Eustice:**

The average clean cattle price in 2016 for Northern Ireland was 319.37 pence/kg and the price in GB was 330.59 pence/kg.

**■ Beverage Containers: Recycling****Richard Burden:**[\[59662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions (a) she and (b) Ministers and officials of her Department have had with coffee chain companies on the disposal and recycling of take-away cups.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

This Government remains committed to recycling and will be consulting widely on our plans for resources, waste and recycling in developing our 25 year environment plan engagement framework. We also continue to work with businesses, local authorities and waste managers on policies and initiatives to encourage recycling.

Defra Ministers, officials and I have had a number of discussions with a range of stakeholders in drawing up our 25 year environmental plan and in developing ongoing policy; as part of these discussions, companies and representative trade organisations will raise issues and ideas about specific products or treatments.

As part of our ongoing stakeholder engagement, Defra officials were involved in discussions regarding the development of the Paper Cup Recycling and Recovery Group Manifesto and attended its launch on 27 June 2016. This manifesto aims to significantly increase paper cup recycling rates by 2020 and includes coffee chain companies as signatories.

**Richard Burden:**[\[59663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to improve recycling solutions for polyethylene-lined paper cups.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for West Ham, Lyn Brown, on 9 September 2016, PQ UIN 44382.

**■ Bovine Tuberculosis****Dan Jarvis:**[\[59828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what support her Department provides to farmers who have cattle infected with tuberculosis.

**George Eustice:**

TB reactors disclosed on affected farms are removed and compensation is paid for any cattle compulsorily slaughtered as a result of TB. Farmers are given full support and guidance throughout this process.

The Government is taking strong action to deliver a long-term plan to eradicate the disease and protect the future of our dairy and beef industries. Our comprehensive strategy includes strengthening cattle testing and movement controls, improving biosecurity on farm and when trading, and badger control in areas where TB is rife.

**■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: EU Law****Kirsty Blackman:**[\[59841\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which EU directives relating to her Department's responsibilities are awaiting transposition into UK law.



**George Eustice:**

The UK remains a member of the EU until we leave, with full rights and obligations of membership. This includes transposing EU legislation into UK law.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is aware of the following directives relating to the Department's responsibilities for which transposition is planned:

DIRECTIVE	TITLE
2013/51/EURATOM	Directive 2013/51/EURATOM of 22 October 2013 laying down requirements for the protection of the health of the general public with regard to radioactive substances in water intended for human consumption.
2014/97/EU	Commission Implementing Directive 2014/97/EU of 15 October 2014 implementing Council Directive 2008/90/EC as regards the registration of suppliers and of varieties and the common list of varieties.
2014/96/EU	Commission Implementing Directive 2014/96/EU of 15 October 2014 on the requirements for the labelling, sealing and packaging of fruit plant propagating material and fruit plants intended for fruit production, falling within the scope of Council Directive 2008/90/EC.
2014/98/EU	Commission Implementing Directive 2014/98/EU of 15 October 2014 implementing Council Directive 2008/90/EC as regards specific requirements for the genus and species of fruit plants referred to in Annex I thereto, specific requirements to be met by suppliers and detailed rules concerning official inspections.
2015/412/EU	Commission Directive 2015/412/EU of 11 March 2015 amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in their

DIRECTIVE	TITLE
	territory.
2015/996/EU	Commission Directive (EU) 2015/996 of 19 May 2015 establishing common noise assessment methods according to Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council.
2015/1480/EU	Commission Directive (EU) 2015/1480 of 28 August 2015 amending several annexes to Directives 2004/107/EC and 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down the rules concerning reference methods, data validation and location of sampling points for the assessment of ambient air quality.
2015/1787/EU	Commission Directive (EU) 2015/1787 of 6 October 2015 amending Annexes II and III to Council Directive 98/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption.
2015/2193/EU	Commission Directive (EU) 2015/2193 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from medium combustion plants.
2015/2203/EU	Commission Implementing Directive EU) 2015/2203 of 25 November 2015 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to caseins and caseinates intended for human consumption and repealing Council Directive 83/417/EEC
2016/11/EU	Commission Implementing Directive 2016/11 of 5 January 2016 amending Annex II to Council Directive 2002/57/EC on the marketing of seed oil and fibre plants.
2016/317/EU	Commission Implementing Directive (EU) 2016/317 of 3 March 2016 amending Council Directives 66/401/EEC, 66/402/EEC, 2002/54/EC, 2002/55/EC, 2002/56/EC and 2002/57/EC as regards the official label of seed packages.

DIRECTIVE	TITLE
2016/2284/EU	Commission Implementing Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of 14 December 2016 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants, amending Directive 2003/35/EC and repealing Directive 2001/81/EC.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Labour Mobility**

**Tom Brake:** [59143]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many civil servants in each unit of her Department are in the redeployment pool.

**George Eustice:**

As of the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2017, there are three individuals in the redeployment pool.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Policy**

**Dan Jarvis:** [59869]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will provide a comprehensive list of the public policy targets established by her Department (a) between 2010 and May 2015 and (b) since May 2015.

**George Eustice:**

Public policy targets between 2010 and May 2015 under the Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government are held by the National Archives

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20151013142002/http://transparency.numb](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20151013142002/http://transparency.numbler10.gov.uk/business-plan-pdf/10)  
[er10.gov.uk/business-plan-pdf/10](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20151013142002/http://transparency.numbler10.gov.uk/business-plan-pdf/10)

Public policy targets since 2015 are included in Defra's Single Departmental Plan which includes manifesto commitments. This plan was last updated in September 2016 and will be updated at regular intervals.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020/single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020)  
[2020/single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020/single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020)

■ **Fisheries: Iceland**

**Melanie Onn:** [59759]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department plans to offer assistance to British seafood processing firms in the event that the Icelandic fishermen's strike continues beyond 13 January 2017.

**Melanie Onn:** [\[59760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate her Department has made of the cost of the Icelandic fishermen's strike on British seafood processing businesses.

**Melanie Onn:** [\[59761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions Ministers of her Department have held with the Icelandic Ambassador on the Icelandic fishermen's strike.

**Melanie Onn:** [\[59762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether Ministers of her Department have held discussions with British seafood processing firms on potential disruption to their resources caused by the Icelandic fishermen's strike.

**Melanie Onn:** [\[59763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether Ministers of her Department have made representations to the companies involved in the ongoing dispute with Icelandic fishermen on the contribution of seafood imports to the British food processing sector.

**George Eustice:**

British seafood companies have not sought a meeting with Ministers about this issue, nor have Ministers raised this issue with the Icelandic Ambassador and the Department has not modelled the impact of the strike on UK seafood businesses. The international trade section of Seafish, the UK-wide industry levy funded Non-Departmental Public Body, provides information to domestic seafood processors on overseas markets should they require assistance on identifying alternative sources of supply.

## ■ Flood Control

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[59815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 22 December 2016 to Question 57991, on flood control, if she will publish the infrastructure companies' initial assessments of their vulnerable sites referred to in that Answer.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Government will not publish the assessments carried out by utility providers as they are sensitive in both commercial and security terms.

## ■ Flood Control: Cost Effectiveness

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[59814]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 10 January 2017 to Question 58346, on flood control, what efficiencies have been identified to achieve the target savings listed in that Answer.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Environment Agency's 6 year capital investment programme for flood and coastal erosion risk management will reduce the flood risk for at least 300,000 homes between 2015/16 and 2021.

Efficiency savings in the capital programme have been identified in the following categories:

- innovation and value engineering - where innovative solutions, methods or materials have been used to achieve the same result at reduced cost
- packaging and programming - where similar projects have been delivered together more efficiently
- controlling project scope - for example, by maintaining focus on original project outcomes
- contracting approach - for example, where contracts encourage consultants and contractors to deliver more efficiently
- streamlining - for example where co-located teams or systems improvements have led to reduced costs
- standardisation and building information modelling (BIM) - where existing designs, documents and best practice have been used
- operational productivity
- bulk buying and economies of scale

## ■ Floods: Property Development

**Craig Whittaker:**

**[59651]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department has taken with the Department for Communities and Local Government to ensure that local authorities take account of flooding issues when producing their local development plans.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Departments work together closely to ensure flood risk is an important consideration in the planning system. Local planning authorities must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework when preparing Local Plans. The Framework sets out strict tests to protect people and property from flooding which all local planning authorities are expected to follow. The Framework is clear that Local

Plans should be supported by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and take account of flooding advice from the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authorities.

Local Plans are examined by a planning inspector who will assess whether a plan is sound, including whether it is consistent with national planning policy. A local authority can only adopt a Local Plan that has been found sound.

## ■ Food: Waste

**Craig Whittaker:**

[\[59653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the feasibility of bringing forward legislative proposals to reduce the practice by large food retailers of destroying or disposing of unsold food.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Government favours a voluntary approach to the prevention of food waste, including the redistribution of surplus food to feed people. A law focused on the redistribution of surplus food from supermarkets would not resolve the barriers to redistribution. Research published by the Waste and Resources Action Programme in May 2016 indicates that supermarkets only produce around 200,000 tonnes of the 10 million tonnes of food waste which arise each year in the UK. Our approach is to work with the whole supply chain through the voluntary Courtauld 2025 agreement.

## ■ Lions: Hunting

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

[\[59271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 13 December 2016 to Question 56691, what steps her Department has taken to identify the (a) country of origin of the lion trophies identified and (b) country that exported those trophies in 2015.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Under the provisions of Article 4.(b)(i) of EC CITES Regulation 338/97 it is a requirement that an export permit is issued by the CITES Management Authority of the country exporting the specimen, and is presented before the UK CITES Management Authority issues an import permit.

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[\[59331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 27 June 2016 to Question 40644, what recent assessment she has made of improvements in the way lion hunting takes place; what criteria are used to measure such improvements; and if she will make a statement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Defra is continuing to look carefully at the issue of lion hunting and trophy imports.

At the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) in September 2016, which I attended, Parties agreed to remove a loophole allowing hunting trophies to be

transported as personal effects. Parties also agreed clear criteria which the exporting country should consider when assessing that the hunt was both legal and sustainable before issuing an export permit.

In the case of lions, the UK has to then confirm that we agree with this assessment and issue a corresponding import permit before any import can take place. As part of this process, the UK's scientific advisors for fauna, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, considers whether the import would be harmful to the conservation of the species or the extent of its range, taking into account available scientific evidence. An import permit is only issued if the trade is not considered to be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.

### ■ Plastic Bags: Fees and Charges

**Craig Whittaker:**

[\[59622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of charges for plastic carrier bags; and whether she has plans to increase the number of retailers who are required to levy those charges.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The 5p charge on single use carrier bags was brought in for England in October 2015 and so far it has been highly effective at reducing consumption: early data suggests it will lead to six billion fewer plastic bags being issued in the first year of the charge (over seven billion carrier bags were issued by seven main retailers in 2014). The charge in England has also resulted in donations of more than £29 million from retailers towards good causes including charities and community groups.

Any additional change in policy would require an assessment of cost and efficacy implications. The Single Use Carrier Bags Charges (England) Order 2015 requires the Secretary of State to carry out a review of this Order before 5 October 2020.

### ■ Plastics: Packaging

**Craig Whittaker:**

[\[59654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans her Department has to encourage large retailers to reduce excess plastic packaging of products bought (a) in retail stores and (b) online.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Twickenham, Dr Tania Mathias, on 7 December 2016, PQ UIN 55985.

### ■ Polar Regions: Environment Protection

**David Mackintosh:**

[\[59053\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her overseas counterparts on proposals to protect the Last Ice Area and its polar bear population.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Defra has had no recent discussions with our overseas counterparts on proposals to protect the Last Ice Area. We were however pleased that polar bear range countries committed to the first-ever circumpolar, 10 year action plan in 2015 to protect and manage the bears and their habitat. The UK supports this collaborative approach as the way forward to ensure the long term conservation of the species.

**FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ **Alexander Adamescu****David T. C. Davies:**[\[59827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his counterpart in the Romanian government on the case of Alexander Adamescu.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The Foreign Secretary and I have had no discussions with my Romanian counterpart on this case.

■ **Egypt: Politics and Government****Tom Brake:**[\[59254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government has taken to address restrictions on civil society in Egypt.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Ministers and senior officials regularly raise human rights concerns with the Egyptian authorities, including the restrictions on civil society.

The Prime Minister raised the ongoing 'Foreign Funding' NGO case with President Sisi when they last met on 20 September. She stressed the importance of NGOs being able to operate in Egypt. I made a statement on the reopening of the case in March, and I and senior officials have raised it with the Egyptian authorities on several occasions.

Following the Egyptian Parliament's passing of the draft Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) Law on 29 November, I made a statement (available on the gov.uk website) on 1 December and 13 January expressing our concern with the draft law and the restrictions it will enforce on civil society. Senior officials and I have raised concerns about the NGO law with the Egyptian Government and Parliament in private on a number of occasions. Senior officials raised this most recently on 11 January.



■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Conservative Friends of Israel**

**Sir Nicholas Soames:**

[\[59357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many meetings he has had with representatives of the Conservative Friends of Israel since taking office.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson) has not had any face-to-face meetings with Conservative Friends of Israel since taking office, but did speak at an event organised by Conservative Friends of Israel during the Conservative Party Conference in October 2016.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Visits Abroad**

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[59016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, for what reason meetings held during his 14 overseas visits between July and September 2016 were not published in his Department's transparency data for that period.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

Between July and September 2016 the current Foreign Secretary conducted 7 overseas trips, visiting 12 countries, as recorded in the latest Ministerial quarterly return. The return also details ministerial meetings with external organisations, as defined by Cabinet Office guidance. All the Foreign Secretary's relevant meetings in this period are included.

■ **Gaza and West Bank: Elections**

**Mr Ivan Lewis:**

[\[59251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support free and fair elections in the West Bank and Gaza.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We continue to call on the Palestinian leadership to work towards genuine and democratic elections for all Palestinians. Strong, inclusive and democratic institutions, based on respect of the rule of law and human rights, are crucial elements in establishing a viable and sovereign Palestinian State. Our Consulate General in Jerusalem has regularly discussed the local elections with senior Palestinian ministers and officials over the past months. Following the postponement of the elections, we have continued to urge all sides to make efforts to hold genuine and democratic local elections in the West Bank and Gaza in accordance with the law.

**■ Israel: Diplomatic Relations**

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [\[59355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many meetings Government special advisers had with Israeli embassy officials in 2016.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The special advisers to the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson) did not have any meetings with Israeli Embassy officials during 2016.

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [\[59358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many meetings he has had with Israeli embassy officials since taking office.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson) met the Israeli Ambassador to London in Jerusalem on 30 September.

**■ Israel: Diplomatic Service**

**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [\[59356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Israeli authorities as a result of recently reported comments made by an Israeli diplomat in respect of a Government Minister.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Israeli ambassador has apologised and been clear these comments do not reflect the views of the embassy or Government of Israel. The UK has a strong relationship with Israel and we consider the matter closed.

**■ Israel: Palestinians**

**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[59065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of progress made in achieving the objectives set out in the Paris Initiative in June 2016 on ending Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Ultimately, an agreement can only be achieved by direct negotiation between the parties. Solutions cannot be imposed from the outside - they need to be mutually agreed between the parties. But international action can play a role in supporting those bilateral efforts. The French conference in June 2016 identified economic incentives, civil society, and Palestinian capacity-building as key objectives. Working groups were set up for these areas but progress is ongoing.

**Tom Brake:**

[\[59347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will attend the Paris conference on Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories in January 2017.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK decided to attend the Paris Conference only as an observer and, in that capacity, we did not sign up to the Communiqué. Britain welcomes France's efforts to promote peace but we have been clear for some time that a conference so close to the change of US administration, and without the attendance of the two main parties, would not be the best way to make real progress on this complex issue.

## ■ Israeli Settlements

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[59064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) on progress towards a two-state solution to Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) is a clear reinforcement of the international community's conviction that a two state solution remains the only viable route to sustained Arab-Israeli peace. The resolution supports progress towards a two state solution by calling on all parties to exert collective efforts to launch credible negotiations on all final status issues and urging the intensification and acceleration of international and regional efforts to support a comprehensive peace.

## ■ Palestinians: LGBT People

**Mr Ivan Lewis:**

[\[59252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on the Palestinian Authority's commitment to equality for LGBT people in the Palestinian territories; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We are deeply concerned about the treatment of the LGBT community in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs), particularly in Gaza where they are subject to widespread social discrimination for cultural and religious reasons. Homosexuality remains a taboo subject in the OPTs. In some places, such as Ramallah, these taboos are relaxed, but in more conservative areas the situation is very challenging. There are no laws protecting LGBT people, although we are not aware of any recent legal cases targeting the LGBT community.

**■ Romania: Press Freedom****David T. C. Davies:** [\[59826\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his counterpart in the Romanian government on press freedom in that country.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The Foreign Secretary and I have had no discussions on this issue with the new Romanian government, which has been in office for just two weeks.

**■ Somaliland: Commonwealth****Andrew Rosindell:** [\[59373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what his Department's policy is on the bidding by Somaliland for Observer Status of the Commonwealth of Nations.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

There is no observer status or associate membership of the Commonwealth of Nations. The criteria for membership include the requirement to be a full sovereign state, and Somaliland is not internationally recognised. HMG's position has long been that it is for Somalia and Somaliland to decide their future, and for regional neighbours to take the lead in recognising any new arrangements.

**■ South Sudan: Peace Negotiations****Tom Brake:** [\[59276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts in the Troika on support for the peace process in South Sudan.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We work very closely with the US and Norway (our Troika partners) and other key international actors in support of the peace process. The UK Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan is in contact with his US and Norwegian counterparts at least once a week to ensure that our efforts to support the peace process are coordinated effectively, as part of our extensive bilateral and multilateral engagement with international and regional partners at both ministerial and official level.

**■ South Sudan: Visits Abroad****Tom Brake:** [\[59283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions the Minister for Africa and the Middle East had with opposition leaders during his recent visit to South Sudan.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

During my visit to Juba I met President Kiir, senior officials from the South Sudanese Government and civil society representatives, directly raising our concerns whilst also reiterating our support to the South Sudanese people. The majority of the South Sudanese opposition leaders are currently outside of the country; we maintain regular engagement with them through the UK Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan.

■ **Yazidis: Females****Helen Jones:**[\[59392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his European counterparts on providing support for Yazidi women who have escaped captivity by ISIS.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Alongside continued discussion with the Government of Iraq, Ministers and officials have ongoing discussions regarding the campaign to bring Daesh to justice with European counterparts, both in Brussels and in capitals. The campaign seeks to offer support to all Daesh's victims, including Yezidis who have been subject to horrific violence at the hands of Daesh.

**HEALTH**■ **Accident and Emergency Departments****Mr Chuka Umunna:**[\[59788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much the NHS spent on accident and emergency and urgent care services in each year since 2010.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The information is not available in the format requested.

The reference costs for accident and emergency and urgent care collected by healthcare resource groups (HRG) show an estimate of the total cost of accident and emergency (A&E) and urgent care for the last 6 years.

Total estimated cost of A&E and urgent care 2010-11 to 2015-16

YEAR	TOTAL ESTIMATED COST (£ BILLIONS)
2010-11	1.9
2011-12	2.0
2012-13	2.1

YEAR	TOTAL ESTIMATED COST (£ BILLIONS)
2013-14	2.3
2014-15	2.5
2015-16	2.7

*Source:* Reference costs, Department of Health

*Notes:*

- The following HRGs are included in the table:

VB01Z Any investigation with category 5 treatment

VB02Z Category 3 investigation with category 4 treatment

VB03Z Category 3 investigation with category 1-3 treatment

VB04Z Category 2 investigation with category 4 treatment

VB05Z Category 2 investigation with category 3 treatment

VB06Z Category 1 investigation with category 3-4 treatment

VB07Z Category 2 investigation with category 2 treatment

VB08Z Category 2 investigation with category 1 treatment

VB09Z Category 1 investigation with category 1-2 treatment

VB10Z Dental Care

VB11Z No investigation with no significant treatment

VBDOA <sup>1</sup> Emergency and urgent care: Dead On Arrival

VB99Z <sup>2</sup> Emergency Medicine, Patient Dead On Arrival

- Total costs are estimated from the unit costs and activity submitted in reference costs.

<sup>1</sup> 2010-11 only

<sup>2</sup> 2014-15 and 2015-16

## ■ Breast Cancer: Drugs

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**

**[59131]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (a) has met since 29 December 2016 or (b) plans to meet Roche during the consultation period for the Kadcylla form of trastuzumab emtansine.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has advised that there have been no such meetings since 29 December 2016 and that a meeting with Roche is in the process of being arranged.

**Breast Cancer: Medical Treatments****Royston Smith:**[\[59223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what alternative treatments are available for breast cancer patients requiring bisphosphonates until 2018.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Although bisphosphonates are not licensed for the treatment or prevention of secondary breast cancer, there is no legal or regulatory barrier to healthcare professionals prescribing them for this purpose if they believe that it is clinically appropriate to do so.

Treatment options for breast cancer patients are a matter for clinicians and their patients.

In its clinical guideline on the diagnosis and treatment of early and locally advanced breast cancer (CG80), published in February 2009, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends that bisphosphonates should be offered to patients for the management of breast cancer treatment-induced bone loss subject to certain criteria. NICE is currently updating this guidance and the use of adjuvant bisphosphonates is one of the key areas that will be covered in the update which is expected in July 2018.

**Chronic Illnesses: Employment****Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**[\[59160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what meetings (a) ministers and (b) officials of his Department have had with Public Health England on developing the evidence base on long-term health conditions and work outcomes following the publication in November 2016 of the work, health and disability green paper: improving lives.

**David Mowat:**

'Improving Lives: The Work Health and Disability Green Paper' was published in October 2016 and was a joint publication by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Health. The Departments worked closely with Public Health England during the development of the Green Paper. The Green Paper makes a specific commitment to build the evidence base on long-term health conditions. Both Departments will jointly consider next steps, which will be determined by the responses received through the national consultation, which is underway currently.

**■ Complementary Medicine**

**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[59014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department provides to (a) healthcare professionals and (b) NICE on the role of complementary medicines and alternative medicines.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department has not provided any guidance to healthcare professionals or the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence on the role of complementary and alternative treatments.

**■ Death Certificates: Smoking**

**Dr Andrew Murrison:** [\[59231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans the Government has to include smoking as a contributory factor on death certificates.

**David Mowat:**

Doctors are required under the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953 to complete the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD) to the best of their knowledge and belief. Internationally accepted guidance from the World Health Organization requires only those conditions that contributed directly to the death to be recorded on the death certificate, and whether a condition contributed is a matter for their clinical judgement.

Under United Kingdom and international standards, risk factors or behaviours such as smoking are not normally included on the MCCD, because these are not medical conditions.

**■ Department of Health: Labour Mobility**

**Tom Brake:** [\[59146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many civil servants in each unit of his Department are in the redeployment pool.

**David Mowat:**

Following the selection and posting process - part of the DH2020 restructuring programme - there is a total of nine civil servants, who have not currently secured roles and are subject to redeployment.

**■ Department of Health: Re-employment**

**Mr David Lammy:** [\[59174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many members of staff who ceased to be employed by his Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies in the last three years have subsequently been re-employed by his Department on a temporary basis or as a third-party contractor or consultant.



**David Mowat:**

To retrieve and analyse the records of all leavers from the Department, its agencies and non-departmental bodies to determine the number of individuals re-engaged by the Department on a temporary basis or as a third-party contractor or consultant in the last three years, would incur disproportionate costs.

However, information from the 'core' Department's Business Management system shows that five or fewer individuals who ceased employment with the 'core' Department in the past three years have returned to the 'core' Department on a temporary basis or as a third-party contractor or consultant.

**■ Emergency Calls: Social Services****Charlotte Leslie:****[59013]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the incidence of 999 emergency services being used to provide non-emergency social care.

**David Mowat:**

The Care Act 2014 promotes wellbeing and independence, and does not just wait to respond when people reach a crisis point.

The Care Act requires that local authorities must provide or arrange for the provision of services, facilities or resources that will contribute towards preventing, delaying or reducing the needs for care and support of adults and carers.

The Act also places a duty on local authorities to establish and maintain a service for providing people in its area with information and advice relating to care and support for adults and support for carers. The Government provided local authorities with start-up funding of £32.5 million capital funding to support them to develop new online services that provide people with more consistent and more easily accessible information about their local care and support options.

In addition, [NHS Choices](#) has a selection of pages aimed at providing targeted information and advice on care and support. This includes a direct link (based on post code) to each local authority website's contact page on how a person can access a needs assessment.

NHS England's review of urgent and emergency care proposes a fundamental shift in the way urgent and emergency care services are provided, delivering more care closer to home where clinically appropriate.

The integrated urgent care service will build on the success of NHS 111 and will help to deliver the benefits for all patients set out in the Urgent and Emergency Care review. The intent is to enable commissioners to deliver a functionally integrated 24/7 urgent care service that is the 'front door' of the National Health Service, and which provides the public with access to both treatment and clinical advice. This will include NHS 111 providers and general practitioner out-of-hours services, community services, ambulance services, emergency departments and social care.

## ■ General Practitioners: Qualifications

**Stephen Timms:** [\[59831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of (a) registered and (b) active GPs obtained their initial qualifications in other EU countries.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The Department does not collect information on the number of registered and active General Practitioners (GPs) that obtained their initial qualifications in other European Union countries.

The General Medical Council has provided the following information:

6.08% of registered GPs in the United Kingdom obtained their initial qualification in other EU countries within the European Economic Area (EEA), this is 4,120 of 67,771; and

5.36% of registered GPs with a licence to practise obtained their initial qualification in other EU countries within the EEA, this is 3,272 of 61,096.

## ■ Hospices: Children

**Neil Gray:** [\[59050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will increase the value of the children's hospice grant in England.

**David Mowat:**

NHS England is continuing to prioritise the Children's Hospice Grant at the current level. NHS England has been engaging with children's hospices through Together for Short Lives prior to a consultation on the allocation method for the 2017/18 grant.

## ■ Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis

**Stephen McPartland:** [\[59159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will introduce the mandatory collection of data relating to the number of people diagnosed with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis by a multi-disciplinary team; and if he will make a statement.

**David Mowat:**

There are no plans to introduce the mandatory collection of data relating to the number of people diagnosed with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) by a multi-disciplinary team.

Although data is collected for patients attending specialised respiratory services, NHS England does not collect data specifically on patients with IPF. The service specification covers a broader range of respiratory diseases and does not include IPF as a data requirement.

NHS England is able to quantify the number of patients who qualify and receive high cost drugs for IPF. In addition, the British Thoracic Society holds a voluntary register of IPF cases.

## ■ Life Expectancy

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

[59230]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will rank the causes of health inequality measured by life expectancy in England.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Data on the causes of health inequality measured by life expectancy in England can be accessed using the following link:

<http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/segment>

## ■ Mental Illness: Prescription Drugs

**Luciana Berger:**

[59888]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many prescriptions for anti-anxiety medication were dispensed in each region in each month of each year since 2010.

**David Mowat:**

There are a range of drugs that can be used for anxiety states, including beta-blockers and some anti-depressants, but there is no information on which indication a medicine is actually used for. Medicines for the alleviation of anxiety states are under British National Formulary (BNF) 4.1.2 Anxiolytics and this has been interpreted as the anti-anxiety medicine information requested.

Information on the number of prescription items for anxiolytics based on BNF classifications is shown in the attached table. Monthly data is only available for a 60 month rolling period with the earliest available month from November 2011.

**Attachments:**

1. PQ59888 attached file [PQ59888 attached document.xlsx]

## ■ NHS: Complaints

**Luciana Berger:**

[59889]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many formal complaints (a) mental health services and (b) the NHS received in each region in each month of each year since 2010.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

NHS Digital is the organisation responsible for publishing National Health Service complaints data and the attached tables show data received in respect of NHS Mental Health Services for the periods requested.

These data were collected annually until 1 April 2015. NHS Digital now collects these data quarterly. Because of changes to the method and frequency of the data collection NHS Digital currently classify data from April 2015 as 'experimental' so cannot be compared with previous years.

**Attachments:**

1. PQ59889 attached file [PQ59889 attached document.xlsx]

**■ Occupational Health**

**Luciana Berger:** [\[59890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health, what progress his Department has made in doubling the reach of the Individual Placement and Support Programme since February 2016.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

NHS England is currently procuring a national baseline audit to determine current provision of supported employment, with a view to conducting the audit in early 2017 and to publish results by autumn 2017.

**■ Palliative Care: Children and Young People**

**Catherine McKinnell:** [\[59758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what safeguards his Department has in place to ensure that local authorities are planning and funding palliative care for children and young people; and if he will make a statement.

**David Mowat:**

Local authorities are not commissioners of children's palliative health care, but would have a role in providing social care support, and any appropriate educational support that was assessed as needed by a child with a life-limiting condition.

**■ Prisons: Counselling**

**Mr David Burrowes:** [\[59901\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much his Department spent on counselling or therapy in prisons for (a) prisoners and (b) prison staff with post-traumatic stress disorder in (i) 2014, (ii) 2015 and (iii) 2016.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Information on spending on counselling or therapy for prisoners with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is not collected centrally by NHS England.

Spending by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) on psychological therapies delivered to NOMS' staff for work related trauma was £22,131.06 in 2014, £150,336.09 in 2015 and £199,690.03 in 2016. NOMS' data do not identify the proportion of PTSD-related cases within this spend.

**■ Psychiatry: Children**

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:** [\[59128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the funding arrangement is for accredited child psychotherapists; and what such funding has been provided for the (a) current and (b) 2010 to 2015 Parliament.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The information is not collected centrally.

## ■ Strokes

**Chris Leslie:** [\[59483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 22 November 2016 to Question 53101, what meetings took place on the National Stroke Strategy between (a) Ministers and officials of his Department, (b) Ministers of his Department and representatives of NHS England and (c) officials of his Department and representatives of NHS England in each month since October 2016.

**David Mowat:**

Ministers and officials have met with a range of stakeholders interested in stroke and have discussed a number of topics including the National Stroke Strategy.

## ■ Tobacco

**Philip Davies:** [\[59208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with officials from which countries officials of his Department met during the Seventh Session of the Conference of the Parties of the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department's officials attended co-ordination meetings which were held with European Union Member States and countries in the World Health Organization's European Region throughout the Conference of the Parties. Officials also met delegates from Canada, the United States, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:** [\[59226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he plans for the Tobacco Control Strategy to be published.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:** [\[59229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, on what dates he has met supermarkets to discuss their policy on tobacco sales.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Government is developing a new tobacco control plan, which will be published shortly.

As part of the development of the tobacco control plan, stakeholders were invited to give views during the initial stages. This included representatives from the independent retail sector. Ministers have not met with individual supermarkets to discuss tobacco sales.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:** [\[59227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the relationship between tobacco price and consumption of tobacco.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:** [\[59228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect on consumption of tobacco of a (a) two per cent and (b) five per cent above inflation increase in the price of tobacco.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:** [\[59233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of narrowing the tax differential between manufactured and hand-rolled cigarettes on health inequalities.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department has made no such assessments. Tax policy and the assessment of its impact is the responsibility of HM Treasury.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:** [\[59232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he (a) has met and (b) will meet tobacco companies to discuss a Tobacco Companies Obligation as recommended by Action on Smoking and Health in its report entitled Smoking Still Kills, published in June 2015.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department has not met and has no plans to meet the tobacco industry to discuss the Tobacco Companies Obligation.

## ■ Tobacco: Licensing

**Dr Andrew Murrison:** [\[59235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has for a licensing scheme for tobacco (a) retailers and (b) wholesalers.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Last year HM Revenues and Customs led a consultation on licensing throughout the supply chain. The Government committed to legislation on licencing of tobacco machinery in Budget 2016. Officials are further considering responses on licensing in other parts of the supply chain.

## ■ Tobacco: Prices

**Dr Andrew Murrison:** [\[59234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to establish a minimum unit price for tobacco products.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Government has no current plans to introduce a minimum unit price for tobacco products. The Government announced at Budget 2016 that it would introduce a Minimum Excise Tax (MET) on cigarettes. This will set a minimum amount of total duty to be collected on any sale of cigarettes. Draft legislation for the MET was published on 5 December and the rate will be announced at Budget 2017.

**HOME OFFICE**■ **Alexander Adamescu****David T. C. Davies:****[59837]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Metropolitan Police Service was contacted by Alexander Adamescu's legal representatives prior to his arrest.

**Brandon Lewis:**

Mr Adamescu was arrested on 13 June 2016 in relation to a European Arrest Warrant. As his case is currently before the courts it would not be appropriate for me to comment further.

■ **Asylum****Alison Thewliss:****[59646]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum claims in 2015 were (a) refused within six months of being lodged and (b) subsequently granted on appeal.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Home Office publishes figures on the outcome of asylum claims made during each calendar year in table as\_06 of the *Immigration Statistics* release.

The Home Office also publishes figures on asylum appeals and determinations, in table as\_14\_q of the quarterly *Immigration Statistics* release.

A copy of the latest release, *Immigration Statistics July to September 2016*, is available from <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>

In addition, as part of its Transparency agenda the Home Office publishes data on decisions made within 6 months. Figures for the financial year 2015/16 can be found at tab Asy 01 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-transparency-data-november-2016>

**Shabana Mahmood:****[59773]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what geographical unit of measurement her Department uses to determine whether its 1:200 ratio of asylum seekers to resident population has been breached.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The 1:200 population ratio is a longstanding operating principle that is generally applicable to Local Authority area.

**Caroline Lucas:****[59796]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests were (a) made and (b) accepted for transfer of an asylum application from the UK to another country under (i) article 8, (ii) article 9, (iii) article 10 and (iv) article 17 of the Dublin III Regulation during the last 12 months for which figures are available.

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[59797]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests were (a) made and (b) accepted for transfer of an asylum application to the UK under (i) article 8, (ii) article 9, (iii) article 10 and (iv) article 17 of the Dublin III Regulation during the last 12 months for which figures are available.

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[59798]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests the Government made under the Dublin III Regulation for an asylum application to be transferred to another country; and how many of those requests were agreed to during the last 12 months for which figures are available.

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[59799]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests the Government made under the Dublin III Regulation for an asylum application to be transferred to another country; and how many of those requests were agreed to during the last 12 months for which figures are available.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

At present we do not publish data on cases covered by the Dublin Regulation. Eurostat, the EU's statistics agency, regularly publishes Member State figures, which you can find at

[http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Dublin\\_statistics\\_on\\_countries\\_responsible\\_for\\_asylum\\_application](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Dublin_statistics_on_countries_responsible_for_asylum_application)

## ■ Asylum: Appeals

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[59800]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many refusals of an application for asylum resulted in the right of appeal being non-suspensive in each of the last three years; and in asylum cases where a right of appeal is non-suspensive, how many appeals were (a) submitted from outside the UK, (b) successful, (c) refused and (d) outstanding, in each of those years.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Home Office publish the number of main claimants refused asylum and eligible for the non-suspensive appeals process each quarter in table as\_13\_q of the quarterly Immigration Statistics release. The latest figures are available at the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/572377/asylum3-q3-2016-tables.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572377/asylum3-q3-2016-tables.ods)



## ■ Extradition: Romania

**David T. C. Davies:**

**[59838]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests she has received from the Romanian government for the extradition of UK residents under the European Arrest Warrant since 13 July 2016.

**Brandon Lewis:**

Each year the National Crime Agency publishes statistics on the number of European Arrest Warrants (EAW) received by the UK.

These figures include a breakdown of the number of EAWs received from each country by nationality of the person requested and offence. These figures are published at <http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/european-arrest-warrant-statistics>

## ■ Firearms: Licensing

**Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger:**

**[58381]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer to the hon. Member for the Cotswolds of 1 December 2017 to Question 54884, for what reasons the Government does not collect or publish data on firearm and shotgun certificate applications.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Home Office collects and publishes data on firearm and shotgun certificates issued in England and Wales, including those granted and refused for new and renewal applications. The Government currently has no plans to collect and publish data on police performance in processing firearm and shotgun certificate applications. Under the Firearms Act 1968 firearm and shotgun certificate administration is a matter for the chief officer of police for the area in which the applicant lives.

In considering what information is collected and published by the Home Office, emphasis is given to whether data are justified, of strategic importance and able to be collected with minimal burden.

## ■ Higher Education: Finance

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[59882]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 30 November 2016 to Question 54580, what specific proposals are being considered to strengthen the system to support the best universities to attract the best talent; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

We will be shortly be seeking views on how we can support the sector to continue to attract the brightest and best.

■ **Home Office: EU Law****Kirsty Blackman:** [\[59842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which EU directives relating to her Department's responsibilities are awaiting transposition into UK law.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Harrow West, UIN 48180, on 19 October 2016.

■ **Home Office: Labour Mobility****Tom Brake:** [\[59147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many civil servants in each unit of her Department are in the redeployment pool.

**Sarah Newton:**

There are 43 staff in the redeployment pool. This data is taken from Home Office redeployment database on 10/1/17 and is broken down by unit as follows:

DIRECTORATE	DEPT	TOTAL
<b>Border Force</b>	North Region	1
<b>Capabilities &amp; Resources</b>	Chief Technology Office	4
	Commercial	11
	Communications	1
	Civil Service Learning	1
	Finance & Estates	1
	Performance & Risk	1
	Science England & Technology	1
	Human Resources	5
	Transformation	2
<b>Crime Policing Group</b>	Finance & Strategy	1
<b>HM Passport Office</b>	Strategy & Change	1
	Customer Digital	1
	East & Midlands	1
	Wales & SW	1

DIRECTORATE	DEPT	TOTAL
	Nth East	1
<b>International &amp; Immigration Policy Group</b>	Independent Chief Inspector of Borders & Immigration	1
<b>Office Security &amp; Counter Terrorism</b>	Comms Capabilities Dev Programme	1
	National Security Directorate	2
<b>UK Visas &amp; Immigration</b>	Complex Casework	1
	Premium Services	1
	Temporary Migration & Sponsorship	3

## ■ Home Office: Pay

**Keith Vaz:**

[\[59532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many civil servants in her Department received a bonus in 2016; and what the total amount of such bonuses was at each grade in her Department in that year.

**Sarah Newton:**

As part of the Government transparency agenda all year end and in-year bonuses are published in the Non-Consolidated Performance Related Pay (NCPRP) return. This information can be found on [data.gov.uk](http://data.gov.uk). The latest set of this information was published in March 2016 and relates to the 2014/15 performance year.

## ■ Homophobia

**Neil Coyle:**

[\[59479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with police forces on (a) training and (b) other mechanisms for avoiding institutional homophobia.

**Brandon Lewis:**

Equality and diversity are important – people across all communities want the police to fight crime while having confidence that their needs will be understood and respected.

The Government has reformed policing to ensure that there is a sector-led approach to making improvements, including the establishment of the College of Policing as the professional body charged with setting standards in all areas of police practice, and developing guidance and training.

The College launched the Code of Ethics in July 2014. The Code clearly sets out the core principles and standards of behaviour expected from everyone in policing, including in the areas of equality and diversity.

Each force has responsibility, as the employer, to ensure that their workforce is suitably equipped for the work they carry out.

## ■ Immigration

**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[59714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she took to consult stakeholder bodies and the public on developing a sustainable approach to immigration.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Government is committed to an immigration policy that works in the interests of the whole of the United Kingdom. We regularly meet and consult key stakeholders during policy development.

## ■ Immigration: Human Trafficking

**Fiona Mactaggart:** [\[59379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many non-British citizens who were conclusively identified as trafficked have received a residence permit since 2010.

**Sarah Newton:**

In the period 2010-2016 there were 661 confirmed victims of trafficking with a positive outcome at the conclusive grounds stage who have an outcome linked to a grant of Discretionary Leave. Confirmed victims of trafficking granted leave under other criteria such as asylum, humanitarian protection or under categories of the Immigration Rules are not included in the data above.

## ■ Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service: Finance

**Conor McGinn:** [\[59101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much funding Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service received by grant from central government in each year since 2010.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The table below sets out core central government funding for the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority since 2010-11.

These figures do not include specific central government grants such as pension top-ups and National Resilience Assurance.

**MERSEYSIDE**

	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>
<b>Core funding £m</b>	26.441	22.759	18.729

In 2013-14 a major change was introduced in local government finance that meant that local authorities (including Fire and Rescue Authorities) were now able to retain a share of their local business rates. This reduced the level of requirement from central government funding.

**MERSEYSIDE**

	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
<b>Core funding £m</b>	26.441	22.759	18.729	16.522

■ **Police: Counter-terrorism****Ms Diane Abbott:**[\[58116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much funding each police force in England and Wales received from her Department to employ counter terrorism security advisers in each year since 2010.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

Advice and guidance on protective security and preparedness to terrorist threats is provided by specialist Counter-Terrorism Security Advisors (CTSAs) who operate in every police region.

The Home Office funds CTSAs as part of a wider grant payment to the police in England and Wales for specific counter-terrorism purposes. We do not publically provide a breakdown of this funding or resources by force, region or capability for security reasons.

■ **Ravil Mingazov****Tom Brake:**[\[58526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government has received an application from Ravil Mingazov for asylum since she has been granted release from Guantanamo Bay.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

We do not routinely comment on individual immigration cases. An application for asylum can only be made by a person who is present in the United Kingdom

The transfer of Mr Mingazov from the detention facility is a matter for the US Government.

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT****■ Developing Countries: Females****Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**[\[59265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department's Women and Girls Team is taking across government departments on a UK implementation plan for the Sustainable Development Goals.

**James Wharton:**

DFID's Gender Equality Team is working with other Government Departments to ensure gender equality is integrated effectively throughout work on the Sustainable Development Goals.

This includes working with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Ministry of Defence to implement the UK National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security; working across HMG to meet our manifesto commitments as set out in the cross Government Strategy on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls; and taking a co-ordinated approach with the Home Office on tackling FGM. We are putting women and girls at the centre of all our efforts.

**■ Developing Countries: HIV Infection****Catherine McKinnell:**[\[59770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 54484, what indicators her Department uses to measure the UK's distinct contribution to progress towards the UNAIDS outcome Decentralization and integration of HIV related services strengthened.

**James Wharton:**

The UK government, as the fourth largest donor to UNAIDS, and as a member of the Programme Coordinating Board, closely monitors progress towards all of UNAIDS indicators including on the decentralisation and integration of HIV services. We rely on UNAIDS and country data to assess progress in specific countries.

The UK expects all its bilateral health systems strengthening programmes in high burden countries to integrate HIV. DFID does not track UK specific progress using a unified central indicator.

**■ Overseas Aid****Mr Peter Bone:**[\[59070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what proportion of her Department's aid budget is given to third parties to distribute.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID spends aid through a range of delivery partners. Delivery partners are selected based on a value for money assessment of their capacity to deliver objectives in the country DFID is working in.

Overall, for 2015, approximately 36% of DFID's aid was delivered through multilateral organisations, 64% was delivered bilaterally.

Details of 2015 spend on all UK official aid is published in the Statistics on International Development, including the delivery channels used in every country in which we work.

## ■ South Sudan: Overseas Aid

**Tom Brake:**

[\[59282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the need for humanitarian aid in South Sudan.

**James Wharton:**

The humanitarian situation in South Sudan remains dire, with over 3 million people displaced and 3.6 million people in emergency or crisis level food insecurity; without humanitarian assistance there is a very real risk of famine. As the second largest bilateral donor to South Sudan, the UK continually assesses the need for humanitarian aid using a variety of sources, including the annual South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan. In addition, in-year assessments carried out by humanitarian partners such as those on food security are used to ensure the UK's humanitarian response remains sufficient to meet emerging needs.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Beer: Exports

**Henry Smith:**

[\[59136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps his Department is taking to increase British beer exports.

**Mark Garnier:**

The Department for International Trade is committed to increasing exports of British food and drink, including beer. We offer a range of services and support for both new and experienced exporters and we work closely with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and industry bodies such as the British Beer and Pub Association to help British brewers in their export efforts.

We are developing export campaigns in high growth markets where there is potential for increasing sales of British beer and we continue to help British brewers enter those markets and expand internationally. For example, in November last year we organised the first ever UK Beer and Cider Pavilion at the Food and Hotel China trade show in Shanghai. Over 30 British brands were represented.

**■ Department for International Trade: EU Law****Kirsty Blackman:** [\[59843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which EU directives relating to his Department's responsibilities are awaiting transposition into UK law.

**Greg Hands:**

The UK remains a member of the EU until we leave, with full rights and obligations of membership. This includes transposing EU legislation into UK law. The only Directive that is awaiting transposition by the Department for International Trade is Directive (EU) 2016/970, amending Directive 2009/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the list of defence related products (OJ L 163, 21.6.2016, p.1). This is due to be implemented by the Export Control (Amendment) Order 2017.

**■ Department for International Trade: Labour Mobility****Tom Brake:** [\[59149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many civil servants in each unit of his Department are in the redeployment pool.

**Greg Hands:**

The Department for International Trade does not currently have a redeployment pool.

**■ Foreign Investment in UK****Ms Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh:** [\[59537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what inward investment levels have been in the UK in the last six months by (a) region and (b) sector.

**Greg Hands:**

I refer the hon Member for Ochil and South Perthshire to the answer I gave to the hon Member for East Ham on 16 January 2017, UIN: 59624.

**NORTHERN IRELAND****■ Housing Benefit: Social Rented Housing****Andy McDonald:** [\[59774\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent discussions he has had with the Northern Ireland Executive on the legislative steps necessary to establish financial mitigation for the effects of the under-occupancy penalty in Northern Ireland.

**James Brokenshire:**

I engage regularly with the Northern Ireland Executive to discuss matters of mutual interest, including the implementation of the Fresh Start Agreement.

Part of that Agreement is the implementation of welfare reform to Northern Ireland, where it is clear that it is for the Northern Ireland Executive to provide for any welfare top up schemes such as that alluded to in the question.



## ■ Terrorism: Republic of Ireland

**Conor McGinn:**

[\[59897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what his policy is on the publication of all documentation held by the Government relating to the 1974 Dublin and Monaghan bombings.

**James Brokenshire:**

In accordance with its statutory responsibilities HM Government undertakes annual releases of its papers to The National Archives. This is the means by which retained government papers are made available to the public. All releases of material are compliant with the Public Records Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

## SCOTLAND

### ■ Jobcentres: Glasgow

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[59713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to the Answer of 14 December 2016 to Question 56916, on what date he was informed of the proposed jobcentre closures in Glasgow planned for 2018.

**David Mundell:**

I have regular discussions with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in relation to a wide range of issues affecting Scotland. I met with representatives of DWP in July who provided an overview of DWP's estates process in general, without detailing specific places.

DWP is currently reviewing its estate strategy on a nationwide basis, to ensure this best meets the current, medium and long-term needs for its business and work. By paying only for the space DWP needs it will help save several millions of pounds of taxpayers' money.

However, DWP are carrying out local consultation to help inform decisions about additional provision such as outreach services, and prior to implementing any changes in relation to JobCentre Plus offices over three miles or 20 minutes away by public transport in the Glasgow area. This consultation is online and open until 31 January.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Blue Badge Scheme: Children

**Neil Gray:**

[\[59049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many children under the age of three have a blue parking badge in (a) England, (b) Scotland and (c) Wales.

**Andrew Jones:**

This response only covers England because the Blue Badge scheme is devolved.

There are 2311 Blue Badges on issue to children in England under the age of three who are either dependent upon bulky medical equipment or need to be kept near a vehicle for emergency medical treatment.

We do not hold records for children between the ages of two and three who have been issued a Blue Badge under the general walking criterion as this criterion is open to anyone over the age of 2 years. Local authorities would have this data.

■ **Department for Transport: Labour Mobility****Tom Brake:**[\[59154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many civil servants in each unit of his Department are in the redeployment pool.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Department for Transport currently consists of a central Department and four executive agencies. As of the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2017, the following numbers are in the redeployment pool, which is defined as those individuals who are at risk of redundancy.

AGENCY	NUMBER OF PEOPLE
Central Department	16
Driver Vehicle & Licensing Agency	less than 5
Maritime & Coastguard Agency	less than 5
Vehicle Certification Agency	0
Driver Vehicle & Standards Agency	0

■ **Department for Transport: Re-employment****Mr David Lammy:**[\[59176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many members of staff who ceased to be employed by his Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies in the last three years have subsequently been re-employed by his Department on a temporary basis or as a third-party contractor or consultant.

**Mr John Hayes:**

A total of 54 members of staff, who have ceased to be employed by the Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies in the last three years, have returned either on a temporary basis or as a third party contractor or consultant. This number includes those who were originally employed on a fixed term basis.

## ■ London Underground: Technology

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[59334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the cost of fully automating the trains on the London Underground.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Department has made no assessment of this matter. The Mayor of London is responsible for the London Underground and any decision to move towards full automation of the trains would be entirely for him.

## ■ Maritime and Coastguard Agency: South Shields

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[59390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what alternative provision the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has made for seafarers in the North East to obtain advice and support in renewing their (a) Eng-1 medical and (b) basic training verification as a result of the planned closure of Tyne Marine Office.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The primary resource for advice and guidance to seafarers, including the renewal of ENG1s, can be found on gov.uk, and support is offered by officials working in the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's Seafarer Training and Certification Branch. Contact details for them can be found on the website.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[59391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's current lease agreement for the Tyne Marine Office expires.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The lease agreement for Tyne Marine Office expires on 13 March 2017.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[59393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has made of alternatives to closure for the Tyne Marine Office; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency's decision to close Tyne Marine Office was made following their review of operational estate and a national consultation exercise that ran in March and April 2016. After the closure, the primary office for north-east England will be in Beverly, with a 'satellite office' located at South Tyneside College.

## ■ Merchant Shipping: Recruitment

**Stephen Doughty:** [\[59750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many trainees from which regions of the UK have entered the merchant navy in each of the last five years.

**Mr John Hayes:**

Whilst the Maritime and Coastguard Agency retains records of cadets in training under the Support for Maritime Training (SMarT) scheme, it does not collate information about whether those trainees joined the Merchant Navy after they have completed their training.

The number of trainees that entered training under SMarT in each of the last five years is shown below:

YEAR	NUMBER OF TRAINEES ENTERING SMART
2010/11	850
2011/12	903
2012/13	776
2013/14	778
2014/15	819

The above includes published information only. This information is not recorded by region.

**Stephen Doughty:**[\[59752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans his Department has to implement the proposed SMarT Plus scheme to encourage trainees to enter the merchant navy.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Government supports maritime training through the £15 million Support for Maritime Training (SMarT) budget. We are currently reviewing the provision of that support. Last year we commissioned two pieces of research which are relevant - the Seafarer Projections research and the SMarT Review. I have received the SMarT Plus proposal from the UK Chamber of Shipping and Nautilus and it will be considered as part of the process. A decision on the future funding arrangement will be made once we have fully considered all options.

■ **Railway Stations: Repairs and Maintenance****Mr Gavin Shuker:**[\[59437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much each of the 10 National B Interchanges identified in the Better Rail Stations review as in need of priority funding have received since 2009; and if he will make a statement.

**Paul Maynard:**

The following amounts of capital funding have been provided from a variety of sources at each of the ten stations named since 2009.

**Manchester Victoria Station**

*Amount/Comment:* 44.7m (from a number of sources) on station redevelopment (completed 2015) (made up of Access for All (AfA), National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP) and Station Commercial Project Facility (SCPF) funding).

**Clapham Junction Station**

*Amount/Comment:* £13.1m AfA funding (2011).

**Crewe Station**

*Amount/Comment:* £7m franchise funding; £6.2m SCPF funding.

**Warrington Bank Quay Station**

*Amount/Comment:* £8.4m franchise funding; £690k NSIP funding

**Barking Station**

*Amount/Comment:* By the end of 2019, £5.5m will have been invested through the franchise, plus £350k of NSIP funding.

**Preston Station**

*Amount/Comment:* £14m of franchise funding; £710k NSIP funding.

**Wigan North Weston Station**

*Amount/Comment:* £10.4m franchise funding; £535k NSIP funding.

**Luton Station**

*Amount/Comment:* £5m of Local Sustainable Transport Funding was allocated to Luton Borough Council as a block; DfT does not hold information on how much was allocated by the Council to the railway station, but this money part-funded the High Town footbridge, the bus interchange and station forecourt enhancements, removal of old station footbridge and provision of new staircase at front of station. £180k delivered through franchise funding. £1.9m NSIP funding (recently deferred). These figures exclude 12-car platform extensions and new multi-storey car park (delivered by Network Rail).

**Liverpool Central Station**

*Amount/Comment:* Funding at Liverpool Central station is a devolved matter for Merseytravel, and DfT does not hold complete information. However, £1m AfA funding was provided in CP4.

**Stockport Station**

*Amount/Comment:* £5m franchise funding; £11.6m SCPF funding.

**■ Railways: Oxfordshire**

**Mr Andrew Smith:**

**[59277]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will commission a study into the viability of a rail link between Oxford and Witney.

**Paul Maynard:**

A study into the options for re-opening the rail route from Witney to Yarnton to connect with the Oxford to Worcester has already been carried out by Oxfordshire County Council to inform its "Investing in the A40 - Long Term Strategy Consultation Report" published in May 2016.

We believe that local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are best placed to carry out further studies and consider whether a rail re-opening is the best way to meet local transport needs.

**Railways: West Midlands****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[59335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to reduce train fares in the West Midlands.

**Paul Maynard:**

Train fare revenue is crucial to funding day-to-day railway operations and the massive upgrade programme we are delivering, all of which benefit passengers. However, the Government recognises the serious concern consumers have around the cost of rail fares. We recognise that the cost of travelling for rail passengers can seem high – this is why we have taken action and capped the rail fares we regulate at RPI+0% since 2014 and will continue to do so for the term of this Parliament.

The new West Midlands rail franchise, expected to commence in October 2017, will deliver a rail service that is fit for modern life and supports the sustainable growth of the West Midlands and the country as a whole. The Invitation to Tender requires bidders for the franchise to set out how they will provide clearer and more transparent information on fares so that it is simpler for customers to purchase tickets and find the cheapest fares and this could include the use of multi-buy discount tickets for passengers who travel less than five days a week.

**Roads****Richard Arkless:**[\[59790\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if the Government will continue to recognise the A75 (E18) and other main roads as Euro-Routes after the UK leaves the EU.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The E-Route numbering network is not part of the functions of the EU or the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The UK Government hasn't ratified the E-Route Treaty and no decision has been taken on whether the UK will join the scheme in the future.

## ■ Roads: Planning

**Mr Peter Bone:**

[\[59270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what his policy is on expediting decisions on road development in order to permit planned residential projects to proceed.

**Mr John Hayes:**

On the Strategic Road Network, Highways England is a statutory planning consultee and is required to respond to planning applications, within 21 days as a statutory requirement.

On local roads my Department has no direct role in Local Highway Authority decisions on the timing of road adoptions linked to residential housing developments. I plan to publish an Advice Note in the spring, which provides best practice guidance to support the successful adoption of such roads.

## ■ Shipping: Training

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[59753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding his Department plans to allocate to the Support for Maritime Training scheme in 2017-18.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The planned allocation of funding for the Support for Maritime Training scheme in 2017-18 is £15 million.

## ■ Southern: Wifi

**Mr Steve Reed:**

[\[59748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made on making wi-fi available on Southern Rail services.

**Paul Maynard:**

Govia Thameslink Railway introduced wi-fi access at 104 of its stations in March last year. We understand that Southern Rail is making good progress in regards to on-board wi-fi and will announce further details in due course.

## ■ Speed Limits: Research

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[59048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects to publish the findings of research commissioned by his Department into the effects of 20 mph speed zones.

**Andrew Jones:**

The research is due to be completed at the end of 2017 and we expect to publish the findings early next year.

**■ Trains: Sanitation**

**Dr Lisa Cameron:** [R] [\[59279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with train operating companies on the installation of disabled toilets on trains.

**Paul Maynard:**

Where toilets are provided on a train, an accessible toilet which meets the requirements of modern accessibility standards needs to be provided. All new trains with toilets are built with accessible toilets as standard, and this has been a requirement since 1999. Trains built before 1999 have until 2020 to comply and the Department is monitoring progress towards this target. Currently 75% of mainline trains are either built or refurbished to modern accessibility standards. This includes the provision of an accessible toilet, where toilets are provided.

**■ Volkswagen**

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** [\[59775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of Volkswagen to ensure that customers affected by the emissions scandal receive the compensation they are entitled to.

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** [\[59776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his Department's policy to ensure that consumers affected by the Volkswagen diesel emissions scandal receive a share of the £1 million compensation received by his Department from Volkswagen.

**Mr John Hayes:**

I meet regularly with Volkswagen UK to press them to improve their treatment of UK consumers; the most recent meeting was on 16<sup>th</sup> January. I am considering how the Government should best invest the £1.1m we secured from Volkswagen.

**WALES****■ S4C**

**Mr David Hanson:** [\[59656\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how many letters or emails his Department has received on Government support for S4C since 1 January 2016; and how many of those letters or emails he has personally (a) read and (b) replied to.

**Alun Cairns:**

The Wales Office remains in active discussions with colleagues across Whitehall to consider how the Government can best support S4C.

Since 1 January 2016 we have received significant levels of correspondence regarding the Government's support to S4C. All letters have received a response. I



take a close interest in all matters relating to S4C, including letters and emails, and answer as required.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Department for Work and Pensions: EU Law

**Kirsty Blackman:**

[\[59844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, which EU directives relating to his Department's responsibilities are awaiting transposition into UK law.

**Damian Hinds:**

The UK remains a member of the EU until we leave, with full rights and obligations of membership. This includes transposing EU legislation into UK law.

The Department for Work and Pensions is aware of the following directives relating to the Department's responsibilities for which transposition is planned:

Council Directive 2013/59/Euratom of 5 December 2013 laying down basic safety standards for protection against the dangers arising from exposure to ionising radiation. The transposition deadline is 6 February 2018. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has the overall UK government policy lead. The Health and Safety Executive is responsible for a discrete set of regulations (The Ionising Radiations Regulations) under the Basic Safety Standards Directive.

Directive 2016/2341/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 on the activities and supervision of institutions for occupational retirement provision (IORPs). The transposition deadline is 13 January 2019.

### ■ Employment: Mental health

**Stephen Timms:**

[\[59830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans he has to introduce further measures to assist employers in supporting employees to return to work after a mental health-related absence; and if he will make a statement.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Health have published 'Improving Lives – the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper'. The Green Paper sets out the Government's proposals for improving work and health outcomes for disabled people and people with long-term health conditions.

Many employers are already creating healthy, inclusive workplaces, but more needs to be done so that employers provide the support needed for employees with disabilities and long-term health conditions, including mental health conditions, to help them get into and stay in work

Through the Green Paper we are asking about the barriers preventing employers from recruiting and retaining disabled people and people with health conditions, and what measures would help them in doing so. Specifically:

- We are consulting on reform to Statutory Sick Pay to support phased returns to work. A phased return to work can be beneficial to both employer and employee, as it may help prevent further periods of absence or the employee falling out of work entirely;
- How we can transform occupational health provision to ensure it more closely meets the spectrum of need, including the needs of employers.
- The Green Paper also announced a review of the current operation of the fit note. This review will look at the current system and whether it meets the needs of its users – including employers. We are seeking views to inform this review through the consultation.

Further, the Government has asked Paul Farmer and Lord Stevenson to conduct a review into how best to ensure employees with mental health conditions are supported to thrive in the workplace and perform at their best. We will also be reviewing internally the evidence around discrimination in the workplace for people with mental health.

This review will build on our Green Paper consultation to help build the evidence base around mental health and employment.

## ■ Jobcentres: Glasgow

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

**[59785]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect of the amount of information available on the number of people in the disabled working-age population in the Glasgow South constituency who use services at (a) Castlemilk and (b) Langside jobcentres on public sector equality duty.

**Damian Hinds:**

We are committed to complying with our Public Sector Equality Duty, as part of the Equality Act 2010, to meet the needs of those with protected characteristics. Equality analysis involves us considering the likely or actual effects of proposals on people with protected characteristics as part of our decision making processes and helps us comply with the Equality Act 2010.

We will be undertaking an equality analysis as part of the detailed planning for service reconfiguration. This will include feedback from public consultation in those locations where this applies.

The equality analysis and public consultation will help us determine whether we have sufficient information to assess the impact on the 5,790 people in Glasgow South who claim Employment and Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefits, as well as other people who use our services at Castlemilk and Langside Jobcentres, before any final decisions are made.

It is also important for us to assess the extent to which people use our services as not all benefit claimants are required to attend the Jobcentre on a regular basis.

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

[\[59786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans his Department has to record the number of people in the disabled working-age population in the Glasgow South constituency who use services at (a) Castlemilk and (b) Langside jobcentres ahead of the equality impact assessment.

**Damian Hinds:**

We will be undertaking an equality analysis as part of the detailed planning for service reconfiguration and before any final decisions are made.

There are a total of 5,790 people claiming Employment and Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefits in Glasgow South who use our services to varying degrees, depending upon the type of claim they have. For example, those in the work-related activity group of Employment and Support visit the Jobcentre for more regular interviews with an adviser, whilst those in the support group do not have to attend interviews unless they wish to speak to a personal adviser.

The purpose of the equality analysis and public consultation is to help establish how many people are likely to be affected by these proposals, not just those in receipt of a disability-related benefit.

## ■ **Members: Corospendence**

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[59902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he expects the hon. Member for Rutherglen and Hamilton West to receive a reply to her freedom of information request of 8 November 2016; and what the reason is for the time taken in responding to that request.

**Caroline Nokes:**

A reply to the hon. Member's freedom of information request was issued on 16 January 2017.

## ■ **National Insurance Contributions: Carers**

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[59199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have been in receipt of carers credit in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

**Richard Harrington:**

The information is not available in the format requested. The Carers Credit was introduced in April 2010 and as at January 2017 an estimated 11,500 people were

receiving these credits. Over the last five years (January 2012 to December 2016) we estimate that the Carers Credit has been awarded to around 10,000 people.

Source: Department for Work and Pensions Carers Credit Operating System

Notes: The figure has been rounded to the nearest 100.

## ■ Occupational Health

**Lyn Brown:**

**[59500]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans he has for further measures to assist employers in supporting employees to return to work after a health-related absence.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Health have published 'Improving Lives – the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper'. The Green Paper sets out the Government's proposals for improving work and health outcomes for disabled people and people with long-term health conditions.

Many employers are already creating healthy, inclusive workplaces, but more needs to be done so that employers provide the support needed for employees with disabilities and long-term health conditions, to help them get into and stay in work

Through the Green Paper we are asking about the barriers preventing employers from recruiting and retaining disabled people and people with health conditions, and what measures would help them in doing so. Specifically:

- We are consulting on reform to Statutory Sick Pay to support phased returns to work. A phased return to work can be beneficial to both employer and employee, as it may help prevent further periods of absence or the employee falling out of work entirely;
- How we can transform occupational health provision to ensure it more closely meets the spectrum of need, including the needs of employers.
- The Green Paper also announced a review of the current operation of the fit note. This review will look at the current system and whether it meets the needs of its users – including employers. We are seeking views to inform this review through the consultation.

## ■ Personal Independence Payment: Motability

**Phil Boswell:**

**[59602]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants who have been transferred from disability living allowance to personal independence payment (PIP) have had their eligibility for the Motability scheme removed as a result of reassessment using the new PIP guidelines.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

This information is published online and can be found at

[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-independence-payment-april-2013-to-october-2016](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-independence-payment-april-2013-to-october-2016)

**Nic Dakin:****[59783]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 11 January 2017 to Question 58948, how many people who were previously in receipt of the enhanced personal independence payment and qualified for the Motability scheme have since been reassessed and lost their Motability vehicle.

**Nic Dakin:****[59784]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 11 January 2017 to Question 58948, how many people who were previously in receipt of the higher rate of the mobility component of disability living allowance and qualified for the Motability scheme have been reassessed and lost their Motability vehicle.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ **Social Security Benefits: Inverclyde**

**Ronnie Cowan:****[59486]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in Inverclyde constituency have had their benefit payments reduced after transferring from disability living allowance to personal independence payments in each of the last three years.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The table below gives statistics on the number of people in Inverclyde constituency who have had their benefit payments reduced following reassessment for Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

**Table 1 – decreased awards following reassessment for PIP in Inverclyde**

	AWARD DECREASED	DISALLOWED POST REFERRAL TO THE ASSESSMENT PROVIDER
Jan-Dec 2014	0	0
Jan-Dec 2015	-	-
Jan-Oct 2016	200	100
Total	200	200

- indicates fewer than 50 cases in the category

## ■ State Retirement Pensions

**Ian Blackford:**

**[59372]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the minimum formal notice period is for pensionable age changes to be notified to individuals by his Department.

**Richard Harrington:**

There is no formal legal requirement to provide notice within a minimum period. However, the Government is committed to not changing the legislation relating to State Pension age for those people who are within 10 years of reaching it. This means that there will be at least 10 years between any future Act getting Royal Assent and the provisions of that Act which change State Pension age coming into force to ensure that individuals are able to plan for the future

In addition to giving adequate notice, we recognise the importance of ensuring people are aware of any changes to their State Pension age and we use a number of different means to do this. In the past, these have included writing to people and targeted communications campaigns. However, we continue to look at the most effective way to ensure people are aware of any changes. Anyone can find out their State Pension age with our online calculator or the 'Check your State Pension' statement service.

## ■ Universal Credit

**Dr Eilidh Whiteford:**

**[59862]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support and assistance the Government provides to families which experience reductions in their income as a result of the six-week waiting period for receipt of their first universal credit payment.

**Damian Hinds:**

Advances of Universal Credit are available if claimants need financial support before they receive their first payment. Advances can be up to 50% of the household's monthly entitlement.

In addition, there are various forms of Alternative Payment Arrangement available. These are designed to address various aspects of financial difficulty, including a direct payment of housing costs to the landlord, more frequent than monthly payments and split payments within a household in certain circumstances.

At the initial meeting with a new claimant, the Department's Work Coaches will assess the claimant's financial situation and determine if there is a need for Personal Budgeting Support. If there is, the claimant can be referred to a range of free services including the Money Advice Service and locally provided support. The Work Coach can also consider whether the criteria for an Alternative Payment Arrangement are met.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### TREASURY

#### ■ **Charter for Budget Responsibility autumn 2016 update**

**The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Philip Hammond):**

[\[HCWS417\]](#)

Today I have laid before Parliament an updated Charter for Budget Responsibility. The updated Charter sets out a new fiscal framework, changes to the operation of the welfare cap, and minor amendments to text on the operation of debt management.

The updated Charter laid today was published in draft on 23 November 2016. The Charter was first published in draft as it includes modified guidance to the Office for Budget Responsibility. Under Section 6(4) of the Budget Responsibility and National Audit Act 2011, 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.

Since publishing the Charter in draft one operational amendment has been made, requiring the Debt Management Office to produce a debt management report annually rather than as part of the Budget Report. This change has been made to facilitate the move to a single fiscal event. The change does not modify guidance to the Office for Budget Responsibility.

A debate and vote in the House of Commons on the updated Charter has been scheduled for Tuesday 24 January 2017.

#### ■ **OBR Fiscal sustainability report 2017**

**The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke):**

[\[HCWS416\]](#)

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) has today published its sixth Fiscal Sustainability Report (FSR), fulfilling its legal obligation to publish an analysis of the sustainability of the long-term public finances and an assessment of the public sector balance sheet at least once every two years. The report was laid before Parliament earlier today and copies are available in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office.

The FSR provides us with insight into how long-term economic and demographic trends, including our ageing population, are likely to impact the public finances over the next half century, without mitigating action. These long run projections are based on OBR assumptions of unchanged policy beyond the medium term horizon. They are therefore not the OBR's predictions of what will happen – but an illustrative projection of what may happen, if the government did not take action.

In producing these projections the OBR must make stylised assumptions, and as they note, many of these assumptions are subject to a high degree of uncertainty. The results are highly sensitive to these assumptions, and this is particularly the case over the 50 year horizon in the FSR. For example, the OBR project that debt to GDP by 2066-67 could be between 40% of GDP higher or 101% of GDP lower than the central projection,



depending on which assumptions are used to underpin projected growth in healthcare spending.

Their findings must be interpreted in this context. However, the FSR's underlying conclusion is clear: fiscal sustainability will come under increasing pressure from both demographic change and the need to improve efficiency and productivity over the next 50 years. It is important that action continues to be taken to address demographic pressures and improve efficiency, particularly in the health sector.

While the FSR's fundamental message is unchanged from previous reports, changes to the assumptions underpinning this year's projections drive higher projected spending than in previous reports. Higher projected spending, alongside higher initial borrowing and debt, feeds through, in turn, to higher projected borrowing and debt by the end of the projections.

In terms of specifics, the FSR projects that spending on the State Pension will rise from 5.0% of GDP in 2021-22 to 7.1% of GDP by 2066-67, putting significant pressure on taxpayers. To ensure that the State Pension remains sustainable and fair across generations, the government is carrying out its first review of State Pension age. The government will consider all the evidence – including an independent report by John Cridland – before formally responding by publishing its Review by 7 May 2017.

The FSR also projects that health spending will rise from 6.9% of GDP in 2021-22 to 12.6% of GDP in 2066-67, due to the inclusion of non-demographic cost pressures in the OBR's analysis for the first time. As the OBR note, there is significant uncertainty around this long-term projection, and it does not take into account the impact of any government action to address projected cost pressures in future Parliaments. We are taking steps over this Parliament to improve the efficiency of the NHS. This includes funding for the NHS's Five Year Forward View Plan, which sets out its vision for a sustainable long-term future for the NHS, and its proposals for reforms to help it meet future challenges. Decisions on funding in the longer-term will be for future governments to take.

Overall, the FSR demonstrates that the situation would be far graver without the significant progress made by this government since 2010. The deficit the government inherited in 2010 stood at 10% of GDP. We have now brought down the deficit by almost two-thirds of GDP and, by 2021-22, the OBR forecast that borrowing will have fallen to its lowest level in two decades. In 2018-19, the OBR forecast debt to fall as a share of GDP for the first time since 2000-01. The magnitude of the long-term fiscal sustainability challenge faced by the UK is similar to many other advanced economies, according to international institutions. Debt is projected to reach 141% of GDP in the US by 2046, and could reach over 180% of GDP in Germany by 2060. This compares to about 125% of GDP in the UK by 2046-47 and rising to about 200% of GDP by 2060-61 as projected in this year's FSR.

Nonetheless, despite significant progress made to repair the public finances since 2010, today's OBR projections suggest that, without further policy change, debt will reach over 234% of GDP by 2066-67 and continue on its upwards trajectory thereafter, driven by increased age-related spending.



Clearly, this would not be a responsible course of action. This provides the motivation for the fiscal framework that the government set out at Autumn Statement 2016. We must continue to reduce the deficit and get debt falling over the medium-term. And we must bring the public finances to balance at the earliest possible date in the next Parliament. The debate and vote on the new fiscal framework will take place next week, enshrining these commitments to fiscal responsibility into law.

As we look towards the next Parliament, ensuring that the public finances remain sustainable will continue to be one of this government's key priorities. In consideration of this fact, at Autumn Statement 2016, the Chancellor announced his intention to review public spending priorities and other commitments for the next Parliament in light of the evolving fiscal position at the next Spending Review. Fiscal discipline today will help us tackle any future economic shocks and reduce the burden of debt on future generations. Increasing life-expectancies and other economic trends will continue to pose challenges for the public finances. In response, we will continue to control public spending and grow the potential of the UK economy, including by targeting increased investment in infrastructure to increase the UK's long run productivity challenge.

The FSR is yet another important example of the credibility and transparency that the independent OBR brings to the public finances, as recognised recently by the IMF's Fiscal Transparency Evaluation.

## COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Homelessness Reduction Bill

**Minister for Local Government (Mr Marcus Jones):**

[\[HCWS418\]](#)

I am today updating the House on a commitment I made at Second Reading of the Homelessness Reduction Bill – the Member for Harrow East's Private Members' Bill – to fund the costs of the Bill in line with the new burdens doctrine.

I can confirm that the Government will provide £48m to local government to meet the new burdens costs associated with the Bill over the course of the Spending Review. It is estimated that offsetting savings to local authorities will mean there are no costs thereafter. This reflects the cost of the Bill in its current form. I will continue to monitor the Bill as it proceeds through the House and will update the new burdens assessment as appropriate once the Bill is in its final form.

#### **Estimated new burdens costs of the Homelessness Reduction Bill**

YEAR	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
<b>Net cost</b>	<b>£35.4m*</b>	<b>£12.1m*</b>	<b>£0</b>

\* Rounding means these are summed to £48m

The Government has been working with local councils and the Local Government Association to test the methodology behind the estimated costs, as well as the core assumptions within it.

We will continue to work with local councils and the Local Government Association to develop the distribution model for the funding. This will reflect differing need in different authorities.

I also intend to consider the case for making available a small amount of further funding for local authorities in high-pressure areas to manage the transition to the new duties in the Bill.

This would be in addition to the level of funding provided to meet our commitment to fund new burdens.

## ■ WINTER FLOODING 2015/2016

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Andrew Percy):** [\[HCWS412\]](#)

I would first like to thank all of those who supported local communities in the wake of the flooding in December 2015 and early January 2016. It is important that we recognise the enormous amount of effort that has gone into supporting households, businesses and communities repair and recover from these floods.

In the days that followed those storms, the Government very quickly identified that the immediate priority was to respond to the urgent needs of those affected and we have paid out almost £300 million to help householders, communities and businesses to get back on their feet. Furthermore, we have supported repairs to vital transport links, including getting the A591 in Cumbria open ahead of schedule, as well as improving flood defences and providing match funding for charity appeals.

Alongside this early response, Ministers informed the House of our intention to apply to the European Union Solidarity Fund. We submitted our initial application on 26 February 2016. The application was made within the 12 week deadline and included a provisional estimate of the cost of direct damage incurred by the floods in December 2015 and early January 2016.

The European Union Solidarity Fund is limited in principle to non-insurable damage and does not compensate for private losses, such as damage to private property. Long-term action – such as lasting reconstruction, economic redevelopment and prevention – are not eligible for support. In the case of a regional application, the Solidarity Fund retrospectively reimburses Member States for 2.5% of the direct costs associated with the damage incurred. As the assistance received is therefore dependent on the extent of the costs incurred, it has been important that we ensure the application represents our best estimate of the damage. Subsequent to the initial application, my department continued to work extensively with devolved administrations, local authorities and other government departments to refine and update our cost analysis and comply with the complex rules of the Fund. As a result of that work, the Government finalised the UK's application to the European Union Solidarity Fund in September 2016.

The Commission has now completed its assessment of our application and has proposed to the European Parliament and Council that the UK receives a notional €60 million in assistance (subject to approval by the two bodies). However, owing to the costs involved in making an application and the effect of clawback through the UK rebate, the overall net benefit to the UK is only estimated to be €17 million (circa £15 million). This will be further offset by a payment of £14.5m that the UK is legally obliged to make to the EU in respect of the UK's 2007 application (by then Labour Government) for Solidarity Fund assistance following the serious floods that year. The Commission carried out an assurance review in 2010 and 2011 to verify that all of the expenditure incurred was eligible. The UK Government is obliged to repay funding where there was ineligible spending under the Labour administration. Consequently, this funding does not offer additional support, but is only eligible to reimburse a small portion of the extensive financial support that has already been given by the Government to the areas affected.

The UK Government continues to stand squarely behind those flooded, working with local authorities to ensure households and businesses receive all eligible support. Furthermore, we are focused not only on ensuring the recovery from these floods, but also on preventing future damage – we are exceeding our manifesto commitment by building 1,500 new flood defence schemes that will better protect 300,000 more homes.

## DEFENCE

### ■ Phalanx Availability Contract - Contingent Liability

**Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Harriett Baldwin):** [\[HCWS415\]](#)

The Secretary of State for Defence has retrospectively laid before Parliament a Ministry of Defence (MOD) Departmental Minute describing the Contingent Liability within the Phalanx Close In Weapons System Availability Contract with Babcock Marine.

The Departmental Minute describes the Contingent Liability that the MOD will hold as a result of placing the new Phalanx availability contract, which will provide continuous support to the Navy's Operational Fleet of ships. The maximum contingent liability against the MOD is therefore £268 million over the two year life of the contract.

It is usual to allow a period of fourteen sitting days prior to accepting a Contingent Liability, to provide Members of Parliament with an opportunity to raise any questions. I apologise but on this occasion it was not possible to do so.

However, a break in the contract with Babcock Marine would have resulted in potential severe operational impact to the support of Phalanx, particularly those on-board ships deployed on operations and requiring contractor support to repair them. As such, and by exception, I approved the awarding of the new support contract with Babcock Marine from 22 December 2016; to come into effect from 31 December 2016. This ensures that support provided to Phalanx was not interrupted.

In accordance with the procedures established for cases of special urgency, the Department wrote to the Chairs of the Public Accounts Committee and the Defence

Committee on 23 December 2016, in advance of incurring this liability, inviting them to respond with any objections. No such objections have been received.

I apologise that the Ministry of Defence did not allow fourteen sitting days for Members of Parliament to signify an objection. Contracts of this type do not normally fall within the Parliamentary notification requirement, and it only became apparent that this contract was different late in the process. I have asked Ministry of Defence officials to ensure that these exceptions are identified earlier in future.

The Treasury has approved the proposal. If, during the period of fourteen Parliamentary sitting days beginning on the date on which the Minute was laid before Parliament, a member signifies an objection by giving notice of a Parliamentary Question or by otherwise raising the matter in parliament, I undertake to examine the objection and respond to the member concerned.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Outcomes from the 66th meeting of the International Whaling Commission

**Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (George Eustice):**

[\[HCWS414\]](#)

I was unable to attend last year's meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC66) on the 24-28 October 2016 in Slovenia but there was a strong UK delegation present.

This meeting marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the global moratorium on commercial whaling. I am happy to report that all UK objectives for this meeting were achieved and, as always, the UK worked tirelessly behind the scenes to influence and support crucial decisions intended to improve the conservation and welfare of cetaceans. The UK also ensured its long standing opposition to commercial whaling and whaling under Special Permit (scientific whaling) was made clear at every appropriate opportunity. As with previous meetings, there was the need for careful negotiation at times but overall the dialogue was constructive despite the fundamental differences in views.

I was pleased that a number of important Resolutions were adopted. In particular, IWC adopted a Resolution on the need for action to address the alarming decline in the critically endangered Vaquita. In line with the agreed position of EU Member States, the UK voted in support of the proposal. This was aligned with the UK's negotiating position and represents a good outcome. The Vaquita, a small cetacean found in Mexico, is under significant pressure from bycatch driven by the illegal trade in the Totoaba. With an estimated population size of only 59 individuals, action is needed now and so I was encouraged that Parties were able to put aside their disagreements on whether the scope of the IWC extended to small cetaceans in order to make this important statement.

I was also encouraged to see decisions taken on further modernisation of the organisation through institutional and governance improvements agreed by consensus, and the expansion of research efforts into important threats to cetaceans such as

contaminants passed by a vote. These are important steps forward. In line with the agreed position of EU Member States, the UK supported both of these proposals. This was aligned with the UK's negotiating position and represents a good outcome.

Reflecting on previous unsuccessful proposals for "small-type coastal whaling", Japan proposed a process for intersessional dialogue to address issues relating to fundamental differences of positions within the IWC. An informal process to discuss such issues was established. The UK will maintain a careful watching brief on this matter.

I was disappointed that Japan announced its intention to begin a new 12 year programme of whaling under Special Permit in the North Pacific. In collaboration with other EU Member States, the UK will ensure a strong coordinated statement is made in response to this announcement. The UK will continue to oppose the issuing of Special Permits on the basis that there is no justification for lethal scientific research on whales. I was, however, pleased that a Resolution was passed that should help strengthen the role of the IWC in considering Special Permits, albeit not by consensus. In line with the agreed position of EU Member States, the UK voted in support of the proposal. This was aligned with the UK's negotiating position and represents a good outcome.

A proposal brought forward by Japan, Cambodia and Ghana to create a fund to strengthen the capacity of Governments of Limited Means to participate in the IWC did not achieve consensus. Because consensus could not be reached with Parties, EU Member States were instructed to abstain from the vote. A number of other anti-whaling countries also abstained. The Resolution passed which is an acceptable outcome for the UK; although we will keep the development of the fund under close scrutiny to ensure appropriate safeguards and restrictions are in place.

Once again I am pleased to report that the UK, in line with the agreed position of EU Member States, voted in favour of establishing a South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary. Unfortunately the proposal failed to gain the three-quarters majority required for adoption. This will be re-tabled at the next meeting in 2018, which was announced as being hosted by Brazil.

Finally, I was pleased that the UK led work to progress the consideration of non-hunting threats to cetacean welfare was well received. A number of important recommendations were proposed to allow this important and groundbreaking work to continue. These were agreed by consensus meaning the UK can continue working closely with NGOs and academia to move this to the next stage.

In conclusion, this was a successful meeting and the UK made clear its continued strong opposition to commercial and scientific whaling. We now turn our attention to building for the 2018 meeting in Brazil, and will be working very closely with civil society in order to continue developing and delivering tangible improvements to the conservation and welfare of cetaceans globally.

On 23 June, the EU referendum took place and the people of the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. Within IWC, until exit is concluded, the UK will continue to operate as

part of the EU. Once we leave the EU, we will regain the ability to speak and vote independently at IWC and will be able to form broader coalitions to promote the conservation of whales and cetaceans.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ HS2 Phase One: Government Response to the Lords Select Committee Report

**Secretary of State for Transport (Chris Grayling):**

**[[HCWS413](#)]**

*I am today publishing the Department's response to the Special Report from the House of Lords Select Committee for the HS2 Phase One hybrid Bill that was published on 15 December 2017.*

*The Lords Select Committee was tasked with considering petitions from those specially and directly affected by the Bill and subsequent additional provisions to the Bill. Their First Special Report concludes the Committee deliberations which began in May 2016. The Lords Select Committee considered 822 petitions lodged against the HS2 Phase One hybrid Bill. Of these, the locus of 278 petitions was successfully challenged. Of the remaining 544 petitions the Select Committee heard 314 petitions in formal session, with the remainder withdrawing, or choosing not to appear before the Select Committee, mainly as a result of successful prior negotiation with HS2 Ltd.*

*The Select Committee's recent report summarises their hearings and contains modifications to the Bill powers, directions for action by the Promoter in a number of specific cases and more general recommendations on what actions the Promoter should take on a range of other issues.*

*In responding to the Select Committee we have confined our response to those areas of the report where the Select Committee has requested the Government take action or where we believe a further clarification would be beneficial.*

*Alongside the response to the Select Committee report, we are also publishing the Statement of Reasons Command Paper. The Statement of Reasons is required by Parliamentary Standing Order 83A in order to assist the House of Lords during the 3rd Reading of the HS2 Phase One hybrid Bill. This document summarises the work that has already been done to assess, control and mitigate the environmental impacts of HS2 Phase One, and explains why the Government continues to take the view that the HS2 Phase One project is worthy of Parliament's support.*

*Copies of the Response to the Select Committee can be found on the GOV.UK. website. Copies of the Statement of Reasons will be made available in the libraries of both Houses.*

#### **Attachments:**

1. CM 9396 [170117-Command Paper 9396.pdf]
2. CM 9398 [170117-Lords-HS2 Phase One Statement of Reasons Command Paper-Cm9398.pdf]