This report shows written answers and statements provided on 14 July 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:37 P.M., 14 July 2017). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: [http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/](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 unstarrred.
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Carbon Emissions

Grahame Morris: [3676]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will set a target date for the UK to become carbon neutral.

Claire Perry:

We are focused on delivering our existing long term carbon target as set out in the Climate Change Act - to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Advertising

Deidre Brock: [3400]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much his Department has spent on advertising on social media in each month since January 2016.

Margot James:

Since January 2016, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Department for Energy and Climate Change and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy have spent the following amount on social media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Spend</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2016</td>
<td>£10,979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2016</td>
<td>£40,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2016</td>
<td>£132,073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2016</td>
<td>£37,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2016</td>
<td>£33,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2016</td>
<td>£40,364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2016</td>
<td>£9,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2016</td>
<td>£42,983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>£13,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2016</td>
<td>£19,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2016</td>
<td>£12,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Spend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>£10,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2017</td>
<td>£12,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2017</td>
<td>£11,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>£130,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td>£136,318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2017</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2017</td>
<td>£0</td>
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These figures represent gross social media advertising spend excluding fees, commission and VAT. ‘Social’ channels are defined as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat (traded as display) and Twitter. These figures represent total spend for each month by DECC, BIS and now BEIS since January 2016.

Government advertising supports the government’s priorities and helps deliver its programmes, from raising awareness of the National Minimum and Living Wage, to encouraging young people to apply for apprenticeships. The media in which we place government advertising are selected for their ability to most effectively reach our target audience.

Government advertising is purchased by our media buying partner, Carat. Carat has held the contract for UK government media buying since January 2015.

### Energy: UK Trade with EU

**Drew Hendry:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will assess the effect on the energy sector of the UK leaving the EU without having agreed a trade deal with the EU.

**Richard Harrington:**

*Holding answer 11 July 2017*: Departments are currently conducting analysis with the Department for Exiting the EU to understand the impacts that withdrawal will have on business, consumers and other economic actors. We are committed to securing the best possible deal with the EU and will ensure effective energy market operation and cross border trading of energy.
EU Exit Business Advisory Group: Manufacturing Industries

Mary Creagh: [3968]
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Oral Answer of 27 June 2017, Official Report, column 441, what organisations on the EU Exit Business Advisory Group represent the chemicals industry.

Claire Perry:
The Government regularly engages constructively and positively with businesses and representative organisations, including with the chemicals industry, on EU exit and other issues.

Industry

Rebecca Long Bailey: [3480]
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the Government plans to publish its response to the Building our Industrial Strategy consultation.

Claire Perry:
[ Holding answer 11 July 2017]: We are currently analysing the responses to the consultation and intend to publish an Industrial Strategy white paper in late 2017.

Iron and Steel: Reviews

Stephen Kinnock: [3000]
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish his Department's Steel Future Capabilities Review; and what effect that review will have on Government (a) policy and (b) procurement practices.

Claire Perry:
We will publish the Future Capabilities of the UK Steel sector study as soon as it has been finalised.

The study, which involved the sector at all stages, was intended to support the UK steel sector identify future opportunities, in terms of domestic steel demand, within the UK market over the next 15 years. It should also help shape the steel sector’s proposal for a sector deal, under the Government’s Industrial Strategy. As well as generating policy considerations for the Government, including potentially around procurement practices, it will identify challenges which need to be addressed by the sector itself in order to capture these future opportunities.

Motor Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries

Bridget Phillipson: [3435]
To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Answer of 25 October 2016 to Question HL2367, on motor vehicles, if it remains his Department's policy to support all UK-based or manufacturers and ensure that their ability to export is not adversely affected when the UK leaves the EU.
Claire Perry:  
[Holding answer 11 July 2017]: Yes, BEIS officials are working closely with the UK automotive industry to understand the impacts and opportunities of leaving the EU. The Government will continue its longstanding programme of support for the competitiveness of the UK automotive industry, including pursuing a bold and ambitious Free Trade Agreement with the EU that provides the greatest possible tariff-free and frictionless trade in goods and services.

Bridget Phillipson:  
[3608] To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the implications are for his Department's policies of data published by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders on 20 June 2017 on investment in the automotive sector during the first half of 2017.

Claire Perry:  
[Holding answer 12 July 2017]: The Department works closely with the UK automotive industry, including through the Automotive Council, to understand the issues and opportunities the sector faces. The Government will continue its longstanding programme of support for the sector’s competitiveness. The UK has been very successful in attracting inward investment from automotive companies. Companies such as Nissan and Toyota have continued to re-invest, thanks to our highly-skilled workforce, strong partnership between government and industry, and long-term investment in new technology and innovation.

Layla Moran:  
[3616] To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the implications for the motor manufacturing industry of the UK leaving the EU with no deal.

Claire Perry:  
The Department works closely with the UK automotive industry to understand the impacts and opportunities of leaving the EU. A strong common ground exists between us and other EU member states for automotive trade. The UK is the second largest market for cars in the EU, and manufacturing supply chains are highly integrated across Europe. It is in both our interests to ensure trade is free. The Government will continue its longstanding programme of support for the sector’s competitiveness. We are determined to ensure that the UK continues to be one of the most competitive locations in the world for automotive and advanced manufacturing. This includes seeking a tariff and barrier-free comprehensive free trade deal in goods and services with the EU for a new, mutually beneficial customs agreement that allows cross-border trade to be as frictionless as possible.
Open University: Overseas Students

Catherine West:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with the Open University on its use of a restricted countries list in its applications process.

Joseph Johnson:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had no such meetings. Higher Education policy is a matter for the Department for Education.

Post Offices: Bank Services

Stuart C. McDonald:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has received any representations on the Post Office’s planned operation of Transcash in 2017-18.

Margot James:

The Department has not received any representation on the Post Office’s operation of Santander’s Transcash service in 2017-18.

UK Trade with EU

Bridget Phillipson:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what response the Government plans to make to the request by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders of 20 June 2017 for an interim agreement for the UK to remain in the customs union as long as necessary to agree a comprehensive trade deal with the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Claire Perry:

[Holding answer 12 July 2017]: The Department works closely with the UK automotive industry including through the Automotive Council which is attended by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. We have frequent conversations about the challenges that leaving the EU poses and the opportunities available to different sectors as well as the government’s position as set out in the EU Exit White Paper. As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has said we will continue to work closely with business to ensure we reflect the key concerns and deliver the best deal for Britain.
### Banks: Closures

**Mr Nigel Evans:**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government is taking to prevent the closure of the last remaining local bank in communities where there is a high population.

**Stephen Barclay:**

Decisions on the opening and closing of individual bank branches are taken by the management team of each bank on a commercial basis without intervention from Government. While banks and building societies need to balance customer interests, market competition, and other commercial factors when considering their strategy, the Government is pleased to see that the industry is committing to further improvements to protect those affected by branch closures. For this reason, the Government welcomed the industry-wide Access to Banking Protocol and Professor Russel Griggs' independent ‘one year on’ review, published last November.

Building on Professor Griggs’ review, the new Access to Banking Standard came into effect on 1 May. The Standard commits banks to ensure customers are better informed about branch closures and the reasons for them closing, along with the options they have locally to continue to access banking services, including specialist assistance for customers who need more help.

### Government Securities

**Neil O'Brien:**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will list by country where stocks of gilts are held by overseas investors and foreign central banks; and how much and what proportion of such stocks are held in different countries.

**Neil O'Brien:**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will list by country flows of interest payments on UK central Government debt held by overseas investors and foreign central banks.

**Stephen Barclay:**

The Treasury does not hold information on the organisations or individuals who hold gilts. However, information on gilt holdings by different sectors is published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The most recent publication shows that at the end of March 2017, overseas investors hold 27% of gilts in issuance, but this does not include a breakdown of gilt holdings by country.
Insurance

David Linden: [3386]
To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he will make an assessment of the effect on the insurance sector of the UK leaving the EU without having agreed a trade deal with the EU.

Stephen Barclay:
Treasury ministers and officials are in close contact with the insurance industry and are assessing how firms would be affected by the many possible outcomes of market access discussions.

Iron and Steel: USA

David Linden: [3621]
To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he last discussed with members of the US Cabinet trade in steel between the US and the UK.

Stephen Barclay:
Given the breadth and depth of the UK-US relationship, there are regular discussions between UK Ministers and their US counterparts on economic and other issues – including on US trade and steel. Global overcapacity in steel and other sectors has also been discussed regularly with international partners, including at the G7 and G20 Summit.

Motor Vehicles: Insurance

Justin Tomlinson: [3934]
To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will take steps to ensure that administration fees charged by car insurance companies for changes to policies are proportionate to the cost of the policy change.

Stephen Barclay:
The Government is determined that insurers should treat customers fairly and firms are required to do so under the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) rules. These include, amongst other things, requirements to treat customers fairly, and clearly disclose administration fees before they are payable. FCA rules also prevent insurers from profiting from cancellation fees. Specifically, insurers must not use cancellation fees to penalise customers and any fees charged must have been reasonably incurred by the firm.

The Government does not tend to intervene in the level of charges administered by insurance firms as this is ultimately a matter of their commercial judgment. However, if an individual feels that they have not been treated fairly and would like to complain about a particular type of insurance practice, they can contact the FCA through their consumer support service.
Overseas Loans

Jim Shannon:

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps are being taken to improve transparency of loans made to Governments outside the UK.

Stephen Barclay:

The Loans to Ireland Act 2010 provided Parliamentary authorisation for a bilateral loan of £3.2 billion to Ireland. Under section 2 of this Act, HM Treasury provides a report to Parliament on the UK’s bilateral loan to Ireland as soon as practicable after 31 March and 30 September each year. The UK also provides lending to overseas buyers to support UK exporters through UK Export Finance, details of which are reported in their annual report. The UK also has a limited portfolio of loans to developing countries made in the past through the Department for International Development, and the balances are reported in DFID’s annual report. The UK engages in discussions on debt internationally and has agreed to principles on debt sustainability in the G20. This includes work to improve transparency sovereign debt data.

Treasury: Advertising

Deidre Brock:

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much his Department has spent on advertising on social media in each month since January 2016.

Andrew Jones:

I can advise that there was no advertising expenditure on social media between January 2016 and August 2016. I can confirm that between September 2016 and to date, that £789.67 have been spent per month on social media.

Treasury: USA

David Linden:

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he last met the US Commerce Secretary; and what was discussed at that meeting.

Stephen Barclay:

The Chancellor of the Exchequer and other Treasury Ministers meet with their international counterparts on a regular basis, including at the G7, G20 and other fora, where they discuss a range of policy issues. Details of ministers’ overseas travel is published on a quarterly basis and is available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel.

In line with the practice of successive administrations details of ministerial discussions are not routinely disclosed.
David Linden:

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he last met the US Treasury Secretary; and what was discussed at that meeting.

Stephen Barclay:

The Chancellor of the Exchequer and other Treasury Ministers meet with their international counterparts on a regular basis, including at the G7, G20 and other fora, where they discuss a range of policy issues. Details of ministers’ overseas travel is published on a quarterly basis and is available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel.

In line with the practice of successive administrations details of ministerial discussions are not routinely disclosed.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Council Housing: Construction

Dr David Drew:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what his policy is on amending the provision of local authority housing finance further to incentivise construction of council houses.

Alok Sharma:

Under the Self-Financing Settlement introduced in 2012, local housing authorities now retain their own rental income. This is a good deal under which local authorities are empowered to make their own spending decisions including the construction of additional housing where they think appropriate. At the same time, local authorities have retained almost £2 billion of Right to Buy receipts for the purposes of replacing stock sold under Right to Buy.

Council Housing: Sales

Gloria De Piero:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many council homes have been sold in (a) Ashford constituency and (b) Nottingham in each year since 2010.

Alok Sharma:


Figures are not collected at a constituency level.
Department for Communities and Local Government: Ministerial Policy Advisers

Jim Fitzpatrick:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many policy advisers employed by his Department are experts in external wall systems, including cladding systems; and what that expertise is.

Jim Fitzpatrick:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many of the policy advisers in his Department are experts in external wall insulation systems, including cladding systems; and what qualifications and experience inform their expertise.

Alok Sharma:

The Department employs staff with expertise in a range of technical building issues, including with expertise related to aspects of external wall insulation and cladding systems, and with specific fire safety expertise.

The independent expert panel will provide advice to the government on any immediate measures needed to make buildings safe following the Grenfell Tower fire.

Jim Fitzpatrick:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many people in his Department in (a) 2010 and (b) 2017 (i) had expertise in cladding systems, (ii) were chartered structural engineers and (iii) were fire experts working in policy teams advising on cladding and external wall insulation systems.

Alok Sharma:

In 2010, two members of staff had specific expertise in fire safety matters. Five members of staff had specific expertise in cladding and external wall insulation.

Currently, three members of staff have expertise related to aspects of cladding and external wall insulation systems, including one member of staff who has specific fire safety expertise and one member of staff who is a chartered structural engineer.

In both 2010 and 2017 (and all years between), DCLG has had a structural engineering support contract in place to supply specialist structural engineering advice. This contract could provide any additional experienced chartered engineers as required.

The independent expert panel will provide advice to the government on any immediate measures needed to make buildings safe following the Grenfell Tower fire.

Fire Prevention

Jim Fitzpatrick:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, which external bodies his Department has consulted on the safety of cladding and external wall insulation systems in the last 12 months.
**Alok Sharma:**

An official met with the National House Building Council in July 2016 to discuss an NHBC guidance note on the “acceptability of common wall constructions containing combustible materials in high rise buildings”.

The Department is now working closely with the expert panel set up in response to the Grenfell Tower fire. These discussions form the basis of two notes, published on 30 June and 6 July, which set out the steps being taken to provide advice to landlords on the safety of cladding and external wall insulation systems when used as part of a wider building external wall system. The notes can be found at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/explanatory-note-on-safety-checks-and-testing](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/explanatory-note-on-safety-checks-and-testing) and [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/expert-panel-recommends-further-tests-on-cladding-and-insulation](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/expert-panel-recommends-further-tests-on-cladding-and-insulation)

**Jim Fitzpatrick:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what pre-assessment is undertaken before cladding or an external wall insulation system is installed to ensure that buildings are suitable for those modifications; and what advice he has provided to local authorities on such pre-assessment of buildings.

**Alok Sharma:**

It is the responsibility of people carrying out building work to ensure compliance with the Building Regulations. As well as requirements relating to fire safety (Schedule 1 of the Building Regulations, Part B), requirements relating to structures (Part A), resistance to moisture (Part C) and conservation of fuel and power (Part L) will be relevant. Building owners should take account of all these considerations.

**Fire Prevention: Finance**

**Lucy Powell:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what funding is available to (a) local authorities, (b) arms-length management organisations, (c) social landlords whose properties have been acquired through stock transfer and (d) private landlords for the (i) removal of cladding that has failed safety tests and (ii) reapplication of new cladding.

**Alok Sharma:**

[Holding answer 10 July 2017]: Where Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding is present on residential buildings over 18 metres in height, the Government is providing testing for local authorities, housing associations and private sector landlords, free of charge. If the screening tests indicate that such cladding would not meet the limited combustibility requirements of the current Building Regulations guidance, it is for landlords in consultation with the fire and rescue service and other experts to determine, and take, the best course of action, communicating closely with residents. My Department has issued advice on the interim mitigating measures landlords should implement. Where work is necessary to ensure the fire safety of
social housing, we will ensure that lack of financial resources will not prevent them going ahead.

### Flats: Fire Prevention

Emma Hardy:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to enable councils to access flats bought under right to buy in order to undertake compliance checks for fire safety.

Alok Sharma:

Local authorities have strong powers to deal with poor quality, unsafe accommodation and we expect them to use those powers. Under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), local authorities can issue an Improvement Notice or a Hazard Awareness Notice if they find a defect in the property. Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice is a criminal offence for which local authorities can impose a financial penalty of up to £30,000 or prosecute in the courts which have the power to impose an unlimited fine. In extreme circumstances, the local authority may decide to make repairs themselves, or to prohibit that property from being rented out. The HHSRS applies to all residential properties, regardless of who owns them. Leases will normally also provide a landlord with the right to inspect in good faith where there is concern about the maintenance or repair.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places a duty on housing providers to undertake a fire risk assessment of the common parts of their properties and to put in place and maintain adequate fire precautions to manage the risk that lives could be lost in a fire. The Order is enforced by fire and rescue authorities. Failure to comply with the provisions of the Fire Safety Order may lead to prosecution and potentially a significant fine or custodial sentence.

### Grenfell Tower: Fires

Diana Johnson:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what information his Department holds on whether any survivors of the Grenfell Tower fire who have been made statutory homeless have been declared intentionally homeless by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council.

Alok Sharma:

No survivors of the fire have been declared intentionally homeless and none will be if they do not accept an offer of temporary accommodation.

As the Secretary of State said on 3 July, we are committed to ensuring that families have a choice, and their wishes and needs are fully taken into account. This statement can be found at [http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-07-03/debates/AC706A82-B504-4E3B-9797-85F6B2F20295/GrenfellTower](http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-07-03/debates/AC706A82-B504-4E3B-9797-85F6B2F20295/GrenfellTower)
Diana Johnson:
To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether money from the Grenfell Tower Residents' Discretionary Fund can be used to fund the legal costs of court challenges for those affected by the fire.

Alok Sharma:
The Grenfell Tower Residents’ Discretionary Fund has been set up to meet the urgent needs of residents, but will not cover legal costs. However, the Government has announced that it will be providing an additional fund to meet the costs of providing victims with legal representation at the inquiry. This fund is not legal aid, but legal aid may be available to cover certain other legal costs that residents might face.

Grenfell Tower: Insulation

Mike Kane:
To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether the cladding used at Grenfell Tower was approved for use when the tower was refurbished; and whether standards changed after that refurbishment.

Alok Sharma:
The Government cannot release information specific to the Grenfell Tower, as this would cut across the police investigation currently underway.

The Department wrote to local authority and housing association landlords on 18 June, setting out immediate actions that should be taken to identify residential tower blocks over 18 metres in height with aluminium type external cladding. The Department wrote again on 19 June to set out the process they should follow to submit samples of aluminium composite material cladding for testing.

On 30 June, we published a note at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/explanatory-note-on-safety-checks-and-testing. This note confirms the advice in those letters to local authorities, with further specific information about the tests being carried out.

On 6 July we published details of further tests to be carried out as the next step in helping landlords to ensure the safety of their buildings. These large scale tests will help establish how different types of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) panels in combination with different types of insulation behave in a fire. Further detail about the next testing stage can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/news/expert-panel-recommends-further-tests-on-cladding-and-insulation.

High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention

Mr Clive Betts:
To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of whether additional costs to local authorities for fire prevention measures in tower blocks will reduce expenditure on the maintenance of other social housing.
Alok Sharma:

[Holding answer 13 July 2017]: Where work is necessary to ensure the fire safety of social housing, we will ensure that lack of financial resources will not prevent it going ahead.

Theresa Villiers:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to ensure that residential buildings of 10 storeys and higher are re-inspected to ensure that fire regulations are being complied with.

Alok Sharma:

[Holding answer 26 June 2017]: The Department wrote to local authority and housing association landlords on 18 June, setting out immediate actions that should be taken to identify residential tower blocks over 18 metres in height with aluminium type external cladding. The Department wrote again on 19 June to set out the process they should follow to submit samples of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding for testing.

On 30 June, we published a note at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/explanatory-note-on-safety-checks-and-testing. This note confirms the advice in those letters to local authorities, with further specific information about the tests being carried out.

On 6 July we published details of further tests to be carried out as the next step in helping landlords to ensure the safety of their buildings. These large scale tests will help establish how different types of ACM panels in combination with different types of insulation behave in a fire. Further detail about the next testing stage can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/news/expert-panel-recommends-further-tests-on-cladding-and-insulation.

Diana Johnson:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what additional fire safety arrangements will be put in place in tall residential tower blocks which may have flammable cladding; and what central Government funding is available to finance such arrangements.

Alok Sharma:

[Holding answer 27 June 2017]: The Department wrote to local authority and housing association landlords on 18 June, setting out immediate actions that should be taken to identify residential tower blocks over 18 metres in height with aluminium type external cladding. The Department wrote again on 19 June to set out the process they should follow to submit samples of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding for testing.

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Where work is necessary to ensure the fire safety of social housing, we will ensure that lack of financial resources will not prevent it going ahead.

### High Rise Flats: Insulation

**Jim Fitzpatrick:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what reports his Department has received of incidents of cladding coming away from external walls on high-risk buildings.

**Alok Sharma:**

The Department has been made aware of an incident where cladding came away from high rise buildings but which did not result in injury. The Department is following this up with relevant bodies.

### High Rise Flats: Safety

**Jim Fitzpatrick:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will define the terms (a) high rise, (b) tower block and (c) multi-storey for the purposes of the building safety review to be carried out as a result of the Grenfell Tower fire.

**Alok Sharma:**

For the purposes of the review being conducted by the Government’s expert panel, high rise, tower block and multi-storey are defined as residential properties over 18 metres in height. This is the height at which relevant and additional fire safety requirements are triggered by paragraph 12.7 of Building Regulations Fire Safety Approved Document B guidance.

### Housing: Construction

**Mike Kane:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what proportion of the Home Building Fund has been allocated to property developers in each region since October 2016.

**Alok Sharma:**

In October 2016, the Government launched the £3 billion Home Building Fund, a fund which will provide loans for SME builders, custom builders and offsite construction, and which will unlock large sites throughout England. The £3 billion Home Building Fund is broken down into two funds:
The £1 billion short term fund (STF) is available to small builders, custom builders and innovators and the £2 billion long term fund (LTF) is to deliver infrastructure and site preparation for large sites, including brown field.

The below table presents the proportion of the Home Building Fund (in terms of projects supported) in each region, as recorded by the Homes and Communities Agency, and broken down into long term funding and short term funding. Percentages may not total 100 per cent, as they are rounded to the nearest per cent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HCA Region</th>
<th>LTF</th>
<th>STF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East &amp; South East</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East, Yorkshire &amp; Humber</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South &amp; South West</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National projects are projects where sites are being delivered over multiple areas. This category also includes the £50 million which has been committed to the Housing Growth Partnership.

**Justin Madders:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make it his policy to restrict housing developers from being able to recommend solicitors to prospective buyers.

**Alok Sharma:**

Advice on identifying and working with a solicitor or conveyancer is provided through the Money Advice Service, an independent service set up by Government to help people manage their money.

The Government has no current plans to introduce restrictions on who can recommend solicitors to prospective buyers.

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**Housing: Leasehold**

**Hilary Benn:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what recent assessment he has made of trends in the number of developers selling on the leasehold of new-build homes to other companies; and if he will make a statement.
Alok Sharma:
We do not collect data on the number of developers selling the freehold of a new build home to a third party. Our manifesto made clear that we will crack down on unfair practices in leasehold, and the Housing White Paper states we will promote fairness and transparency for leaseholders.

Leasehold Advisory Service

Justin Madders: [3065]
To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will appoint a representative of the Leasehold Knowledge Partnership to the board of the Leasehold Advisory Service.

Alok Sharma:
It is desirable for Board members of the Leasehold Advisory Service to have knowledge or experience of the housing sector, particularly issues that affect residential leasehold sector. This was included within the last public recruitment exercise for Board members and those appointed had relevant experience. There is no current or planned requirement for a member of the Board of the Leasehold Advisory Service to be a representative of the Leasehold Knowledge Partnership.

Non-domestic Rates: Police Stations

Andrew Gwynne: [3469]
To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions Ministers of his Department have had with representatives from police forces on the effect of business rate changes on local police stations.

Andrew Gwynne: [3471]
To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what discussions Ministers of his Department have had with their counterparts in the Home Office on the effect of business rate changes on local police stations.

Mr Marcus Jones:
Business rates are based on valuations from the Valuation Office Agency and we do not intervene in their independent assessments. We have put in place a £3.6 billion transitional relief scheme for England to support ratepayers at the 2017 revaluation. The transitional relief scheme has capped annual increases in rate bills due to the revaluation.

Planning Permission

Andrew Gwynne: [3425]
To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to bring forward amendments to improve safety standards in planning regulations.
Alok Sharma:
Building control and the planning system are separate regimes and new development often requires approval under both. In the light of the Grenfell Tower fire, the Prime Minister has made clear the need to look at wider issues.

Private Rented Housing: Greater London

Stephen Timms:
To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the effect of borough-wide licensing schemes on the value of buy-to-rent properties in (a) London and (b) each London borough.

Alok Sharma:
[Holding answer 13 July 2017]: The Government has not carried out an assessment on the effect of borough-wide licensing schemes on the value of buy-to-rent properties in (a) London and (b) each London borough.

Sleeping Rough

Catherine West:
To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to eliminate rough sleeping by 2027.

Mr Marcus Jones:
Nobody should ever have to sleep rough and this Government will aim to halve rough sleeping over the course of the parliament and eliminate it altogether by 2027. To achieve this we will set up a new homelessness reduction taskforce and pilot a Housing First approach to tackle rough sleeping.

We have already allocated £30 million of funding specifically to support rough sleepers, including people at risk of sleeping rough, new rough sleepers and those with the most complex needs.

In addition, the Government backed and is now implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act which requires councils to provide support to people earlier.

Social Rented Housing: Electrical Safety

Wera Hobhouse:
To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will introduce mandatory electrical safety checks in the social rented sector in response to the Grenfell Tower disaster.

Alok Sharma:
[Holding answer 3 July 2017]: Social landlords are already obliged, by law, to maintain the structure and exterior of their properties, and to keep in repair and proper working order the sanitation, water, gas and electricity installations.

The Homes and Communities Agency’s national standards also require social landlords to ensure (subject to an agreed extension in some instances, which must
be explained to tenants) that all their homes meet the Decent Homes Standard and to meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

Social Rented Housing: Fire Prevention

Stephen Doughty:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Oral Answer of 26 June 2017, Official Report, column 361, when he last met representatives of estate management companies to discuss fire safety and their obligations to tenants in managed apartment blocks.

Alok Sharma:

[Holding answer 4 July 2017]: My officials meet regularly with key representatives from local authorities, housing associations as well as other arms length organisations (such as tenant management organisations) with responsibilities for carrying housing management functions as part of the Department’s routine work. Building owners, landlords both in the private and social rented sectors, freeholders and/or managing agents are responsible for ensuring the safety of residents. This is covered by the Housing Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Social Rented Housing: Insulation

Liz Saville Roberts:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether the Government is taking steps to proceed with renovating all social housing properties that have been fitted with flammable cladding.

Alok Sharma:

Where Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding is present on social housing over 18 metres in height, the Government is providing testing for local authorities and housing associations free of charge. If the screening tests indicate that such cladding would not meet the limited combustibility requirements of the current Building Regulations guidance, local authorities housing associations and the fire and rescue service will determine the best course of action, communicating closely with residents. Where works are necessary to ensure the fire safety of social housing, we will ensure that lack of financial resources will not prevent them going ahead.

Social Rented Housing: Standards

Liz Saville Roberts:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether his Department will undertake a full review of all social housing properties making an assessment of safety in terms of resilience in a potential disaster, safety for human habitation and fitness for purpose.
Alok Sharma:
The Department wrote to local authority and housing association landlords on 18 June, setting out immediate actions that should be taken to identify residential tower blocks over 18 metres in height with aluminium type external cladding. The Department wrote again on 19 June to set out the process they should follow to submit samples of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding for testing.

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All social housing must comply with the Home Standard which requires registered providers of social housing to comply with all statutory health and safety requirements, including fire safety requirements. The Social Regulator considers all referrals it receives to determine whether they could represent a breach of its consumer standards. If such a breach is found, the Regulator will intervene if it finds that the breach has caused – or may cause – serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants.

Temporary Accommodation: Emergencies

Liz Saville Roberts:

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of placing a requirement on councils to have emergency plans in place for rehousing and compensating residents in the event of a disaster.

Alok Sharma:

Local authorities are Category 1 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Category 1 responders are subject to the full set of civil protection duties. They are required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning. They are also required to put in place emergency plans. The Government has also issued non-statutory guidance in the 2014 Evacuation and Shelter Guidance for local emergency planners.
**DEFENCE**

### Annington Homes

**Toby Perkins:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the implications for the public purse of Annington's 2021 review of rents on the properties sold to it by his Department in 1996; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

I am unable to comment on the work currently under way to ensure any new housing contract proves better value for the Department as to do so would prejudice the Department's commercial interests. There is a break clause to allow for re-negotiation of the contract with Annington Homes Limited in 2021.

### Army

**Toby Perkins:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his policy is on the size of the British Army; and if he will make a statement.

**Mark Lancaster:**

We will maintain the overall size of the Armed Forces, including an Army that is capable of fielding a war-fighting division.

### Counter-terrorism

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many personnel from his Department supported the (a) civilian and (b) military components of Operation Temperer following the activation of that operation on 23 May 2017.

**Mark Lancaster:**

There were approximately 1,400 Defence personnel working in direct support of Operation Temperer following its activation on the 23 May 2017. Approximately 980 of those were military personnel and 390 were Ministry of Defence Police, who deployed in support of the Police. The remaining personnel, a combination of both civilian and military, were supporting the Headquarters elements.

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many personnel from his Department who support the (a) civilian and (b) military components of Operation Temperer had leave cancelled during the period of the operation's activation from 23 May 2017.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Operation Temperer utilises pre-identified personnel who are held at varying levels of readiness and is designed to limit the impact on personnel. As such, there was no need to cancel any leave during this period of activation.
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Sport: Drugs

Mr Jonathan Lord:

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to tackle the use of performance-enhancing drugs in (a) elite and (b) amateur UK sport.

Mr Jonathan Lord:

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to tackle doping in (a) elite and (b) amateur UK sport.

Tracey Crouch:

The Government is fully committed to eradicating the use of performance enhancing substances and methods in sport.

UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) is our Arms Length Body with responsibility for tackling the use of performance-enhancing drugs. UKAD drives a clean sport programme including a successful education programme, along with athlete testing across more than 40 Olympic, Paralympic and professional sports.

Using information from a wide range of sources, UKAD focuses resources where there is the highest risk of doping, whether this be in amateur or professional sports, with the aim of targeting the right people at the right time.

On 30th March, the Government launched a review to ensure UKAD continues to be able to work as effectively as possible and be a world-leader in tackling anti-doping.

EDUCATION

Asylum: Children

Gavin Newlands:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to HCWS232, published on 1 November 2016, if she will place in the Library copies of the quarterly updates the Government provides to the Children's Commissioners for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on the safeguarding of unaccompanied children.

Gavin Newlands:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to HCWS232, published on 1 November 2016, when she expects to publish the joint Home Office and Department for Education Unaccompanied Children Safeguarding Strategy.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The safeguarding strategy on unaccompanied and refugee children will be published this autumn.
I am placing a copy of the previous update in the House Library and any future updates will also be placed in the library.

Children: Day Care

Tracy Brabin:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many local authorities have made representation to her Department on their ability to deliver 30 hours free childcare to all applicable children from September 2017.

Mr Robert Goodwill:
The department works closely with our national delivery contractor, Childcare Works, in supporting all local authorities (LA) to ensure they are ready to deliver from September 2017. LAs who have specific needs are offered targeted support packages. Each LA has a dedicated programme adviser assigned by Childcare Works to support them in their preparations for delivery.

We are making record investments in the government’s free childcare offer: over £1 billion more per year by 2020. This includes £300 million per year for a significant increase to the hourly rates paid for two, three and four-year-old entitlement. From April 2017, the national average funding rates also increased to £4.94 for three and four-year-olds and £5.39 for two-year-olds. We are also investing £100m in capital funding to create nearly 18,000 additional places for eligible children to help meet demand from hardworking parents. This investment will support even more providers to deliver 30 hours.

Tracy Brabin:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance her Department has given to nurseries and childcare providers on charging for (a) meals, (b) activities, (c) nappies and (d) any other items outwith the 30 free hours of childcare provided from September 2017.

Mr Robert Goodwill:
The department’s revised Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities provides clear guidance to local authorities and providers in delivering the existing free entitlements for two, three and four-year-olds and the 30 hours extended entitlement.


The guidance clearly sets out that providers can charge parents for meals, consumables (such as nappies and sun cream) and for additional activities (such as trips and yoga), as long as parents are not required to pay any fee as a condition of taking up their child’s free entitlement place. In April, the department also published Operational Guidance, providing practical examples and case studies of how the free entitlements can be delivered, including examples of charging models.

Department for Education: ICT

Martyn Day: [2593]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the amount of manual processing on paper that it carries out and to make such processing digital.

Mr Robert Goodwill:
The government continues to encourage more people to go online, so they can access the guidance and services they need – as well as reducing the cost of public services. The department has continued to reduce its paper consumption. This has been achieved through better print facilities and a continuing programme of IT improvements, such as the Digital Apprenticeship Service, which are helping to decrease our reliance on paper.

First Aid: Education

Justin Tomlinson: [3170]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make it her policy to include the teaching of emergency lifesaving skills in the curriculum for all students.

Nick Gibb:
The Government believes in the value of teaching young people the basic knowledge they need to carry out first aid and emergency response procedures.

Schools are free to teach first aid, and many schools already choose to teach lifesaving as part of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), building on the relevant statutory content in the National Curriculum, such as the science programmes of study at Key Stages 3 and 4.

Schools are free to draw on materials from expert organisations. For example, the non-statutory programme of study produced by the PSHE Association, encourages schools to teach young people how to recognise and follow health and safety procedures, ways of reducing risk and minimising harm in risky situations, and how to use emergency and basic first aid.

The Children and Social Work Act provides powers for the Secretary of State to make PSHE, or elements therein, mandatory in all schools, subject to careful consideration.

We will set out shortly more details about the engagement process and the work to consider age appropriate subject content. This will result in draft regulations and guidance on which we will consult. Following consultation, regulations will be laid in the House allowing for a full and considered debate.

Free School Meals

Jess Phillips: [2882]
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what criteria the Government will use to determine eligibility for free school meals after the roll-out of universal credit.
Mr Robert Goodwill:
My Department is working closely with DWP, other government departments and other interested parties to establish new criteria for determining entitlement to benefits-related free school meals (FSM) as the roll-out of universal credit (UC) progresses. No decision has been taken yet; our proposals on this matter will be announced in due course.

As an interim measure, all pupils whose parents are in receipt of UC are currently entitled to FSM.

Nurseries: Nurses

Tracy Brabin:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information her Department holds on the average wage paid to nursery nurses in each of the last five years.

Mr Robert Goodwill:
The department does not set pay and conditions for the early years workforce, which is predominantly made up of private and voluntary sector businesses. However, the mean average salary of full-time nursery nurses employed in all state funded schools in each of the past 5 years is provided in the following table. The source of this information is the School Workforce Census which is an annual survey collected in November each year. Salaries are rounded to the nearest £100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>MEAN SALARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>£19,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>£19,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>£20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>£20,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>£20,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tracy Brabin:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what qualifications are held by nursery nurses at each employment level.

Mr Robert Goodwill:
Based on the 2016 Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers in England, we estimate that, excluding head teachers, senior managers and early years co-ordinators, 77% of group-based staff, 73% of nursery staff and 69% of reception staff were qualified to at least level 3. Again excluding head teachers, senior managers and early years co-ordinators, 7% of group based staff, 15% of nursery staff and 26% of reception staff were qualified to at least level 6. These figures include teaching
staff, nursery nurses and other staff involved in the delivery of childcare and early years provision.' The Survey is available online at:


**Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education**

Dr Matthew Offord:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department plans to include (a) antisemitism and (b) Islamophobia in the personal, social and health education curriculum.

Nick Gibb:

The Government is committed to tackling religious discrimination and racism, and to ensure that we have an inclusive society where everyone is treated with respect and fairness.

The National Curriculum provides many opportunities to raise awareness of racial and religious diversity and tolerance. Good quality religious education can develop pupils' knowledge of the values and traditions of Britain and other countries, and foster understanding among different faiths and cultures. Religious education remains compulsory for all state funded schools, including academies and free schools, at all Key Stages.

Holocaust education is a mandatory topic in the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum for history. This can be used to explore issues such as antisemitism and attitudes and hate crimes related to other races and faiths.

Teaching about discrimination can also be included as part of the statutory programme of study for citizenship education at ages 11-16 in maintained schools.

Schools are also already expected to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and, as part of this, fundamental British values, including the values of mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This is at the heart of their responsibility to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Schools are free to teach about religious discrimination as well as racism in Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, where pupils can reflect on and challenge notions of prejudice.

The Children and Social Work Act (2017) allows the Secretary of State for Education to make PSHE education, or elements therein, mandatory in all schools in England, subject to careful consideration. The Department will be conducting a thorough engagement process on the scope and content of PSHE, involving a wide range of interested stakeholders. We will set out more details shortly about the engagement process and the work to consider subject content.
Primary Education: Assessments

Stephen McPartland: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress she has made on her plans to abolish SATs at Key Stage 1; and if she will make a statement.

Nick Gibb: In March, we published a consultation document, ‘Primary Assessment in England’, which set out a number of proposals to improve the primary assessment system. One of those proposals was that a new assessment should be introduced in the reception year, to provide a new baseline for measuring the progress that pupils make at primary school. One of the potential benefits of introducing such an assessment would be that schools could receive greater credit for the education that they provide during reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

We made it clear that, once this new baseline assessment had become established, and its data available to calculate progress measures for pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2, we would no longer require data from statutory assessments currently administered at the end of Key Stage 1.

We sought views on whether those Key Stage 1 assessments should be made non-statutory.

The consultation exercise closed on 22 June, and we will be publishing our response in due course. The consultation document is available to read at: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/primary-assessment-in-england.

Primary Education: Free School Meals

Alex Burghart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the cost of introducing free school meals to all primary school children.

Mr Robert Goodwill: Expanding universal infant free school meals (UIFSM) to all primary school children is not something the government plans to do and we have not examined this fully. However, initial costings suggest there would be an additional cost of between £700m to £900m per year, increasing the overall cost of UIFSM to between £1.3 billion and £1.5 billion per year.

Pupils: Per Capita Costs

Joan Ryan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the findings of the report by the Institute for Fiscal Studies, The short- and long-run impact of the national funding formula for schools in England, published in March 2017, on the projected change in the level of school spending per pupil by 2021-22 if the proposed formula were to be implemented.
**Nick Gibb:**
We want to ensure every school has the resources it needs to deliver a high quality education for every child and that all schools are fairly funded.

Since 2010 the schools budget has been protected in real terms. The Government has committed to increase the school budget further, as well as continuing to protect the Pupil Premium to support those who need it. We know that how schools use their money is also important in delivering the best outcomes for pupils. The Government has produced tools, information and guidance to support improved financial health and efficiency in schools which can be found at:


We received over 25,000 responses to the consultation. We are grateful to all those who expressed their views on school funding and the proposed formula as part of this process. We will publish the response to the consultation in due course.

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**Religion: Education**

Dr Matthew Offord:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment her Department has made of the merits of including religious education in the national curriculum.

Nick Gibb:

Religious education (RE) must be taught by every state funded school to pupils up to the age of 18.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to support the activities of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and publish an agreed syllabus for maintained schools without a religious designation in their local area. Maintained schools with a religious designation and academies are not required to follow the agreed syllabus, although it can act as a useful benchmark for their curriculum planning.

SACRE membership must include representatives of the area’s principal faith groups, teachers and from the local authority. This contributes to securing the confidence of local communities and enables the SACRE to take account of the circumstances of each area in creating an agreed syllabus that has regard to local context.

The Government does not have any current plans to remove the duty on local authorities to establish SACREs and include RE in the National Curriculum.

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**Schools: Admissions**

Stephen Hammond:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress her Department has made on changing the schools admissions code to give summer-born and premature children the right to start reception at compulsory school age.
Nick Gibb:
We are concerned that some summer born children, whose parents elect to defer their entry to school, may be missing the reception year where the essential teaching of early reading and arithmetic takes place. We are giving careful consideration to how we might make any changes. Further information will be available in due course.

Schools: Coventry South

Mr Jim Cunningham:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the new school funding formula for each school in Coventry South constituency.

Nick Gibb:
The Government will continue to work to ensure that every child has the opportunity to attend a good school and that all schools are fairly funded. The core schools budget has been protected in real terms since 2010 and is set to rise from £41 billion in 2017-18 to over £42 billion in 2019-20 with increasing pupil numbers.

We received over 25,000 responses to the consultation. We are grateful to all those who expressed their views on school funding and the proposed formula as part of this process. We will publish the response to the consultation in due course.

Schools: Finance

Joan Ryan:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when her Department plans to publish the second stage of the national funding formula for schools consultation.

Nick Gibb:
We received over 25,000 responses to the consultation. We are grateful to all those who expressed their views on school funding and the proposed formula as part of this process. We will publish the response to the consultation in due course.

Henry Smith:
To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 4 July 2017 to Question 1477, on schools finance, whether she plans to publish that response before the Autumn Budget Statement.

Nick Gibb:
The Queen’s Speech was clear that the Government is determined to introduce a fairer distribution of funding for schools. We are committed to ensure that no school has its budget cut as a result of the new formula.

We received over 25,000 responses to the consultation. We are grateful to all those who expressed their views on school funding and the proposed formula as part of this process. We will publish the response to the consultation in due course.
Schools: Greater London

Joan Ryan: [3279]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will set out plans to address issues identified in the report by London Councils, Talking heads: the views of London’s school leaders in future challenges, published in June 2017, on the effect of funding changes on outcomes, planned changes in the number of teachers and changes made to curriculum breadth in London schools.

Nick Gibb:

The Government will continue to work to ensure that every child has the opportunity to attend a good school and that all schools are fairly funded. We want all children, regardless of where they live or their background, to receive a high quality education that fulfils potential and creates opportunity.

The Queen’s Speech was clear that the Government is determined to introduce a fairer distribution of funding for schools. We are committed to ensuring that no school has its budget cut as a result of the new formula.

We received over 25,000 responses to the consultation, including the response from London Councils. We are grateful to all those who expressed their views on school funding and the proposed formula as part of this process. We will publish the response to the consultation in due course.

Schools: Kingston upon Hull

Diana Johnson: [3657]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 29 March 2017 to Question 68665, from the hon. Member for York Central, on schools: City of York, if she will provide the same data for the Hull local authority for each year since 2005.

Nick Gibb:

The following table provides the number of full time equivalent teachers, teaching assistants, and support staff in schools in the local authority of City of Kingston Upon Hull in each year from 2005 to 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Teaching Assistants</th>
<th>Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2,260</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2,260</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2,160</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2,090</td>
<td>1,170</td>
<td>810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2,150</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CITY OF KINGSTON UPON HULL LOCAL AUTHORITY [1]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Full Time Equivalent</th>
<th>Part Time Equivalent</th>
<th>Total Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2,150</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>1,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2,040</td>
<td>1,480</td>
<td>1,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2,070</td>
<td>1,580</td>
<td>1,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2,190</td>
<td>1,620</td>
<td>1,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2,260</td>
<td>1,620</td>
<td>1,330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: SCHOOL WORKFORCE CENSUS, FORM 618G AND THE SCHOOL CENSUS.

[1] Between 2005 and 2009 the full-time equivalent number of school teachers was collected by Form 618g and the full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants and support staff were collected by the School Census. From 2010 onwards, information on all school employees was collected in the annual School Workforce Census.

[2] The hours worked by school support staff were not collected in the 2010 School Workforce Census so a full-time equivalent figure is not available.

Secondary Education: Teachers

Angela Rayner: [535]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many teachers there were in state secondary schools in England in each year from 2010-11 to the most recent year for which data is available.

Nick Gibb:

The following table provides the full time equivalent number of teachers in state funded secondary schools in England, in November 2010 to 2016.

STATE FUNDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS[1]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 2010</td>
<td>219,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2011</td>
<td>215,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2012</td>
<td>215,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2013</td>
<td>214,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## State Funded Secondary Schools[1]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 2014</td>
<td>213,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2015</td>
<td>210,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2016</td>
<td>208,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: School Workforce Census

These figures are derived from the November School Workforce Census and are published in table 1 from the statistical first release ‘School Workforce in England, November 2016’, available at the following web link:


[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 teachers.

### Exiting the European Union

#### Department for Exiting the European Union: Advertising

Deidre Brock:

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how much his Department has spent on advertising on social media in each month since January 2016.

Mr Steve Baker:

The Department for Exiting the European Union has not incurred any spend on advertising on social media in any month since January 2016.

#### Department for Exiting the European Union: Redundancy

Jon Trickett:

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many staff have left or agreed settlements to leave his Department under (a) voluntary exit, (b) voluntary redundancy and (c) compulsory redundancy since 1 November 2016; and how much compensation was paid in those cases.

Mr Steve Baker:

Details of the number, type, compensation levels and cost of exits from The Department for Exiting the European Union will be routinely published in the Department’s Annual Report and Accounts.

#### Immigration

Paul Blomfield:

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, with reference to his Department’s policy paper entitled, Safeguarding the position of EU citizens in the UK
and UK nationals in the EU, published on 26 June 2017, what his proposals mean for the (a) residence and (b) acquired EU rights of UK nationals who have previously lived in another EU Member State but are no longer resident in that country.

Mr Robin Walker:
For those who have been living in the UK for five years and want to continue to make the UK their home, they will be able to apply for settled status to stay indefinitely after we exit.

As is the case for those holding permanent residence status under EU law, for those who have already lived in the UK for over five years but were not present at the time of the specified date, they will still be eligible for settled status if that absence was for less than two consecutive years.

We have also been clear that we want to secure a reciprocal agreement for UK nationals in the EU which could apply in the same way.

Immigration: EU Nationals

Paul Blomfield: [3554]
To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, with reference to paragraph 6 of his Department's policy paper entitled Safeguarding the position of EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU, published on 26 June 2017, whether non-UK EU nationals will continue to benefit from the right to equal treatment in the UK after the specified date.

Mr Robin Walker:
Our offer applies to all EU citizens equally. We will not treat citizens of one member state differently to those of another, except regarding the special arrangements for Irish nationals. Our offer clearly sets out that EU citizens who have settled status will be treated the same as comparable UK nationals.

We have set out a fair offer to protect the rights and entitlements of EU nationals living in the UK. Settled status will be offered to those that have been continuously resident in the UK for 5 years. Those that have been here for less will be eligible for temporary leave which allows them to remain in the UK with the same broad set of rights and entitlements as they do now until they can get settled status.

Paul Blomfield: [3556]
To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, with reference to paragraph 6 of his Department's policy paper entitled Safeguarding the position of EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU, published on 26 June 2017, what rights and entitlements a non-UK EU citizen will have who arrived in the UK before the specified date but has not lived in the UK for five years.

Mr Robin Walker:
Those EU citizens who arrived and became a resident before the specified date but who have not accrued five years’ continuous residence at the time of the UK’s exit will be able to apply for temporary status in order to remain resident in the UK until
they have accumulated five years, after which they will be eligible to apply for settled status.

EU citizens on this pathway to settled status will continue to be able to access the same benefits that they can access now. If these individuals go on to acquire settled status, they will then be able to access benefits on the same terms as comparable UK residents.

Paul Blomfield:

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, with reference to paragraph 6 of his Department's policy paper entitled, Safeguarding the position of EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU, published on 26 June 2017, whether family dependents of non-UK EU citizens in the UK who arrive after the specified date will be subject to the immigration rules in respect of their family members.

Mr Robin Walker:
Family members of eligible EU citizens resident in the UK before we leave the EU will be able to apply for settled status after five years, whether they are EU or non-EU citizens. They will be subject to the same rules that apply to non-EU nationals joining British citizens, or alternatively to the post-exit immigration arrangements for EU citizens who arrive after the specified date.

Paul Blomfield:

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, which rights accruing from EU citizenship non-UK EU nationals will lose as a result of transitioning to the settled status outlined in his Department's policy document entitled, Safeguarding the position of EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU, published on 26 June 2017.

Mr Robin Walker:

Until the UK's exit, EU citizens resident here will continue to enjoy the rights they have under EU Treaties. After we leave the EU, we will create new rights in UK law for qualifying EU citizens which will be enforceable in the UK legal system. EU citizens that acquire settled status will have access to UK benefits, pensions, healthcare and other rights on the same basis as a comparable UK national.

Motor Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries

Justin Madders:

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the automotive manufacturing industry.

Mr Steve Baker:

The Government has frequent conversations with key stakeholders in the automotive sector, including through our partnership with the Automotive Council. Since the Department was created, we have pursued a wide-ranging programme of engagement in order to build a national consensus around our negotiating position.

This engagement has included a roundtable held in December 2016 with key automotive businesses held by the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union,
joined by Ministers from the Department for Transport and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. This dialogue will continue as negotiations progress.

Details of Ministerial and senior official meetings will be published in the Department’s Quarterly Transparency Returns, which will be made publicly available on GOV.UK.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Politics and Government

Mr Kevan Jones: [3583]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the political situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Sir Alan Duncan:
The Government closely monitors the political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and continues to engage actively to encourage much-needed progress and reform, through political, diplomatic and programme support (worth approximately £7.6m in FY 2017-18). As part of that engagement, the Foreign Secretary visited BiH in April 2017. Some progress has been made, but much political discussion remains divisive and nationalist, and serious challenges to the rule of law have contributed to concerns over political stability.

British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies

Catherine West: [3301]
To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assurances he has given to his counterparts in the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies that the Government will replace funding provided by the EU when the UK leaves the EU.

Sir Alan Duncan:
The British Government has committed to fully involving the Overseas Territories (OTs) as we prepare for negotiations to exit the EU in order to ensure their priorities are taken into account. To this end, Ministers from the FCO, DEXEU and DIT met with OT Leaders at the Joint Ministerial Council for the Overseas Territories on EU Negotiations (JMC OT EN) on 12th July. This was the second in a series of such Ministerial meetings to take place this year and one of the prominent issues discussed with OT leaders was that of EU funding.

While the UK remains a member of the EU, current EU funding arrangements continue unchanged. Leaving the EU provides an opportunity for the UK to take our own decisions about how to deliver the policy objectives previously supported by EU funding and we look forward to continuing our dialogue with the OTs as the negotiations on these issues begin.
Idil Eser

Catherine West: [3477]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has plans to make representations to his counterpart in Turkey on the arrest of Idil Eser, director of Amnesty International, Turkey.

Sir Alan Duncan:
The Prime Minister has raised the detention with President Erdogan, at the G20 on 7/8 July, emphasising the importance of fully respecting fundamental rights and the rule of law.

Turkey: Mass Media and Press Freedom

Catherine West: [3474]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the levels of media freedom and plurality in Turkey.

Sir Alan Duncan:
We monitor the situation closely and encourage Turkey to ensure the full protection of fundamental rights, including freedom of expression. Freedom of the media remains a priority for our bilateral projects in Turkey.

HEALTH

NHS Improvement

Justin Madders: [3139]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to require future chairs of NHS Improvement to have had previous experience in the health sector.

Mr Philip Dunne:
The Government and the Commissioner for Public Appointments are committed to encouraging as wide a range as possible of high quality candidates to consider applying for public appointments.

It is important that the collective leadership of NHS Improvement has strong experience from within the health sector, and it is also vital that it has skills and experience drawn from outside of the sector, in order to provide a range of perspectives.
HOME OFFICE

Airbnb: Passports

Chris Bryant: [3467]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will discuss with Airbnb the security implications of the requirement by some hosts for guests to send the photograph page of their passport to secure a booking.

Brandon Lewis:
The Government recognises the importance of appropriate identity checking processes. It is a matter for each organisation to determine how this is done in a way that protects them and their customers.

Immigrants: Republic of Ireland

Angus Brendan MacNeil: [4182]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to Section 2(1) of the Ireland Act 1949, what the status of Irish citizens will be after the UK leaves the EU.

Brandon Lewis:
The close historic, social and cultural ties between the UK and Ireland have led to the creation of additional rights above those associated with common membership of the EU. The special status afforded to Irish citizens within the UK is rooted in the Ireland Act 1949 and, for the people of Northern Ireland, in the 1998 Belfast Agreement. As outlined in the UK Government policy paper released on 26 June, relating to the rights of EU citizens living in the UK, we want to protect the rights enjoyed by UK and Irish nationals when in the other State.

We remain committed to preserving the rights of Irish citizens within the UK.

Immigration: EU Nationals

Hilary Benn: [4042]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 10 July 2017 to Question 2790, on immigration: EU nationals, what criteria for (a) conduct and (b) criminality will be employed when assessing applications for settled status by non-UK EU citizens living in the UK.

Brandon Lewis:
Applications for settled status by non-UK EU citizens will be refused on grounds of public policy if on the basis of their conduct or criminality they represent a genuine, present and sufficiently serious threat to the fundamental interests of society in the UK. Applications will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

This will be subject to negotiations and a reciprocal deal with the EU.
INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Cybercrime: Northern Ireland

Jim Shannon:
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to encourage inward investment in cyber security in Northern Ireland.

Greg Hands:
This department works closely with Invest Northern Ireland, promoting and showcasing Northern Ireland’s (NI) world-class cyber security capability, through our overseas network, inward missions and at major industry events such as Infosec and Mobile World Congress. More recently, this Department supported Invest Northern Ireland to secure investments from US cyber security companies: Black Duck Software and Rapid7, creating over 100 jobs in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland is the number one international investment location for US cyber security firms. A US inward mission to showcase Northern Ireland’s technology and cyber security is scheduled for 2018.

Department for International Trade: Equality

Kate Green:
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the oral Answer of 2 November 2016, Official Report, column 879, what steps his Department has taken to use 2011 census classifications, including on Gypsies and Travellers, to audit racial disparities in public service outcomes.

Greg Hands:
I refer the hon. Member for Stretford and Urmston to the written answer given by my Rt hon. Friend, the Minister for the Cabinet Office and First Secretary of State, on 11 July 2017, UIN: 3079.

Department for International Trade: Official Hospitality

Hannah Bardell:
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many receptions he has hosted for representatives of print and broadcast media since the establishment of his Department; how much each such reception cost; and how many people attended each such reception.

Greg Hands:
No such receptions have been held.
Department for International Trade: Procurement

Jon Trickett:  [3950]
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what proportion of public procurement contracts his Department awarded through framework agreements since his Department's creation.

Greg Hands:  
The proportion of public procurement contracts awarded through framework agreements by the Department for International Trade, since July 2016 is 80%.

Department for International Trade: Staff

Justin Madders:  [3516]
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many staff of his Department work on trade negotiation.

Greg Hands:  
The Department for International Trade has a strong and capable trade policy team which has grown significantly since June 2016 (from 45 to over 300 today), and is continuing to grow.

We continue to hire the brightest and best talent from within the UK civil service and externally, in order to build a world class trade policy team that can deliver the best outcomes for the UK.

The Department has recently appointed Crawford Falconer to the role of Chief Trade Negotiation Adviser and Head of Trade Profession. Mr Falconer brings a wealth of global trade expertise from over 25 years of working on trade policy in the New Zealand government, the World Trade Organization and academia.

Drugs: Manufacturing Industries

Andrew Rosindell:  [3095]
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps his Department is taking to help UK-based pharmaceutical businesses export and develop their businesses internationally.

Greg Hands:  
The Department for International Trade (DIT) supports UK-based companies to export their products and services and to attract foreign direct investment. Support for the export campaigns of UK pharmaceutical companies is provided by the DIT Life Sciences Organisation. This is focussed on seven high value export markets where government support has the most impact. In addition, UK Export Finance helps UK exporters by providing trade finance and insurance.
Electronic Surveillance: Arab States

Caroline Lucas:  
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether his Department has approved export licenses for internet surveillance systems to (a) Saudi Arabia, (b) the United Arab Emirates, (c) Qatar, (d) Oman, (e) Morocco and (f) Algeria.

Mark Garnier:  
Information on all licences granted is available to view at GOV.UK.  

Electronic Surveillance: United Arab Emirates

Caroline Lucas:  
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if his Department will revoke export licenses for internet and telecommunications surveillance equipment to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) under Criterion 2 on grounds of recent evidence that human rights defenders have been targeted by electronic surveillance and UAE security forces have used torture in secret detention facilities in that country.

Mark Garnier:  
The Government assesses all export licence applications to the UAE on a case-by-case basis against strict criteria (the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria), taking account of all relevant factors at the time of the application, including human rights considerations under Criterion 2.  
The Government will not, for example, grant a licence if there is a clear risk that the items might be used for internal repression.  
The Government is able to respond quickly and suspend or revoke licences if necessary by taking into account whether prevailing circumstances have changed or new information indicates an export would no longer comply with the criteria.

Motor Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries

Justin Madders:  
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the automotive manufacturing industry.

Mark Garnier:  
The Department for International Trade (DIT) is working to deliver the best international trading framework for the UK to maximise global trade opportunities, including for the automotive sector. DIT Ministers and officials have frequent conversations with key stakeholders in the automotive sector, including through the Government’s partnership with the Automotive Council.
Overseas Trade: Brazil

Jim Shannon: [3418]
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what discussions he has had with his counterpart in Brazil on the potential for trade in the agri-food sector.

Mark Garnier:
On December 7th, 2016, my Rt. Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade met with Brazilian Finance Minister and UK investors based in Brazil on wider bi-lateral trade relationship. The meeting focussed on identifying a range of issues on which both sides shared a mutual interest.

Trade Promotion: Developing Countries

Andrew Bridgen: [3002]
To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps the Government is taking to promote trade between the UK and the least-developed countries.

Greg Hands:
In June we announced that on leaving the EU, we will secure existing duty-free access to UK markets for around 48 Least Developed Countries. Once we have left, we will seek to strengthen existing support and seize new opportunities to increase trade links. Additionally, the UK’s aid programmes encourage economic growth, helping to ensure that this growth improves conditions for those living in poverty.

UK Export Finance has appetite to support UK exports to 41 Least Developed Countries. Following the 2016 Autumn Statement, it has increased the support it has available for 6 of these countries, and will be reviewing its support for others.

JUSTICE

Electronic Tagging

Vicky Foxcroft: [3566]
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many electronic tags used by the Electronic Monitoring Service to monitor ex-offenders have been reported (a) faulty and (b) lost.

Mr Sam Gyimah:
In March 2016, G4S became the sole provider of Personal Information Devices (PIDs) – commonly referred to as tags after taking over the contract to supply electronic monitoring equipment from the previous joint provider Serco. The contractual arrangements entered into with G4S and Serco in 2014 were different, the Ministry of Justice purchased equipment from G4S while the equipment was leased from Serco. The data recording requirements were therefore different and there is no comparable data of sufficient quality available for Serco equipment.
The answer provided refers to lost and broken PIDs for all individuals subject to a curfew requirement.

Table 1: Lost G4S Personal Identification Devices (tags) [1]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year 2015/16</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net Losses</td>
<td>5,236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Broken G4S Personal Identification Devices (tags) [2]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year 2015/16</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sent for repairs</td>
<td>11,626</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PIDs are deemed to be lost if they are not recovered within four weeks of the end of the electronic monitoring order. Therefore, none of the lost tags relate to individuals who are still subject to electronic monitoring.


‘Broken’ indicates the RF tag was sent for repair. There are a variety of reasons why PIDS can be sent for repair including (but not restricted too) low battery life, damage, (including that caused by the subject), and faults. The need for a repair can be determined at any time, thus not all PIDS sent for repair will have been fitted to a subject. A fault may be established during the installation process hence there should not be assumed to be a relationship between the numbers of repairs and the actively monitored caseload. Damage is most often caused by the subjects wearing the PID, so it should not be assumed that damage is the result of a manufacturing issue.

Vicky Foxcroft: [3567]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the savings to the public purse of out-sourcing electronic tagging for ex-offenders.

Mr Sam Gyimah:
Electronic Monitoring is an important tool to improve supervision in the community and support offenders to change their lives. The Electronic Monitoring service has always been delivered using a contracted infrastructure. Estimating the cost of a public sector delivery model could only be provided at a disproportionate cost.
Employment and Support Allowance: Appeals

Rachel Reeves:
To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average waiting time was for an ESA appeal hearing in each of the last 12 months.

Mr Sam Gyimah:
The average waiting time for disposal of ESA has reduced significantly over the last four years from 21 weeks in 2013/14 to 14 in 2015/16. The information requested is set out below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH/YEAR</th>
<th>AVERAGE WAITING TIME IN WEEKS, FOR THE DISPOSAL OF EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE (ESA)1 APPEALS FROM RECEIPT TO OUTCOME2, BETWEEN APRIL 2016 AND MARCH 2017 (THE LATEST PERIOD FOR WHICH FIGURES ARE AVAILABLE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2016</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2016</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2016</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2016</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2016</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>October 2016</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>November 2016</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2017</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2017</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[1] Includes ESA and ESA (Reassessments).

2 Outcome: all appeals disposed of include those appeals disposed of with and without a Tribunal hearing.

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the details are subject to inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale case management system and are the best data that is available.
The data are a subset of official statistics extracted from the case-management system on a different date.

### Prisoners: Rehabilitation

**Ellie Reeves:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, which organisations have been given clearance to run educational activities on hate crime, racism or discrimination as part of prisoner rehabilitation work.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

There are currently no external organisations delivering specific educational activities on Hate Crime, racism or discrimination as part of prisoner rehabilitation work.

All new prisoners go through a local induction programme that promotes tolerance for protected characteristics. It also advises on the process for reporting incidents in prison that might be considered hate crimes through the prisoner complaint system or to prison staff.

### Prisons: Education

**Ellie Reeves:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what programmes his Department sponsors across the prison system to educate prisoners against (a) racism, (b) anti-Semitism, (c) Islamophobia and (d) homophobia.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

All new prisoners go through a local induction programme that promotes tolerance for protected characteristics. It also advises on the process for reporting incidents in prison that might be considered hate crimes through the prisoner complaint system or to prison staff. The Thinking Skills Programme encourages participants to develop pro-social attitudes and manage relationships with other people. There are no specific sponsored programmes for educating prisoners on these issues.

### Reoffenders

**Mr Jonathan Lord:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the reoffending rates for (a) short-term and (b) long-term prisoners were in each of the last three years.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The most recent published data on reoffending rates is for the period commencing July 2014 to July 2015. The information requested is available via the following link:

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Government Departments: Written Questions and Correspondence

Chris Bryant:  
To ask the Leader of the House, how many (a) parliamentary written questions and (b) letters from MPs were answered late in 2016-17, by Department.

Andrea Leadsom:  
Since the introduction of the electronic system for the handling of parliamentary questions for written answer, the Table Office has provided the Procedure Committee with statistics relating to the timeliness of answers which are obtained directly from that system. The Procedure Committee’s most recent report on its monitoring of written parliamentary questions, which provided data for the session 2015–16, was published on 27 July 2016 as HC 191 of Session 2016–17.

On Monday 11 July my right hon. Friend the First Secretary of State and Minister for the Cabinet Office made a written statement, HCWS35, detailing the performance of Departments and Agencies on handling correspondence from Members and Peers during the calendar year 2016.

Times of Sittings

Chris Bryant:  
To ask the Leader of the House, when she plans to announce the dates for Friday sittings of the Commons for the 2017-19 session.

Andrea Leadsom:  
The hon. Gentleman may have seen that the dates for Friday sittings were announced on the 13 July 2017.

The hon. Member may recall that in the extended Parliamentary session of 2010-12, the Government did provide extra days but those dates were approved at a later date.

Chris Bryant:  
To ask the Leader of the House, whether she plans to provide additional days in proportion to the duration of the 2017-19 session for (a) Opposition, (b) Backbench and (c) Private Members' Bills business in the House.

Andrea Leadsom:  
The allocation of Opposition Days is set down in Standing Orders. The hon. Member should also know that it is not unusual for Her Majesty's Government to provide additional Opposition days.

As with Opposition Days, the allocation of Backbench Business days is set out in Standing Orders. Again, a motion to provide for additional time is not required. I am sure the hon. Member will acknowledge that in previous Parliaments, HMG provided additional time beyond the requirement of the Standing Orders. I am happy to
consider any reasonable request for additional time for Backbench Business subject to the progress of Government business.

As mentioned in UIN 3021, the hon. Member may recall that in the extended Parliamentary session of 2010-12, the Government did provide extra days for Private Members’ Bills but those dates were approved at a later date.

**PRIME MINISTER**

**Ministers: Redundancy Pay**

**Chris Bryant:**
To ask the Prime Minister, what the total cost of redundancy payments made to (a) Ministers and (b) special advisers has been since she became Prime Minister.

**Mrs Theresa May:**
The Ministerial and Other Salaries Act 1975 sets out severance entitlements for Ministers. Severance payments made to Ministers are published in departmental annual reports.


An updated version will be published in due course.

**Parliamentary Private Secretaries: Travel**

**Chris Bryant:**
To ask the Prime Minister, how many parliamentary private secretaries have undertaken travel (a) within the UK and (b) overseas with or on behalf of ministers since she became Prime Minister.

**Mrs Theresa May:**
There is no requirement for domestic visits to be authorised and the information is not held centrally. I have not authorised overseas travel by any Parliamentary Private Secretary in an official capacity since I took Office.

**Russia: Political Prisoners**

**Mr Jonathan Lord:**
To ask the Prime Minister, what recent discussions she has had with President Vladimir Putin of Russia on political prisoners in that country.

**Mr Jonathan Lord:**
To ask the Prime Minister, what recent discussions she has had with her Russian counterpart on the treatment of political prisoners in that country.
Mrs Theresa May:
While I met President Putin at this G20, my last substantive bilateral with him was at the G20 Summit in Hangzhou, China where we discussed a range of international and domestic issues. In our bilateral relationship with Russia we regularly raise our concerns with Russia that political freedoms in that country are becoming increasingly constrained. The interests of the Russian people and the stability of the Russian state would be best served by a political system based on strong institutions, together with a safe political space for dissenting views to be heard, and free and fair elections.

Turkey: Human Rights and Press Freedom

Catherine West:
To ask the Prime Minister, what recent discussions she has had with President Erdogan of Turkey on (a) human rights and (b) press freedom in that country.

Mrs Theresa May:
I discussed these issues with President Erdogan during the G20 Summit in Hamburg emphasising the importance of fundamental rights and rule of law. We regularly engage in a broad and comprehensive dialogue with Turkey at ministerial level.

TRANSPORT

Department for Transport: Redundancy

Jon Trickett:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many staff have left or agreed settlements to leave his Department under (a) voluntary exit, (b) voluntary redundancy and (c) compulsory redundancy since 1 November 2016; and how much compensation was paid in those cases.

Mr John Hayes:
Details of the number, type, compensation levels and cost of exits from the Department for Transport are due to be published next week in the Department’s Annual Report and Accounts.

High Speed 2 Railway Line

Edward Miliband:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many responses were received in the HS2 Crewe to Manchester, West Midlands to Leeds: Route Refinement Consultation 2016; and how many of those responses were (a) in support of and (b) against the new M18 route.
Paul Maynard:
Following the conclusion of the consultation, the consultation responses are being processed. We are committed to responding to this consultation before the end of the year. At the time of our response, we will release the consultation details.

Mersey Tunnels: Tolls

Justin Madders:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the annual cost to the taxpayer would be of scrapping Mersey Tunnel tolls.

Jesse Norman:
The operation and funding of the Mersey Tunnels has always been a matter for the local authorities in the area. Following the creation of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority in 2014, the ownership of the Mersey Tunnels, and the power to set tolls, rests with them. Any decision to scrap the tolls, which cover the cost of Tunnel operations and fund other local transport priorities, would therefore be for the Combined Authority to take. We have been advised by Merseytravel, which operates the Tunnels on behalf of the Combined Authority, that the Tunnel tolls currently raise £41m per year so this would represent the cost to the local taxpayer if they were foregone. In addition, if the tunnel tolls were scrapped there might well be some leakage of traffic from the Mersey Gateway bridge, which is currently under construction and will be tolled, to the tunnels. If so, this would create an adverse impact on the finances of the bridge.

Motor Vehicles: Fuels

Grahame Morris:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will set target dates for phasing out (a) petrol and (b) diesel vehicles.

Jesse Norman:
This Government has a manifesto commitment for almost all cars and vans on our roads to be zero emission by 2050. We believe this would necessitate all new cars and vans being zero emission vehicles by 2040.

Motor Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries

Justin Madders:
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with the automotive manufacturing industry.

Jesse Norman:
Ministers and officials at the Department for Transport hold regular meetings with representatives of the automotive industry, and only last month the Secretary of State addressed the SMMT’s summer parliamentary reception, meeting industry stakeholders.
Motor Vehicles: Scotland

Deidre Brock:

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many motor vehicles in each vehicle excise duty class are registered to Scottish addresses by registration (a) before and (b) after 1 April 2017.

Jesse Norman:

The vehicle database changes on a daily basis. The most recent figures show a total of 3,123,773 motor vehicles were registered to Scottish addresses.

Out of the vehicle excise duty (VED) classes, 20 are exempt from payment of VED. Further information on vehicle excise duty rates can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rates-of-vehicle-tax-v149.

The following table shows the number of motor vehicles registered in Scotland for use on the public road in the vehicle excise duty classes listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAX CLASS</th>
<th>VEHICLES FIRST REGISTERED *(A)</th>
<th>VEHICLES FIRST REGISTERED *(B)</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Machine</td>
<td>50,487</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>50,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Fuel Car</td>
<td>14,570</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>14,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambulance</td>
<td>1,257</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powered Bicycle</td>
<td>122,472</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>123,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>13,467</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>13,561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crown Vehicle</td>
<td>1,259</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diesel Car</td>
<td>913,973</td>
<td>3,037</td>
<td>917,010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disabled</td>
<td>109,835</td>
<td>2,556</td>
<td>112,391</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disabled Passenger Vehicle</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>719</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electric Motorcycle</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>105</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electric Vehicle</td>
<td>2,875</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>2,943</td>
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<tr>
<td>EURO 4 Light Goods Vehicle</td>
<td>8,396</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8,397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Engine</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Service</td>
<td>712</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Haulage</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAX CLASS</td>
<td>VEHICLES FIRST REGISTERED *(A)</td>
<td>VEHICLES FIRST REGISTERED *(B)</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gritting Machine</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HGV</td>
<td>33,106</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>33,513</td>
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<tr>
<td>HGV Combined Transport</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic Vehicle</td>
<td>30,592</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeboat Haulage</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Goods Vehicle</td>
<td>251,007</td>
<td>1,834</td>
<td>252,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighthouse Authority</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited Use</td>
<td>4,642</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine Rescue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mowing Machine</td>
<td>1,403</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1,439</td>
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<tr>
<td>NHS Vehicle</td>
<td>1,148</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1,157</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petrol Car</td>
<td>1,334,611</td>
<td>5,171</td>
<td>1,339,782</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>1,982</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private HGV</td>
<td>4,961</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Light Goods</td>
<td>182,858</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>183,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery Vehicle</td>
<td>1,287</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Pollution Bus</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Pollution HGV</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Pollution Special Types</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Pollution Trailer HGV</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Island Vehicles</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow Plough</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Types</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAX CLASS</td>
<td>VEHICLES FIRST REGISTERED *(A)</td>
<td>VEHICLES FIRST REGISTERED *(B)</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Vehicle</td>
<td>14,143</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>14,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Vehicle Trailer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steam</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trailer HGV</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powered Tricycle</td>
<td>1,636</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,108,196</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,477</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,123,773</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* (a) up to 31 March 2017
* (b) on or after 1 April 2017

**Railway Stations: Disability**

**Justin Tomlinson:***

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to improve access to rail stations for disabled people.

**Paul Maynard:**

We are committed to improving accessibility of the rail network. Currently 70% of train fleets operating passenger services meet modern accessibility standards, up from just 39% as at January 2011, with the remaining vehicles due to be either upgraded or replaced by 1 January 2020. We are continuing to improve station access through the Access for All programme and other major projects such as Thameslink or Crossrail. By 2019 at least 75% of all journeys will be from stations with step-free access.

**Railways: Crawley**

**Henry Smith:***

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to extend the Oyster ticketing system to Three Bridges and Crawley railway stations.

**Paul Maynard:**

The department currently has no plans to extend the oyster ticketing system to the Three Bridges and Crawley stations. The fare zone structure and the classification of individual stations are covered by the Travelcard Agreement. Train operators are required under their franchises to honour this agreement. Any changes to the Travelcard Agreement, including the inclusion of stations within the oyster ticketing system, must be agreed between TfL and the train operators. Any proposals put
forward will be considered by the Secretary of State for Transport on the basis of a business case, and other wider policy initiatives at the time.

Railways: Ombudsman

Catherine West:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to establish a passenger ombudsman for rail ticketing and pricing.

Paul Maynard:  
I have been leading discussions with industry and consumer bodies about introducing a rail ombudsman that would improve the passenger voice in rail and provide independent binding resolution of complaints. Work on the detail of the scheme, which is being developed by a Task Force which includes the Rail Delivery Group, Transport Focus, London TravelWatch and the Office of Rail and Road, is progressing, and I anticipate being in a position to provide a further update on its work by the end of the summer.

Railways: Wales

Jonathan Edwards:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of rail infrastructure funding identified in the Transport Investment Strategy will be spent on the Welsh rail network.

Paul Maynard:  
The Transport Investment Strategy identified that, of the £46bn programme to operate and enhance the railway between 2014-19, £30bn is for renewals and enhancements of the network infrastructure. The volumes of renewals are set out in Network Rail’s CP5 Delivery Plan 2016 update and the enhancement outputs are set out in Network Rail’s June 2017 Enhancement Delivery Plan. There is no apportionment between England and Wales.

River Mersey: Bridges

Justin Madders:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the estimated annual income from Mersey Gateway tolls is.

Jesse Norman:  
The Mersey Gateway Bridge scheme is being promoted by Halton Borough Council. Annual income from tolls will vary but the most recent estimate produced for the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board shows an annual average income over the operational period of the project of £38,361,000.
Severn River Crossing: Tolls

Justin Madders:

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the estimated annual cost to the taxpayer is of reducing the Severn Bridge Toll to £3.

Jesse Norman:

The figure of a toll for cars of £3 was included in the Government’s consultation issued earlier in the year. The consultation set out an intention to recoup fully the costs that taxpayers have incurred outside the concession agreement, although this would take longer if the tolls were reduced.

Transport: Infrastructure

Jonathan Edwards:

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what road and rail infrastructure projects outlined in the Transport Investment Strategy published on 5 July 2017 are considered (a) England only, (b) England and Wales, (c) England, Wales and Scotland and (d) UK-wide.

Jesse Norman:

The Transport Investment Strategy sets out the priorities and principles for future investment decisions by the Department for Transport, it does not identify or decide on particular projects. We will continue to work closely with the Devolved Administrations on areas where our responsibilities interact.

Jonathan Edwards:

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what criteria the Government uses to assess whether a transport infrastructure development is considered (a) England only, (b) England and Wales, (c) England, Wales and Scotland and (d) UK-wide.

Jesse Norman:

The relevant devolution settlements and their associated legislation determine the responsibility for infrastructure development. We continue to work closely with the Devolved Administrations (DAs) on areas where our responsibilities interact.

Jonathan Edwards:

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what mechanisms will be put in place to ensure effective consultation with the devolved administrations on proposals made in the Transport Investment Strategy.

Jesse Norman:

Although transport issues are substantially devolved in the UK, all four Governments work together on matters where the respective infrastructure policy responsibilities of the UK government and devolved administrations overlap.

The Transport Investment Strategy sets out principles for future investment decisions, including as to the balance between the need to keep decision-making as close as possible to the people affected and the need to ensure the coherence and integrity of
national networks. We will continue to work closely with the Devolved Administrations on areas of mutual interest, for example on long-distance rail lines such as the East and West Coast Mainlines, or HS2.

### Transport: Wales

**Jonathan Edwards:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what representations the Government has received from the Welsh Assembly on the Transport Investment Strategy.

**Jesse Norman:**

Although transport issues are substantially devolved in the UK, all four Governments work closely on areas where THEIR interests and responsibilities interact. While we have not yet received representations directly from the Welsh Assembly on the Transport Investment Strategy, we will continue to work closely with the Devolved Administrations on areas of mutual interest and TO consider any representations they may make as part of that dialogue.

### Tyne and Wear Metro: Rolling Stock

**Mr Stephen Hepburn:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions his Department has had with Nexus on its proposal for new rolling stock on the Tyne and Wear Metro.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Department for Transport is currently in discussions with Nexus regarding their proposals for new rolling stock on the Metro, including exploring various funding options.

### Wales and Borders Rail Franchise

**Jonathan Edwards:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the Government expects to devolve legislative powers to the Welsh Assembly to procure and manage the Wales and Borders rail franchise.

**Paul Maynard:**

The UK Government continues to work closely with the Welsh Government to facilitate its ongoing procurement process and finalise the arrangements for the devolution of the Wales and Borders franchise. The Statutory Instrument used to transfer executive powers in relation to franchising functions is expected to be laid this autumn.
WALES

Cardiff-swansea Railway Line: Electrification

Chris Elmore:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what the timetable is for the completion of the electrification of the Cardiff to Swansea railway line.

Alun Cairns:  
Passengers rightly expect high quality rail services and from Autumn 2017, passengers in Wales will benefit from the new generation of electric trains which will deliver 27% more seats, faster journey times and improved connectivity for South Wales to London with 40% more seats in the morning peak once the full fleet is in service.

Wales Office: Advertising

Deidre Brock:  
To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how much his Department has spent on advertising on social media in each month since January 2016.

Guto Bebb:  
The Wales Office prioritises low-cost and no-cost methods of communication to maximise impact at minimal cost to the taxpayer. The majority of our social media is done through owned and earned channels.

The Department spent £71 on limited targeted communications activity aimed at potential exporters ahead of a UK Export Summit in Cardiff. Paid for social media marketing over the past twelve months was to augment our direct communications, digital communications and media relations activity ahead of the UK Export Summit in Cardiff.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

Civil Partnerships

Layla Moran:  
To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will make it her policy to allow different sex couples to enter into civil partnerships.

Nick Gibb:  
The Government carried out a consultation on the future of civil partnerships in 2014. The review found that there was no clear consensus and, therefore, the Government did not change the Civil Partnership Act 2004.

The decision not to change the law was judicially reviewed and the Government won in the High Court last year. The Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal against the High Court judgment in February and confirmed that the Government’s approach is lawful.
We welcomed the Court’s ruling at the time and confirmed that we would carefully consider the judgment and its implications before deciding on our next steps. The claimants in this case have subsequently sought permission to appeal the Court of Appeal’s decision. We are currently awaiting the Supreme Court’s ruling on whether to allow the appeal to proceed.

Marriage

Angela Crawley: [3446]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will take steps to amend same-sex marriage legislation to allow couples to convert civil partnerships to marriage.

Nick Gibb:
We are proud that we legislated for the introduction of marriage for same sex couples.

It is already possible for same sex couples in a civil partnership to convert their civil partnership to a marriage in the parts of the United Kingdom where same sex marriage is legal.

There were 7,732 couples in England and Wales who chose to convert their existing civil partnership into a marriage between 10 December 2014 and 30 June 2015 (just over six months of data).

Mental Illness: Discrimination

Theresa Villiers: [2947]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what plans she has to extend provisions in the Equalities Act 2010 related to protection against discrimination to mental health conditions that are episodic and fluctuating; and whether such provisions will include people with epilepsy.

Nick Gibb:
The Government is exploring a number of options to extend protections from discrimination in the workplace, including through the Equality Act 2010, for people with mental health conditions. We will make an announcement on these issues in due course.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Department for Work and Pensions: Disciplinary Proceedings

Justin Madders: [3374]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many employees of his Department have been referred for disciplinary action as a result of factual inaccuracies in employment and support allowance and personal independence payment assessments in each of the last three years.
Penny Mordaunt:
Employees of the Department for Work and Pensions do not undertake Employment and Support Allowance or Personal Independence Payment assessments.

In August 2012 following a competitive tendering exercise the contract for undertaking Personal Independence Payment assessments was awarded to Atos Healthcare and Capita Business Services Ltd.

Work Capability Assessments are delivered through the Health and Disability Assessment Service Contract. It is a three year contract from March 2015 delivered by the Centre for Health and Disability Assessments, a subsidiary of MAXIMUS.

Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Rachel Reeves: [3519]
To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to raise awareness of inflammatory bowel disease and its effects with employers.

Penny Mordaunt:
The Government wants all disabled people and people with a long term health condition, including those with inflammatory bowel syndrome, to have the opportunity to work and share in the economic and health benefits that work brings.

Government supports employers to help them recruit and retain people with health conditions and disabilities through the Disability Confident campaign, Fit for Work and the Access to Work scheme.

We published ‘Improving Lives the Work: Health and Disability Green Paper’ in October, and we are analysing the responses to understand how employers can be further supported to establish good practices and supportive workplace cultures, and how they can support more people with disabilities and health conditions to stay in or return to work.

Occupational Pensions

Mr Jonathan Lord: [3370]
To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect of compulsory workplace pensions on the level of private sector job creation since the introduction of those pensions in 2012.

Mr Jonathan Lord: [3461]
To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect of compulsory workplace pensions on the level of private sector job creation since 2012.

Guy Opperman:
Automatic enrolment is a policy that works. Over 8 million individuals have been automatically enrolled into a workplace pension by more than 640,000 employers.
Since 2012 private sector employment has grown by 2.6 million to reach 26.5 million. Automatic enrolment has been implemented on a national basis rather than being trialled which means it is not possible to make any assessment of the effect on the level of private sector job creation.

**Personal Independence Payment**

**Neil Coyle:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make it his policy to share copies of assessors' reports with individual claimants before decisions on personal independence payment claims are made.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

There are no plans in place to include copies of the assessors’ reports before assessment decisions are made

One of Paul Gray’s recommendations following his recent review of PIP Assessments was to share copies of assessors' reports with individual claimants with their decision letter. We are currently considering all 14 of Paul Gray’s recommendations and plan to respond later this year.

**State Retirement Pensions: Females**

**Rachael Maskell:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many women born in the 1950s and affected by the change in the state pension age have not been able to return to employment.

**Rachael Maskell:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many women born in the 1950s and affected by the change in the state pension age have been able to return to employment from a position of unemployment.

**Guy Opperman:**

The number of older workers in the UK is at a record high, currently standing at 9.9m workers aged 50 years and over. 4.2m women aged 50-64 are in employment; this compares to 3.5m five years ago. There are 1.2 million individuals in employment aged over 65, of which 39% are women.

Employment rates for older workers have also been increasing and recently reached record highs. Since ten years ago, the employment rate has increased by 6.0 percentage points (pp) (from 65.0% to 71.0%) for people aged 50-64. The current employment rate for women aged 50-64 is at a record high of 66.4%.

Further information on estimates of employment, unemployment, economic inactivity and other employment-related statistics for the UK can be found in the “UK labour market: July 2017” statistical bulletin published at the Office for National Statistics (ONS) website:
The Government is committed to supporting people aged 50 years and over to remain in and return to work; the ‘Fuller Working Lives: A Partnership Approach’ strategy was published on 2nd February. This, crucially, is led by employers, but it also sets out the case for action by individuals, and the role of Government in supporting them in planning their careers and their approach to retirement. The Strategy and supporting evidence base are available at the attached web address:

Office of Tax Simplification: Secondment

Jon Trickett:

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many secondments there have been from (a) the Office of Tax Simplification to placements outside of Government and (b) from outside Government to the Office of Tax Simplification since July 2012.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 11 July 2017. The correct answer should have been:

Mel Stride:

The Office of Tax Simplification (OTS) is an independent Office of the Treasury established on a permanent, statutory basis through the Finance Act 2016. Its objective is to provide independent advice to the Chancellor on simplifying the tax system. In the course of the OTS meeting this objective there have been no secondments from the OTS outside Government and nineteen secondments from outside Government to the OTS since 2012. All of these secondments were on a part-time basis. This includes one part-time secondment in the current financial year (2017-18).