



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 16 November 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:54 P.M., 16 November 2017). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

#### ■ Attorney General: Telephone Services

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[111470\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, which public telephone lines for the Law Officers Departments' services are charged at higher rates; and how much was taken by each such telephone line in the last 12 months.

**Robert Buckland:**

The Law Officers' Departments have no public telephone lines charged at higher rates.

#### ■ Sexual Harassment

**Christine Jardine:**

[\[112789\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what recent discussions he has had with the Crown Prosecution Service on cases involving sexual harassment.

**Robert Buckland:**

I have regular discussions with the Director of Public Prosecutions on a variety of issues

Sexual harassment covers a wide range of conduct. Some cases will meet the threshold for sexual or other offences which are investigated by the police.

When the CPS receives a file from the police it will review the evidence in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors in order to establish if there is a realistic prospect of conviction and that a prosecution is in the public interest. Where both stages of this test are met a prosecution will be brought.

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Boilers: North Tyneside

**Mary Glendon:**

[\[112565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many (a) replacement boilers were installed and (b) gas boilers were repaired in North Tyneside under the Energy Company Obligation scheme in the last year for which figures are available.

**Claire Perry:**

Between July 2016 and June 2017, a total of 362 heating and insulation measures were installed in the North Tyneside constituency under the Energy Company Obligation (ECO). Of those measures, 105 were new boilers. There were no gas

boiler repairs, reflecting ECO's primary focus on the installation of new measures rather than being a repair scheme.

■ **Business**

**Bill Esterson:** [\[112764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what representations he has received from representatives of business sectors on sector deals after the UK leaves the EU; and if he will make a statement.

**Claire Perry:**

As part of the Industrial Strategy Green Paper, the Government proposed sector deals and issued an open challenge to all sectors across the economy to produce proposals to enable them to grow, invest and reach their potential through 'sector deals'.

Stakeholders have warmly welcomed our proposals and over 50 sectors have signalled their interest in developing a Sector Deal. The Government has been working with many of them in recent months.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: EU Grants and Loans**

**Kate Green:** [\[112566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on funding for existing EU structural and investment projects; and whether all such projects meet the criteria of providing strong value for money and are in line with domestic strategic priorities.

**Claire Perry:**

The Department is in regular contact with HM Treasury regarding funding for EU Structural and Investment Funds projects. All EU Structural and Investment Funds projects signed to date deliver value for money and are in line with domestic strategic priorities and will be guaranteed by the Government after the UK leaves the EU.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Official Hospitality**

**Jon Trickett:** [\[112334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Department's publication BEIS ministerial hospitality, April to June 2017, published on 13 October 2017, whether (a) representatives or employees of the firm which offered that hospitality and (b) lobbyists or contractors of those firms were present at those events.

**Margot James:**

We do not hold this information as these are external events.



## ■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Working Conditions

**Chris Ruane:**

[\[112401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to improve the (a) physical and (b) mental wellbeing of staff employed in his Department.

**Margot James:**

The Department officially launched the Civil Service Wellbeing Strategy on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2017 by our BEIS SCS Champion for Health, Safety and Wellbeing. The strategy covers the following priorities:

1. Provide visible leadership for health and well-being
2. Encourage an open dialogue leading to action on mental health
3. Promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle
4. Promote national wellbeing campaigns
5. Support people to stay at work or return to work

The focus of the strategy is also to focus on - **Mental Health** ; **Musculoskeletal** ; and **Healthy Living**. The Department has taken a wide range of actions to support the strategy.

## ■ Drugs: Research

**Ms Harriet Harman:**

[\[112623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that levels of investment in research and development in medicines is maintained after the UK leaves the EU.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The Government is committed to maintaining and enhancing the strength of our research base. This is why we are increasing research and development investment by £4.7 billion over the period 2017-18 to 2020-21, an increase of around 20% to total government R&D spending, more than any increase in any parliament since 1979. This is in addition to our commitment to invest in new scientific infrastructure on a record scale – £6.9 billion over the period 2015-2021.

While we remain a member of the EU, UK businesses and universities should continue to bid for competitive EU funds, and we will work with the Commission to ensure payment when funds are awarded. The Government will underwrite the payment of such awards, even when specific projects continue beyond the UK's departure from the EU. This includes awards that are bid for before exit that are successful after exit. This guarantee gives British participants and their EU partners the assurance and certainty needed to plan ahead for collaborative projects that can run over many years. We are committed to ensuring that the UK continues to be a world leader in international science and research, including in the development of medicines.

## ■ Electrical Safety

**Jim Fitzpatrick:**

[\[112510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress his Department has made in implementing the recommendations of the Electrical Safety Working Group.

**Margot James:**

The Working Group on Product Recalls and Safety published its recommendations in July. We plan to respond to the report before the end of the year. Actions already underway include a new draft Code of Practice on recalls commissioned from the British Standards Institution (BSI), which has recently been subject to consultation, and an upgraded Government website to make it easier to find information on recalls and to register appliances. We are also actively considering the proposal made by the Working Group on Product Recalls and Safety for a new central body to support consumers on product safety.

## ■ Energy: Standing Charges

**Mary Creagh:**

[\[112241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what representations his Department has received on electricity and gas suppliers increasing standing charges to customers who have reduced their consumption of electricity or gas.

**Margot James:**

BEIS Ministers and officials have received representations concerning the standing charge, which reflects the on-going costs that fall on to a supplier regardless how much energy their individual customers use. The setting of a standing charge is a commercial matter for individual companies so they are free to offer tariffs with a low standing charge or, even set the standing charge at zero to attract low energy users (the on-going costs are included in a higher unit rate which customers only pay when using energy).

The draft Domestic Gas and Electricity (Tariff Cap) Bill published by the Government on 12 October introduces an absolute price cap on standard variable and default tariffs. This means the level of the cap, which Ofgem will set, will be the maximum amount suppliers can charge customers (for unit rate and standing charge combined) on standard variable and default tariffs.

## ■ Food: Industry

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[112763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 9 November 2017 to Question 110742, on industry, what representations he has received from business organisations on support for the UK food and drink supply chain as part of the new industrial strategy.

**Claire Perry:**

Stakeholders have warmly welcomed our proposals to develop Sector Deals, with over 50 sectors signaling their interest in developing a Deal and the Government has been working with many of them in recent months.

The Food and Drink sector has submitted proposals. The sector is crucial to the UK economy and we look forward to engaging closely with the sector over the coming months.

**Green Investment Bank: Incinerators****Dr David Drew:**[\[112709\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Green Investment Bank on the number of incinerator projects it is supporting financially.

**Claire Perry:**

The Green Investment Bank (GIB) was moved in to the private sector in August of this year. Ministers meet regularly with GIB. Questions with regard to their support for incineration or other projects should be directed to the [greeninvestmentgroup.com](http://greeninvestmentgroup.com).

**Pay: Barnsley****Dan Jarvis:**[\[112717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 29 June 2017 to Question 1216, on low pay: Barnsley Central, what steps he is taking to increase the average gross hourly earning in Barnsley.

**Margot James:**

The current employment rate in Barnsley is 74.8% compared with an England average of 78% but has grown by 10.7 percentage points since 2010. The Government is investing in economic and jobs growth in Barnsley through both the Leeds and Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnerships. The first two rounds of both their Growth Deals will deliver up to 24,000 new jobs. Projects supported include the Leeds City Region Business Growth Programme, through which 34 Barnsley businesses have benefitted from capital grants to create jobs. The Sheffield City Region Growth Deal has supported the opening up of employment sites at M1 Junction 36 with further work planned for Barnsley town centre regeneration. The Government's Education and Skills Funding Agency also supported the development of a Construction Centre at Barnsley College's Honeywell campus to support a range of construction and engineering training.

**Private Rented Housing: Electrical Safety****Jim Fitzpatrick:**[\[112509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to improve electrical safety in the private rented sector.

**Margot James:**

Electrical products intended for use by consumers, are regulated under the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations. These require all electrical products to be safe when placed on the market. They also require manufacturers, where appropriate, to monitor their products on the market and to take immediate corrective action or if necessary recall a product if they become aware it is unsafe.

**Retail Trade: Employment****Sir David Crausby:**[\[112275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how his Department's industrial strategy plans to protect jobs in the retail sector.

**Margot James:**

The Industrial Strategy is a framework for Government to work in partnership with industry, academia, civil society and business over the years ahead to build on the UK's strengths, make more of our untapped potential and create a more productive economy that works for everyone across the UK.

Our ambition is, therefore, for the Industrial Strategy to support businesses from all sectors of the economy to prosper and grow, including in the retail sector.

**Small Businesses: Government Assistance****Bill Esterson:**[\[112748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 10 November 2017 to Question 110816, what representations he has received from business organisations on support for small businesses after the UK leaves the EU.

**Margot James:**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy regularly engages with a number of business organisations on a wide range of issues, such as the Federation of Small Businesses and the British Chambers of Commerce.

The Government recognises that a strong relationship with industry will be critical as we negotiate to leave the EU. Facing up to challenges together, but also exploiting the opportunities that will become open to us, will be vital for the future of UK economic growth.

**Tesco: Booker Group****Bill Esterson:**[\[112765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what representations he has received from business organisations on the proposed merger of Tesco and Booker.

**Margot James:**

Competition investigations into mergers are a matter for the independent Competition and Markets Authority.

**CABINET OFFICE**■ **Absent Voting****Cat Smith:**[\[112480\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to prohibit the handling of postal ballots by campaigners for political parties.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The review by Sir Eric Pickles into electoral fraud considered postal voting and identified a number of areas in which the existing rules around postal voting at elections could be tightened.

Following this, the Government will look for opportunities to introduce measures that will prohibit party campaigners from handling postal votes, and apply a limit to the number of postal ballots that any one individual can hand in at a polling station. Our intention would be for the provisions to be backed up by a new offence, and will make a significant contribution to enhancing the security of postal voting.

■ **Civil Servants: Industrial Disputes****Chris Stephens:**[\[110431\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many days work were lost to industrial action taken by employees of the Government and its agencies in (a) 2015 and (b) 2016.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The Cabinet Office does not hold this data centrally, and the collection of departmental strike data is a matter for individual departments. The Office of National Statistics also publishes comprehensive data on days lost due to strike action in the public sector.

Link: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/search?q=Public+sector+strike+data>

■ **Companies: Ownership****Frank Field:**[\[112180\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will set a deadline for the UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies to make public their central registers of beneficial ownership.

**Chris Skidmore:**

*[Holding answer 13 November 2017]:* The UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies are separate jurisdictions with their own democratically elected governments. The UK Government works closely with the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies on transparency issues. Our priority is the implementation of

the new bilateral arrangements concluded with them in 2016. Under these arrangements, the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies have committed to establish, where they have not already done so, central registers of beneficial ownership information or similarly effective systems and to give UK law enforcement and tax authorities near real-time access to beneficial ownership information on corporate and legal entities incorporated in their jurisdictions. Nevertheless, it remains the Government's ambition for public registers to become the global standard. If this happens, we would expect the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies to follow suit.

### ■ Elections: Deposits

**Cat Smith:** [\[112485\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of extending the period to return deposits to one calendar week after the date of a poll.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Currently, Returning Officers at UK Parliamentary elections are required to return deposits no later than the next working day after that on which the result of the election is declared. We are not seeking to amend this requirement at present which is set out in primary legislation. The Government is continuing to consider how to improve electoral processes, and will keep this matter under review.

### ■ Elections: Finance

**Cat Smith:** [\[112484\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what guidance he has issued to the Elections Claims Unit on the publication of communications or queries relating to expenses for previous polls during subsequent polls.

**Chris Skidmore:**

**Cabinet Office officials advised the Association of Electoral Administrators that correspondence relating to expenses claims for previous polls would continue to be sent out by the Elections Claims Unit (ECU) during the period running up to the general election, in June 2017, on the basis that an immediate response would not be required and a longer deadline than normal would be set. This was to allow the ECU to continue their work on the scrutiny and settlement process for claims relating to the 2016 Police and Crime Commissioner election and the 2016 EU Referendum.**

### ■ Elections: Proof of Identity

**Cat Smith:** [\[112479\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that (a) young people, (b) students, (c) people with disabilities and (d) people from minority ethnic groups are not disenfranchised as a result of voter ID pilots.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Local authorities best understand the needs of their electors and each pilot will reflect its preference for the form and combination of ID. Each pilot is working closely and collaboratively with the Cabinet Office to ensure that every eligible elector is able to identify themselves before voting. Each pilot authority is undertaking an equality impact assessment to ensure that the needs of its voters are understood and that voters are not disenfranchised.

We want to ensure the system is safe and secure. It is not acceptable that anyone should be disenfranchised from the process.

**Chris Green:**[\[112683\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what progress the Government is making on trialling new methods of voter identification.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The voter ID pilot schemes are part of a comprehensive programme of reform that will enhance public confidence in our elections, and strengthen electoral integrity. The opportunity to pilot voter ID in May 2018 was offered to all local authorities in Great Britain and Woking, Gosport, Bromley, Swindon and Watford have committed to do so. We are working with each pilot authority to identify the forms of identification they want to use to meet their needs. In addition, Tower Hamlets will be piloting measures to improve the integrity of the postal vote process. Each authority is working collaboratively with the Cabinet Office on the design of their pilot with expert advice from the Electoral Commission and Association of Electoral Administrators. Equality impact assessments are being undertaken to ensure that the needs of all voters are understood.

**■ Electoral Register****Jim McMahon:**[\[109585\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many and what proportion of adults of voting age were not registered to vote in each year from 2010 to date.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Information regarding the total number of unregistered people of voting age is not held by the Government. Only totals for the number of registered electors are held, and these can be accessed through the Office For National Statistics website.

**■ Electoral Register: Email****Alex Norris:**[\[110231\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of the Association of Electoral Administrators' recommendation that the collection of voters' email addresses should no longer be optional when registering to vote.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The register to vote service has processed over 29.4 million applications and one of the key reasons for the success of the service is its simplicity. Mandating the entry of an email address to complete an application to register to vote can create barriers to registration, as not everyone has an email address. This is why we encourage applicants to provide an email address rather than requiring one. We will continue to make sure that applicants are encouraged to provide e-mail addresses, recognising that holding this data can be helpful for Electoral Registration Officers.

**■ Government Departments: Location****Luke Graham:****[112549]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he has taken to locate Government Departments (a) outside London and (b) in Scotland after the UK leaves the EU.

**Caroline Nokes:**

Workforce planning is primarily the responsibility of each Government department. However, the Government's Industrial Strategy will help create a more balanced economy by moving Arm's Length public bodies out of London and the surrounding area and into clusters in the regions and devolved nations of the UK.

**■ Government Departments: Procurement****Jon Trickett:****[111032]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what process the Government follows to identify new and emerging suppliers of goods and services for the Government.

**Caroline Nokes:**

We are doing more than ever to break down barriers for new and innovative businesses that want to supply to the public sector.

We are improving pre-procurement dialogue with suppliers to help us develop a more strategic relationship with industry.

The Small Business Research Initiative ( <https://sbri.innovateuk.org/> ), which was set up to connect public sector challenges with innovative ideas from industry, generates new business opportunities for companies, and provides a route to market for their ideas.

Finally, we are planning to set out the conditions for success that need to be in place in departments to drive innovation.

**■ Government Departments: Telephone Services****Ben Lake:****[109359]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which government departments have freephone numbers for public use.



**Caroline Nokes:**

In October 2015 the Government published guidance on departments' use of telephone prefixes and freephone numbers which can be found here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/470411/20151006\\_Customer\\_phone\\_lines\\_draft\\_guidance\\_October\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470411/20151006_Customer_phone_lines_draft_guidance_October_2015.pdf)

Departments are responsible and accountable for their choice of number prefix, supported by an appropriate numbering policy position. Where appropriate, departments must justify exceptions to the guidance. Information regarding Departments' use freephone numbers is not held centrally. Departments should be contacted directly regarding this.

**■ Malnutrition****Mrs Sharon Hodgson:****[111557]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of deaths in England caused by malnutrition in each of the last 10 years.

**Chris Skidmore:**

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

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA response [PQ111557 (1).pdf]

**■ Politics and Government****Chris Ruane:****[112526]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent assessment he has made of the level of understanding of democracy and the UK political system in the UK.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Government is committed to making our democracy work for all. Later this year we will publish a Democratic Engagement Strategy which will include a summary of evidence on democratic engagement and set out future plans, such as the National Democracy Week scheduled to take place July 2018.

**■ Prosperity Fund****Stephen Gethins:****[111886]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 23 October 2017 to Question 108244, on Prosperity Fund, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of Prosperity Fund projects on gender equality in developing countries.

**Caroline Nokes:**

All Prosperity Fund Official Development Assistance (ODA) spending must comply with the International Development Act 2002 and Gender Equality Act 2014. Large, multi-year Prosperity Fund programmes are being developed, building on the foundations laid by smaller projects in 2016/17.

The multi-year Prosperity Fund programmes will include an assessment on gender equality and inclusion. We are implementing a gender strategy to develop these assessments using specialist capability. An external monitoring and evaluation mechanism is in place that will provide information on the impact of programmes on gender equality.

**Stephen Gethins:** [\[111887\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 23 October 2017 to Question 108244, on Prosperity Fund, what strategy he has for Prosperity Fund programmes explicitly to tackle issues of gender inequality in developing countries as required by the International Development Act 2002.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The Prosperity Fund is implementing a gender strategy covering programme selection, design, monitoring and evaluation. The multi-year Prosperity Fund programmes currently being developed will include an assessment of how programmes address the issue of gender inequality and inclusion. Measurement of progress will be part of the Prosperity Fund's monitoring and evaluation.

#### ■ Social Services: Finance

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [\[111274\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if the Government will establish a group of Ministers and officials to discuss proposals for the long-term funding of social care.

**Damian Green:**

The Government has already established an Interministerial Group to oversee the development of its Green Paper on Care and Support.

#### ■ Voluntary Work: Young People

**Chris Green:** [\[108073\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many young people in Bolton took part in National Citizen Service in 2016; and where that borough ranks in numbers of children taking part in the scheme nationally.

**Caroline Nokes:**

774 young people from Bolton participated in the National Citizen Service programme in 2016. Bolton ranked 16th out of the 152 best boroughs for national participant numbers in 2016.

#### ■ Voting Rights: Young People

**Chris Ruane:** [\[112527\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent representations his Department has received on the votes at 16 campaign.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Government has received a wide range of representations on the issue of voting age from individuals across age groups, including school children doing research projects as well as from MPs and Local Government institutions on behalf of their constituents. There has been a noticeable increase in such communication in the last month, in the run up to and following the debate on the Representation of the People (Young People's Enfranchisement and Education) Private Member's Bill, which took place on 3 November 2017. There is no consensus across received representations - some letters support lowering the voting age and others do not.

**TREASURY****■ Companies: Ownership****Catherine West:**[\[112100\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many times HM Revenue and Customs has requested beneficial ownership information from registers of beneficial ownership from the UK's Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies since 1 July 2017.

**Mel Stride:**

The UK has around 150 tax treaties and tax information exchange agreements with other countries around the world, including with all of the Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories.

HMRC is the body responsible for exchanging tax information under international treaties. HMRC routinely exchanges information which is relevant to tax investigations, including information about the beneficial ownership of companies and property.

Last year, HMRC made 1,096 requests of other tax administrations, and received 2,015 requests.

HMRC also automatically receives financial account information about UK taxpayers under the Common Reporting Standard. This year we received information from almost 50 jurisdictions and this will rise to over 100 jurisdictions next year.

Tax treaties and other exchange of information instruments under which exchanges take place have strict confidentiality requirements. This means that the UK cannot provide a breakdown of numbers of requests in relation to particular jurisdictions.

**■ Enterprise Investment Scheme and Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme****Kit Malthouse:**[\[111582\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has assessed the effectiveness of the (a) Enterprise Investment Scheme and (b) Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme.

**Mel Stride:**

HM Revenue and Customs have previously commissioned studies into the use and impact of the Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS). These were published in April 2008 and February 2016 respectively. Details can be found at:

2008 study: <http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/resource/study-impact-enterprise-investment-scheme-eis-and-venture-capital-trusts-vct-company>

2016 study: <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/use-and-impact-venture-capital-schemes>

Seed EIS, introduced in 2012, was not included in the studies. Both these reliefs are currently being considered as part of the Patient Capital Review, the consultation for which was published in August.

**Financial Services****Sir Nicholas Soames:****[112619]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the ability of the financial service industry to continue to service cross-border clients after 2019 in the event that a transition period has not been agreed with the EU; and if he will make a statement.

**Stephen Barclay:**

Since the referendum last year, the Government has undertaken an extensive programme of engagement with financial services firms, in order to listen to concerns from across the sector and to understand how the UK's exit from the EU could impact firms and their customers in a range of different scenarios. We have been clear that we are aiming for a deep relationship with our EU partners which will maintain as much of the current cross-border arrangements as possible.

**Income Tax: East Renfrewshire****Paul Masterton:****[111960]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people in East Renfrewshire constituency paid the (a) top, (b) higher and (c) basic rate of income tax in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

**Paul Masterton:****[111961]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people in East Renfrewshire constituency earn over £24,000 per annum before tax.

**Mel Stride:**

Estimates of the number of individuals in East Renfrewshire parliamentary constituency by their highest marginal rate of income tax for the tax years 2010-11 to 2014-15 are provided in the following table.

TAX YEAR	BASIC RATE	HIGHER RATE	ADDITIONAL RATE
2010-11	41,700	6,700	400
2011-12	36,600	8,300	400
2012-13	36,900	8,500	500
2013-14	37,500	8,100	600
2014-15	36,400	9,300	600

Source: Survey of Personal Incomes

Notes on the table

1 Figures have been rounded to the nearest one hundred.

2 The 2014-15 tax year is the latest year for which these figures are available.

3 As is the case with the published Personal Incomes Statistics, these figures are statistical estimates and will be subject to sampling variation. The sample is not stratified by geography and all SPI estimates for sub-UK geographical areas (e.g. by country, region, county, parliamentary constituency, etc.) should therefore be treated with caution. For further information, please see the Personal Incomes Statistics release (Annex B), at the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-incomes-statistics>

An estimated 26,000 individuals in the East Renfrewshire constituency had total income of at least £24,000 in the 2014-15 tax year. This estimate is based on the Survey of Personal Incomes 2014-15, which is the latest available tax year.

## ■ Insurance: Foreign Companies

**Stephen Hammond:**

[112664]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with the Prudential Regulation Authority on its expected guidance to insurance firms headquartered in the EEA but which have branches in the UK on the process for future authorisations after the UK leaves the EU.

**Stephen Barclay:**

Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. Details of ministerial and permanent secretary meetings with external organisations on departmental business are published on a quarterly basis and are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>.

**Stephen Hammond:**

[\[112665\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the timetable is for the Prudential Regulation Authority to issue guidance for insurance firms headquartered in the EEA on the criteria for authorisations for third party branches and subsidiaries in the UK after the UK leaves the EU.

**Stephen Barclay:**

Authorisation of insurers is a matter for the Prudential Regulation Authority, which is independent of government. This is a matter for the Bank of England.

■ **Insurance: Tax Allowances**

**John McDonnell:**

[\[112077\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the tax relief given to companies and limited liability partnerships for insurance premiums in which they exercise significant control.

**Mel Stride:**

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

■ **Interest Payments: Tax Allowances**

**John McDonnell:**

[\[112076\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish a table showing the total value of tax relief given to companies for interest payments on borrowing from third parties, intragroup entities and related parties.

**Mel Stride:**

We are not able to publish such a table as the information required would only be available at disproportionate cost. No breakdown of interest payments on borrowings is included in the standard Company Tax return (CT600) so accessing the information would require close examination of every company's Corporation Tax computation.

Tax relief is not provided to companies in respect of interest payments but such payments may be deducted against taxable income. New Corporate Interest Restriction rules were included in the most recent Finance Bill which will restrict tax deductions in respect of excessive interest payments.

■ **Money Laundering**

**Chris Elmore:**

[\[901868\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the anti-money laundering supervisory regime.

**Stephen Barclay:**

The government is committed to ensuring the UK's financial system is a hostile environment for illicit finance, and as part of this we are reforming the anti-money

laundering supervisory regime to address the issues identified in the 2015 National Risk Assessment of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing.

I am in regular conversations with colleagues in other Departments as these reforms are developed and implemented.

■ **Mossack Fonseca: Disclosure of Information**

**Tulip Siddiq:**

**[111631]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his Department's press release of 10 April 2016, entitled UK launches cross-government taskforce on the Panama Papers, how many leads the multi-agency taskforce is investigating; and how many of those leads have a direct link to the leaked documents relating to the operations of Mossack Fonseca.

**Mel Stride:**

I refer the Hon Member to the written answer that I gave on 12/10/2017 to the Hon Member for Luton North.

**Tulip Siddiq:**

**[111632]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his Department's press release of 10 April 2016, entitled UK launches cross-government taskforce on the Panama Papers, how many full-time equivalent staff from each agency have been allocated to that taskforce; and whether any staff in that taskforce (a) have the power of arrest, (b) are authorised to access directly the contents of suspicious activity reports, (c) are able to request data on companies incorporated in foreign countries and (d) have powers fully to investigate any allegations of (i) non-compliance with sanctions, (ii) money laundering and (iii) terrorist financing.

**Mel Stride:**

The cross-government taskforce was set up to respond to the Panama Papers data leak, with ongoing operational activity being directed and delivered by the relevant departments and agencies. This includes criminal and civil investigations undertaken by HMRC and the pension fraud investigation being conducted by the Serious Fraud Office and National Crime Agency.

As part of its work, the taskforce set up the ongoing cross-government Joint Financial Analytical Centre which has added greatly to the UK's ability to tackle complex tax and economic crime at home and overseas. It will continue to analyse its holdings against other relevant datasets, including any material that comes out of future data leaks, in order to identify tax avoidance, evasion, assets for recovery, professional enablers who are facilitating financial crime and misconduct, and international bribery and corruption.

All of the powers listed in the question are vested in taskforce members. The number of officers holding each different power is not recorded centrally. HMRC's 26,000-strong compliance workforce covers the full range of tax compliance risks, including the operational work generated by the taskforce in response to the Panama Papers.

## ■ Motor Vehicles: Insurance

**Dan Jarvis:**

[\[112693\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answer of 27 April 2017 to Question 71682, on motor vehicles: insurance, if he has decided the direction of future policy on insurance premiums.

**Stephen Barclay:**

As a rule, insurers use their claims experience and other industry-wide statistics to assess the risks posed by an individual and set the terms and price at which they will offer insurance cover. The Government does not prescribe the terms, conditions or price that insurance companies may set, and does not generally intervene in these commercial decisions by insurers.

However, the Government remains concerned about the impact on motor insurance premiums from the high number and cost of whiplash claims. This is why we have committed to take firm action to reform the whiplash claims process and reduce the financial burden on consumers. Moreover, the Government has announced reforms to the Personal Injury Discount Rate, which affects the way that lump sum payments awarded to personal injury compensation claimants are calculated, and has an impact on motor insurance premiums. The new framework should ensure that claimants continue to receive the money to meet all of their needs whilst reducing the impact on other consumers through increased premiums. The Financial Conduct Authority has also recently announced a review of pricing practices used by insurers, which began this year.

## ■ Offshore Trusts: Property Development

**Catherine West:**

[\[112216\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will commission a review of the practice of property developers using offshore trusts.

**Mel Stride:**

The Government has taken decisive steps to ensure that profits arising from the development of UK property are taxed and that the ownership of UK property through a trust is transparent.

In Finance Act 2016 the Government legislated to ensure that profits from the development of UK property are always subject to tax. Alongside this legislation HMRC created a task force to ensure tax on these profits are effectively collected.

To improve transparency in trusts the Government established a register of trusts incurring UK tax consequences, enabling law enforcement authorities to identify beneficial owners of relevant trusts. Further, the UK is engaged with EU negotiations on targeted amendments to the Fourth Money Laundering Directive, including increased obligations for trusts to register information on their beneficial ownership.



## ■ Students: Loans

**Angela Rayner:**

[112729]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what target has been set for the Resource and Accounting Budgetary Charge on student loans.

**Elizabeth Truss:**

HM Treasury sets a target Resource and Accounting Budgetary (RAB) Charge to the Department for Education as budgetary measure to help manage the costs of student loan book. The current target RAB charge is 36%, published online here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/557414/Correction\\_slip\\_HC\\_362.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/557414/Correction_slip_HC_362.pdf)

## ■ Tax Avoidance

**John McDonnell:**

[112078]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will appoint an independent commission to examine the tax avoidance schemes designed by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

**Mel Stride:**

This government is clear that everyone has a responsibility to pay the tax that is owed. HMRC cannot comment on individual cases, but it will investigate any allegations of wrongdoing brought to its attention.

HMRC has a strong track record in tackling tax avoidance schemes. The Finance Bill 2017-2019 introduced a tough new penalty so that the enablers of tax avoidance schemes that HMRC defeats, including the designers of schemes, will face penalties of 100% of the fees they have earned from the failed avoidance.

The government will continue to consider what further actions are necessary to tackle tax avoidance, evasion, and other forms of non-compliance.

## ■ Tax Evasion: Prosecutions

**John McDonnell:**

[112079]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish a list of the number of successful and unsuccessful prosecutions mounted by HM Revenue and Customs for offshore tax evasion.

**Mel Stride:**

The total number of prosecutions for offshore tax evasion in the last five years to June 2017 is 20. These resulted in over 58 years of custodial sentences and 12 years of suspended sentences. Currently, over 120 individuals are the subject of criminal investigation for offences associated with offshore tax evasion.

HMRC is not itself a prosecuting authority. All prosecutions have to be authorised by the relevant independent prosecuting authority, which for England and Wales would be the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS); for Scotland, the Crown Office and

Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS); and for NI, the Public Prosecution Service for NI (PPSNI).

■ **Taxation: Bermuda**

**John McDonnell:**

[\[112083\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many requests his Department has made to the Government of Bermuda for assistance in its investigation of offshore tax avoidance and evasion.

**Mel Stride:**

The UK has around 150 tax treaties and tax information exchange agreements with other countries around the world, including with all of the Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories.

HMRC is the body responsible for exchanging tax information under international treaties. HMRC routinely exchanges information which is relevant to tax investigations, including information about the beneficial ownership of companies and property.

Last year, HMRC made 1,096 requests of other tax administrations, and received 2,015 requests.

HMRC also automatically receives financial account information about UK taxpayers under the Common Reporting Standard. This year we received information from almost 50 jurisdictions and this will rise to over 100 jurisdictions next year.

Tax treaties and other exchange of information instruments under which exchanges take place have strict confidentiality requirements. This means that the UK cannot provide a breakdown of numbers of requests in relation to particular jurisdictions.

■ **Taxation: Domicil**

**Sir Nicholas Soames:**

[\[112496\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people with non-domiciled status in the UK have left the UK in each of the last three years.

**Mel Stride:**

This information is not available. Individuals with non-domicile status do not have to inform the Government when they leave the UK.

■ **Taxation: Young People**

**Mrs Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

[\[112092\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the level of (a) income tax and (b) National Insurance contributions paid to the public purse by people under the age of 18 in each of the last five years.

**Mel Stride:**

is table contains estimates of the total amount of income tax and national insurance liabilities of individuals who are under the age of 18 at the end of the tax year.

**TOTAL INCOME TAX AND NICs LIABILITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS UNDER THE AGE OF 18 (£ MILLIONS)**  
(1)(2)

	Income Tax	NIC's
2012-13	22.6	9.2
2013-14	20.9	8.8
2014-15	34.9	12.0

1. All counts are presented in millions and rounded to the nearest hundred thousand pounds.
2. These estimates are based on the Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) for the years concerned. Outturn data for the most recent two tax years (2015-16 and 2016-17) are yet available. The latest available outturn data in this format is from the Survey of Personal Incomes for 2014-15.

■ **VAT**

**Patricia Gibson:**

[\[112548\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential effect on small and medium-sized enterprises of any reduction in eligibility for VAT registration.

**Mel Stride:**

All businesses with a taxable turnover above the VAT threshold must register. Businesses below that threshold can voluntarily register.

The Office of Tax Simplification published their review of VAT earlier this month, which included discussion on the registration threshold. The Government will respond to their recommendations in due course.

**COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

■ **Coastal Communities Fund**

**Chris Ruane:**

[\[112088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much funding from the public purse his Department has allocated to each coastal town from the Coastal Communities Fund in each year for which information is available.

**Jake Berry:**

We have funded 102 projects in 79 individual coastal settlements and 27 projects that cover multiple coastal locations in England. The total value of all these projects is £132 million. I will place a table in the Library of the House showing the amount of grant awarded in each bidding round and the coastal locations they cover.

The Welsh Government is responsible for Coastal Community Fund grant awards in Wales and can provide details of grants awarded to coastal locations there.

■ **EU Grants and Loans: Computer Software****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[109985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 24 October 2017 to Question 107778, how much his Department spent on software licences for e-claims for (a) 2015, (b) 2016 and (c) 2017.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Departmental records show the following expenditure by financial year on software licenses specifically for E-Claims:

FINANCIAL YEAR	SPEND (INC VAT)
2014-15	£0
2015-16	£271,200
2016-17	£43,560

The E-Claims service is a management and control system for the delivery of programmes to meet European Commission guidelines. The public facing component of the service allows users to apply for European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) or European Social Fund (ESF) money.

■ **Local Government: Property****Eddie Hughes:**[\[112298\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the effect on the financial stability of local councils of purchasing commercial properties with high loan-to-value loans.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Local authorities have the freedom to borrow and invest, without government consent, provided that their borrowing is affordable. It is for each local authority to assess the risk to its financial sustainability of any borrowing or investment activity.

My Department has recently published a consultation on proposals to update the Statutory Guidance on Local Authority Investments with the aim of improving local risk management and transparency of decision making.

The consultation proposes introducing a new requirement for every local authority to present quantitative indicators that will allow assessment of total exposure from borrowing and investment decisions.

### ■ **Private Rented Housing: Evictions**

**Sandy Martin:**

[\[111938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to identify the number of private renters who are evicted for rent arrears and in receipt of local housing allowance; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Department does not hold information on evictions for rent arrears.

### ■ **Pupils: Health**

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[111949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether his Department holds any responsibility for ensuring that all schools in England are aware of and compliant with the statutory guidance entitled, Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Government understands how important it is that children with medical conditions are supported to enjoy a full education. That is why the Government introduced the duty, under Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014, to require governing bodies to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions, and has provided statutory guidance outlining schools' responsibilities in this area.

Whilst the Department for Communities and Local Government holds no responsibility in the area, the Government continues to work with organisations such as the Health Conditions in Schools Alliance to help raise further awareness of the duty on schools, and have recently promoted the duty through the Department for Education's social media channels.

## DEFENCE

### ■ **Air Space**

**Andrew Bowie:**

[\[112256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many times aircraft were intercepted by Quick Reaction Alert flights in 2016.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) Typhoon aircraft from RAF Lossiemouth and RAF Coningsby launched to intercept on 12 days in 2016.

I am withholding further details as deterrence is a principal function of QRA and QRA is in turn an integral part of the air defence of the UK. The disclosure of information that might compromise the QRA deterrent capability would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ **Armed Forces: Bereavement Counselling**

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[\[111509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he has taken to raise awareness amongst (a) serving, (b) reserve, and (c) families of service personnel of the work of the Bereavement and Aftercare Support Service since 2013; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The importance of casualty management and support to bereaved families is emphasised on the Commanding Officer's Designate Course which is attended by both Regular and Reserve officers who are taking up a Commanding Officer's appointment. The policy is discussed as part of the overall welfare support package, and personnel work through scenarios and have question and answer sessions. All Adjutants are also briefed on casualty procedures and the role of the Bereavement and Aftercare Support team.

In addition to this, the Bereavement and Aftercare Support team write to bereaved families in the first week following the death to introduce themselves.

■ **Armed Forces: Training**

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[\[111510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the training for casualty (a) notification and (b) visiting officers was last revised; whether a training needs analysis was conducted at the same time as that revision; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The training requirements for both Notifying Officers and Visiting Officers are kept under constant review by all three Services. Both Notifying and Visiting Officers produce regular reports for the parent Service on the progress of their tasks. This is analysed by the single Services and any conclusions or adjustments are brought to a tri-Service Working Group for further review and, if necessary, implementation. A Training Needs Analysis was conducted in early 2017 with an updated set of Terms of Reference for the Notifying and Visiting Officers Course being agreed in April 2017.

■ **Army: Recruitment**

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[111625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to recruit soldiers to the Army.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Army recruits through a diverse and wide range of methods and is taking a number of steps to improve its recruitment processes.

Applications to the Army are received through the Army Website, and as of September 2016 the online application process has been enhanced by the launch of the "Quick App" making the application process faster and more user friendly. During the last 12 months there has also been an increased spend on marketing, including on the 'This is Belonging' campaign which is active on television, radio, cinema and a variety of social media outlets. In addition, the Army advertises for specialist staff through online job advertising boards.

These developments are showing signs of progress, over 8,000 people joined the Regular Army last financial year and since April 2017 application levels are over 20% higher than the same period last year.

This is all supported by extensive Army regional engagement to promote awareness across society of the role of the Army and the career opportunities that it presents. The Army is Britain's biggest provider of apprenticeships, offering not just a job, but a career with ongoing training and qualifications.

The Armed Forces also seek to attract recruits from across the UK, and continue to work hard at recruiting a diverse work force. The Army has made addressing issues of equality, diversity and inclusivity a priority in order to ensure that it is a modern employer which is capable of recruiting talent from all elements of society. The lifting of the exclusion for women serving in Ground Close Combat roles highlights the commitment to offering maximum opportunity for all.

**■ Ascension Island: Airports****Zac Goldsmith:**[\[112534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the timetable is for the repair of the runway on Ascension Island; and which Minister of his Department has responsibility for that project.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Secretary of State for Defence is working closely with the US to ensure the Ascension Island runway is repaired. The project is scheduled to be completed by 2020.

**■ European Fighter Aircraft****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[111527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his policy is on funding for the production of Captor-E active electronically scanned array radars; and if he will make a statement.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The Government remains committed to procuring the Captor-E radar capability for our Typhoon Tranche 3 aircraft, as outlined in the Strategic Defence and Security

Review 2015. Within the Ministry of Defence, this work is being taken forward under the E-Scan programme.

### ■ Military Aircraft: Helicopters

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[111823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many flying hours have been logged on (a) Merlin, (b) Wildcat, (c) Apache, (d) Gazelle, (e) Chinook, (f) Puma, (g) Lynx, (h) Bell 212 and (i) Defender aircraft under Joint Helicopter Command in each of the last five years.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[111824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many flying hours have been logged on (a) Merlin, (b) Wildcat, (c) Apache, (d) Gazelle, (e) Chinook, (f) Puma, (g) Lynx, (h) Bell 212 and (i) Defender aircraft under Joint Helicopter Command in 2017.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The number of flying hours by aircraft type under Joint Helicopter Command for financial years 2012-13 to date are shown below. The Joint Helicopter Command does not fly the Bell 212.

Annual flying hours are impacted by a number of factors including operational activity, number of platforms in service and training requirement.

FINANCIAL YEAR	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18(AS AT 31OCT)
MERLIN	6,890	5,520	4,160	3,240	3,250	1,820
WILDCAT	650	1,250	2,160	3,120	4,190	2,730
APACHE	16,660	15,340	11,090	7,980	8,130	5,310
GAZELLE	3,980	4,010	4,000	4,020	3,810	2,310
CHINOOK	14,810	13,940	11,900	10,520	11,450	6,820
PUMA	3,080	1,220	4,170	5,280	5,240	2,870
LYNX	5,150	4,410	2,940	3,420	2,470	950
DEFENDER	2,110	1,760	1,920	2,000	1,760	1,190

Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10. Numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to avoid statistical bias.

These figures are Single Service figures and are not official statistics produced by Defence Statistics.



**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[111827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to reduce Joint Helicopter Command's basing footprint.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The 'A Better Defence Estate' strategy published on 7 November 2016 set out the Ministry of Defence's intent to optimise helicopter basing. This work is ongoing and therefore decisions about Joint Helicopter Command's future basing footprint have yet to be made.

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[111829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many trained pilots from (a) the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm, (b) the Commando Helicopter Force, (c) the Army Air Corps, (d) RAF units and (e) formations under Joint Helicopter Command have left the regular armed forces in each of the last five years.

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[111830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many pilots have joined (a) the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm, (b) the Commando Helicopter Force, (c) the Army Air Corps, (d) RAF units and (e) formations under Joint Helicopter Command in each of the last five years.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The tables below show the number of pilots who have joined and left the specified organisations over the last five financial years. Information relating to Joint Helicopter Command is not held in the format requested, but is included within the figures below.

**Number of Regular Service pilots joining specified organisations.**

FINANCIAL YEAR	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>
<i>of which Commando Helicopter Force</i>	9	11	6	~	5
<b>Army Air Corps <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>14</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>RAF Units</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>82</b>

1. Excludes Full Time Reserve Service and Gurkhas.

2. Figures of fewer than five are represented by “~” in order to prevent identification of individuals.

**Number of Regular Service pilots exiting specified organisations.**

FINANCIAL YEAR	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>Royal Navy</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Fleet Air Arm</b>					
<i>of which</i>	9	19	15	15	13
<i>Commando</i>					
<i>Helicopter</i>					
<i>Force</i>					
<b>Army Air Corps <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>48</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>RAF Units</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>112</b>

1. Excludes Full Time Reserve Service and Gurkhas.

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[111846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many flying hours the (a) Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm, (b) Commando Helicopter Force, (c) Army Air Corps and (d) Royal Air Force pilots under Joint Helicopter Command have flown in each of the last five years.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The number of flying hours under the Joint Helicopter Command for financial years 2012-13 to date are shown below. Annual flying hours are impacted by a number of factors including operational activity, number of platforms in service and training requirement.

FINANCIAL YEAR	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 (AS AT 31Oct)
Commando Helicopter Force	8,440	6,160	7,900	4,040	4,250	2,570
Army Air Corps	35,280	32,010	25,720	20,160	19,350	11,740
RAF	24,790	20,690	16,070	15,790	16,680	9,680

Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10. Numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to avoid systematic bias.

These figures are single Service figures and are not official statistics produced by Defence Statistics.

## ■ **Military Exercises**

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

**[111861]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many British (a) personnel and (b) amphibious bridging vehicles are planned to take part in Exercise Full Throttle; and if he will make a statement.

**Mark Lancaster:**

It is currently planned that approximately 40 personnel from 75 Engineer Regiment and a number of M3 amphibious bridging vehicles will take part in supporting Exercise Full Throttle.

## ■ **Ministry of Defence: Telephone Services**

**Jon Trickett:**

**[111473]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which public telephone lines for his Department's services are charged at higher rates; and how much was taken by each such telephone line in the last 12 months.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

There are 34 FreePhone numbers operated for the Ministry of Defence (MOD) through the Defence Fixed Telecommunications Service (DFTS) contract with British Telecom (BT).

Some mobile phone suppliers may charge higher rates to their users for FreePhone calls, but the MOD does not generate income from this.

The MOD operates four Premium Rate Service (PRS) telephone lines through the DFTS contract with BT. While these four telephone lines do have the capacity to recover money from callers, the MOD as an organisation does not benefit from PRS calls, and no income has been detected from them for the period November 2016 to October 2017.

However, DFTS is not mandated as the single procurement mechanism for PRS telephone lines across Defence, and other Defence contracts may include the provision of publicly accessible PRS telephone numbers, e.g. for contact centres.

## ■ **NATO**

**Martin Docherty-Hughes:**

**[112047]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with his NATO counterparts on locating NATO's North Atlantic command in the UK.

**Mark Lancaster:**

At their meeting on 8 and 9 November 2017, NATO Defence Ministers agreed the outline design for an adapted NATO Command Structure, which will now be the basis

for further work. This will include the establishment of a Command for the Atlantic, no decisions on its location have been made.

## ■ **RAF Fairford**

**Alex Sobel:**

**[112539]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of the development and upgrading of USAF Fairford; and who will bear the costs of that development and upgrading.

**Mark Lancaster:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 13 November 2017 to Question 112003.

### **Attachments:**

1. RAF Fairford [Hansard Extract 13 November 2017, HOC 112003..docx]

## ■ **Saudi Arabia: Military Alliances**

**Catherine West:**

**[111860]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Military and Security Cooperation Agreement signed with Saudi Arabia in September 2017 covers the (a) transfer of any equipment to the Saudi Armed Forces or National Guard and (b) stationing of any additional UK civil servants or military personnel in Saudi Arabia; and if he will make a statement.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The Military and Security Cooperation Agreement (MSCA) signed between the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia further cements the UK's long standing relationship with our key Gulf partner. Defence sales and the stationing of UK Defence personnel have long formed integral parts of our Defence relationship; the MSCA places our engagement on a more formal footing, covering jurisdiction, administrative and other technical issues.

## ■ **Special Forces**

**Crispin Blunt:**

**[111620]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will undertake a review of access to information on the Special Forces by Parliament to enable effective scrutiny of those forces.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Given the sensitivity of their activities, oversight of Special Forces is exercised through the Prime Minister and Defence Ministers. We have no plans to change the current arrangements.

## ■ Veterans: Advisory Services

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[112597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much from the public purse has been spent on the Veterans' Gateway; and for what specific purposes those monies were used.

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[112598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what targets have been set for the operation and activity of the Veterans' Gateway.

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[112599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to monitor and review the (a) effectiveness and (b) value for money of the Veteran's Gateway.

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[112600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many referrals have been made from the Veteran's Gateway to each partner charity to date.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Veterans' Gateway puts veterans and their families in touch with the organisations best placed to provide the information, advice and support that they need. The Gateway was awarded a Covenant Fund grant of almost £2 million for set-up and initial operating costs, to be paid in instalments over a two year period. To date, payments totalling £1 million have been made. In addition, £100,000 was awarded and paid to support the costs associated with an independent evaluation.

Governance and value for money were key criteria used in the assessment process which led to the awarding of the £2 million grant. The payments of the grant instalments are, therefore, linked to the achievement of milestones, which include quarterly monitoring reports, evaluations of marketing activity, annual reviews and the completion of an independent evaluation. An independent evaluation of the Veterans' Gateway has been commissioned and will be delivered by the University of Ulster.

In addition, a Veterans Reference Group to be chaired by a veteran who has lived experience of being 'wounded, injured or sick' will ensure that the Veterans' Gateway continues to focus on the needs of the veterans' community in an uncomplicated and informative way.

A total of 608 calls to the Veterans' Gateway contact centre (staffed mainly by veterans) were referred to 20 partner charities in the period from its launch to 14 November 2017. Many veterans who contact the Gateway have their query resolved through an initial contact and do not seek a further referral. Other veterans are able to find the right organisation for their needs via self-service guides provided on the website. In addition to the calls referred to partner charities, there have been 133,000 website sessions; 1,550 Phone calls; 967 emailed questions and 651 live chats through the website.

**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ **4G**

**Tom Watson:** [\[112608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, in what proportion of UK premises 4G is available.

**Tom Watson:** [\[112610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, in what proportion of the UK geographic area voice coverage is available.

**Matt Hancock:**

As of June 2016, there was 90% geographic voice coverage across the UK from at least one Mobile Network Operator (MNO), and 96% of UK premises had indoor 4G coverage from at least one MNO.

■ **Arts: Free Movement of People**

**Kevin Brennan:** [\[112606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on maintaining freedom of movement between the UK and EU countries for time-limited activities within the creative industries after the UK leaves the EU.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on a range of issues affecting the creative industries in the context of leaving the EU, and recently met with Brandon Lewis, Minister of State for Immigration, where they discussed a range of issues in relation to DCMS sectors and the movement of people between the EU and the UK.

■ **Battle of Beersheba: Anniversaries**

**Bill Wiggin:** [\[111831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to commemorate the Battle of Beersheba in 1917.

**John Glen:**

While the Government has not commemorated the centenary of the Battle of Beersheba with a specific event, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Israel and the Chief of the Air Staff attended a commemoration to mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Beersheba on 31 October 2017, at the Commonwealth War Graves Beersheba War Cemetery in Be'er Sheva, Israel.

## ■ Broadband

**Tom Watson:**

[\[112607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, to what proportion of UK Premises superfast broadband is available.

**Matt Hancock:**

Over 94 per cent of UK homes and businesses can now access superfast broadband and coverage is on track to reach 95 per cent by the end of the year.

Superfast broadband coverage will extend beyond that to at least another 2 per cent of premises. For those not covered by superfast broadband we will ensure universal broadband coverage of at least 10Mbps.

## ■ Broadband: Scotland

**John Lamont:**

[\[111864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions she has had with counterparts in the Scottish Government on improving digital connectivity in the Scottish Borders.

**Matt Hancock:**

Ministers and officials from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport hold regular discussions with their counterparts from the Scottish Government on a range of issues, including the improvement of digital connectivity in Scotland. A recent ministerial meeting was held on the 6 November 2017.

## ■ Charities

**Mr Steve Reed:**

[\[112108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when her Department plans to respond to the House of Lords Select Committee on Charities report of 2016-17 on Stronger charities for a stronger society, HL Paper 133.

**Tracey Crouch:**

We expect to respond to the House of Lords Select Committee on Charities report "Stronger charities for a stronger society" shortly.

## ■ Cultural Relations: Colombia

**Glyn Davies:**

[\[901890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to strengthen cultural links with Colombia.

**John Glen:**

Strengthening cultural relations is an important element of the UK's bilateral relationship with Colombia. We commend the admirable work of the British Council, which is leading a broad programme of work to build partnerships with Colombian artists and civil society through cultural exchanges. This includes skills-sharing and

projects which use the arts to support Colombia's efforts to promote peace and social transformation across society. Working closely with Nesta, the Council is supporting creative entrepreneurs throughout Colombia. UK artists and writers participate in Colombian cultural events, notably through the Hay Festival Cartagena.

## ■ Cybercrime

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

**[111945]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Digital Economy Act 2017, what guidance her Department has issued to providers of online social media platforms on their obligations to (a) report and (b) cooperate with the police on instances of serious digital abuse.

**Matt Hancock:**

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS), which the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport co-chairs, published a practical guide for providers of social media and interactive services. The guide has examples of good practice to encourage businesses to think about "safety by design", including advice on informing the police of illegal content and co-operating with law enforcement requests to remove such content.

The guide can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>

Additionally, we are introducing a code of practice for social media providers, as required by the Digital Economy Act, which will set out guidance about what social media providers should do in relation to harmful conduct on their platforms. The code of practice will include guidance on arrangements for notification by users; the process for dealing with notifications; terms and conditions in relation to these arrangements and processes; and, the giving information to the public about the action providers take against harmful behaviour. We are consulting on how to proceed with this as part of the Internet Safety Strategy and aim to publish the code in 2018.

## ■ Data Protection: Charities

**Susan Elan Jones:**

**[111842]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether she plans to extend her Department's support for smaller charities to include training on data protection before the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation in May 2018.

**Matt Hancock:**

Small charities and SMEs can make use of the ICO's advisory visit service which provide organisations with practical advice on improving their data protection practices. Through an advisory visit charities will be able to benefit from the ICO's knowledge and expertise to identify what they are doing well and where they need to improve. The ICO has also launched a helpline aimed at small organisations;



updated its SME toolkit to include GDPR requirements; and begun working on simplifying its 12-step GDPR preparation guidance.

**Susan Elan Jones:**

[\[111845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether the telephone helpline for small businesses on the General Data Protection Regulation, run by the Information Commissioner's Office, will be open to small charities.

**Matt Hancock:**

Yes. The phone service is aimed at people running small businesses or charities and recognises the particular problems they face getting ready for the new data protection regime. There are already resources on the Information Commissioner's Office website ([ico.org.uk](http://ico.org.uk)) to help smaller organisations to prepare for the data protection regime.

#### ■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Nurseries

**Tracy Brabin:**

[\[110614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what childcare facilities her Department makes available for staff; how much her Department spent (a) overall and (b) per child on those childcare facilities in the last year; and how many staff members use those childcare facilities.

**Matt Hancock:**

The specific information requested is not centrally held and to obtain it would incur a disproportionate cost.

Westminster Holiday Playscheme (WHP), a school holiday service run by Tinies Kids Clubs, is available to civil servants of specific government departments including DCMS. DCMS offers WHP childcare facilities to all staff with a 50% subsidy.

#### ■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Telephone Services

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[111474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which public telephone lines for her Department's services are charged at higher rates; and how much was taken by each such telephone line in the last 12 months.

**Matt Hancock:**

DCMS has no public telephone lines that charge at the higher rate.

#### ■ Dormant Assets Commission

**Susan Elan Jones:**

[\[111843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when she plans to announce the allocation of funding by the Independent Dormant Assets Commission.

**Susan Elan Jones:**

[\[111844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of committing a proportion of the funding from the Independent Dormant Assets Commission to prepare charities for compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

**Tracey Crouch:**

The independent Dormant Assets Commission reported to Government on the feasibility of expanding the current dormant assets scheme to include a wider range of dormant financial assets in March 2017. The Government is considering the Commission's report and will publish its response in due course.

## ■ **Football: Shareholders**

**Catherine West:**

[\[111776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to support the Premier League uphold its rule that states an individual who owns a stake of 10 per cent or more in one club cannot hold a single share in another club.

**Tracey Crouch:**

The Premier League has wide-ranging rules in the areas of club ownership and finance. These include that an individual who owns a significant share in one club cannot also own shares in another. To do so would present a conflict of interest and would distort competition within the game. If the Premier League has evidence that this is happening then they should act.

## ■ **Gaming Machines**

**Stephen Timms:**

[\[112694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the wider economic effect, other than on gambling industry revenue and player utility, of reducing B2 machine stakes; and if she will make a statement.

**Stephen Timms:**

[\[112719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will place in the Library a copy of the KPMG report referenced in the Impact Report for her Department's Consultation on proposals for Changes to Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility Matters.

**Stephen Timms:**

[\[112720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 16 October 2016 to Question 107989, on gaming machines, what estimate she has made of the fiscal impact of each of the options set out in the Consultation on proposals for Changes to Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility Measures; and if she will make a statement.

**Tracey Crouch:**

The Review of Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility Measures and the impact assessment published alongside the consultation document include qualitative analysis regarding wider economic effects and the impact on individuals and communities. The framework for analysis in the impact assessment takes into account some isolated economic effects in other gambling markets but does not attempt to look at the effects on the rest of the economy (general equilibrium) because doing so would be disproportionate relative to the size of the policy impacts expected. We welcome further evidence on costs and benefits in response to the consultation and an updated impact assessment will be published with the Government's final proposals.

DCMS will work with HM Treasury to establish fiscal effects as policy is developed. The KPMG report referred to in the impact assessment has not been made public because it was provided by the Association of British Bookmakers in confidence, on the grounds that it contains commercially sensitive information.

**LIFE****Diana Johnson:**[\[112596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the oral contribution by the Under-Secretary of State for Health of 6 November 2017, Official Report, column 1307, what progress has been made on looking into the decision to award the Life charity with money from the tampon tax fund.

**Tracey Crouch:**

Life Charity was one of 53 charities awarded Tampon Tax funding across England.

As set out in the grant agreement, Life will not be able to use the Tampon Tax grant to fund its counselling service, or its 'Life Matters Education Service' and is prohibited from spending the money on publicity or promotion. The grant is for a specific service in west London that aims to support vulnerable, homeless or at risk pregnant women (who have already decided to keep their babies) and mothers.

**Museums and Galleries****Kevin Brennan:**[\[112605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment she has made of the effect of changes to local authority budgets on the level of professional expertise available in the museums sector.

**John Glen:**

The independent Mendoza Review, commissioned by the government and published on 14th November, shows that 28% of Arts Council England-Accredited museums are operated by local authorities and that they and other museums receive over £200m per year from local government. DCMS does not collect data on professional expertise in the museums sector but the Mendoza Review identifies the need for museums employees to diversify their skills to adapt to today's funding environment.

**Rugby Football League: Finance****Ms Marie Rimmer:****[R] [112142]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much funding her Department has provided to the Rugby Football League in each of the last 10 years; and on what projects that funding has been spent.

**Tracey Crouch:**

Sport England - the arms-length body of government responsible for investing in grassroots sport - made 27 participation and talent investments totalling £54,587,896 in the Rugby Football League (RFL) from 2007-2017. The breakdown of Sport England's four year funding awards for the RFL for 2009-13 and 2013-17 is set out below:

2009-13 - 7 awards totalling £28,031,694

2013-17 - 10 awards totalling £17,893,596

UK Sport - the arms-length body of government responsible for investing in elite sport and major sporting events - awarded up to £500,000 to the RFL as part of the costs of staging the 2013 Rugby League World Cup.

We have committed to investing up to £25 million in the 2021 Rugby League World Cup tournament and associated legacy infrastructure. Up to £15 million of which has been committed to support the staging of the tournament and up to £10 million to legacy infrastructure projects.

**Rugby: Females****Faisal Rashid:****[901893]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has had discussions with the Rugby Football League on women's rugby league.

**Tracey Crouch:**

I have regular discussions with national governing bodies of sport, including the Rugby Football League (RFL), on a range of issues including women's rugby league. I recently wrote to the Chief Executive of RFL to outline the progress made in women's sport and make clear that I am keen that they continue to improve investment in women's rugby league.

**Small Businesses: Data Protection****Bim Afolami:****[111775]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the General Data Protection Regulation on small businesses.

**Matt Hancock:**

The UK worked during negotiations to ensure that the obligations arising from the regulations are greater on an organisation only if the risk their activity poses to an individual is high. Organisations which already operate at the standard set by the Data Protection Act 1998 should be well placed to implement the new data protection framework.

Although businesses will have to make themselves familiar with the new regulation and to what extent it applies to their operations, there are resources on the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) website ([ico.org.uk](http://ico.org.uk)) to help SMEs and those employing fewer than 250 people to prepare for the data protection regime. In addition, the ICO has launched a dedicated helpline service for organisations employing 250 people or fewer and has updated its SME toolkit to reflect the requirements of GDPR. The ICO continue to develop further guidance on both the Bill and GDPR to support the preparations of organisations.

**■ Social Enterprises: Procurement****Mr Steve Reed:**[\[112139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what representations she has received from charities and social enterprises on improving procurement rules after the UK leaves the EU.

**Tracey Crouch:**

As the UK exits the EU, ministers and officials in government are speaking to charities and social enterprises about the potential opportunities they foresee, including changes to procurement regulations.

Government will use opportunities offered by our exit from the EU to carefully consider longer-term options for the UK's public procurement rules.

**DUCHY OF LANCASTER****■ Duchy of Lancaster: Investment****Catherine West:**[\[111857\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, what discussions he has had with the Duchy Council on the Queen's private estate being invested in a fund based in the Cayman Islands.

**Sir Patrick McLoughlin:**

As part of my role as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster I meet with the Duchy Council who update me on issues on Duchy affairs.

**Catherine West:**[\[111858\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, what discussions he has had with the (a) Prime Minister and (b) Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Queen's private estate being invested in a fund based in the Cayman Islands.

**Sir Patrick McLoughlin:**

No discussions have been held with the Prime Minister or the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Queen's private estates as these investments were made between 2002 and 2005.

**Catherine West:**[\[111859\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, what information his Department holds on funds from the Queen's private estate being invested in a fund based in the Cayman Islands.

**Sir Patrick McLoughlin:**

Financial records are held by the Duchy of Lancaster. Details of the finances of the Duchy of Lancaster are published annually in a formal report. These are available on the Duchy of Lancaster website:

<https://www.duchyoflancaster.co.uk/financial/accounts-annual-reports-and-investments/>

**EDUCATION****■ Academies****Angela Rayner:**[\[112103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, in what circumstances her Department will intervene in the (a) financial management and (b) governance of multi-academy trusts in which concerns have been brought to her attention by reports of the Education and Skills Agency.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

Where concern is identified, the Education and Skills Funding Agency will respond proportionately to the severity of the risk, taking into account the scale and nature of the issue and any local circumstances. Where there are significant concerns about financial management and/or concerns about governance in an academy trust (including a multi-academy trust or constituent academies within a multi-academy trust) it may issue, and publish, a Financial Notice to Improve (FNtI). The trust must comply with all the terms of an FNtI. Failure to comply will be deemed a breach of the funding agreement by virtue of the relationship between the funding agreement and the Academies Financial Handbook. In exceptional circumstances, the funding agreement may be terminated due to non-compliance with the terms of the FNtI.

**■ Apprentices****Gordon Marsden:**[\[112294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to encourage businesses to take on 16 to 18-years old apprentices.

**Anne Milton:**

Additional funding to support younger apprentices is available with £1,000 cash payment to both employers and training providers when taking on a 16 to 18 year-old (providing a total of £2,000). Furthermore, the Government covers the entire cost of training younger apprentices for smaller businesses that employ less than 50 staff.

We are undertaking a range of engagement activities to ensure employers of all sizes are aware of how they can benefit from the opportunities that apprenticeships can offer.

**Gordon Marsden:**[\[112296\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to point 9 on page 4 of the Association of Colleges' proposals for Autumn Budget 2017, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies on apprenticeships of the recommendation to earmark up to 25 per cent of apprenticeship levy funds to ensure access, quality and progression.

**Anne Milton:**

Our reforms, the largest changes to apprenticeships government has ever made, are supporting an increase in the quality of apprenticeships and allowing apprentices to develop their talents and progress their careers. We are continually reviewing the impact of these reforms on employers, providers and apprentices and we welcome input from organisations like the Association of Colleges to help inform our decisions.

**■ Apprentices: Ethnic Groups****Gordon Marsden:**[\[112295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether it remains Government policy to increase BAME participation in apprenticeships by 20 per cent by 2020.

**Anne Milton:**

The Government is still planning to increase the proportion of apprenticeships started by those who are Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) by 20% by 2020.

Provisional data for 2016/17 showed 11.2% of starts were by people from BAME backgrounds which is up from 10.5% the previous year.

The Government has encouraged a higher representation of BAME apprentices through our marketing campaign, 'Get in Go Far'. This has included recognising BAME apprentices in high status professional roles.

We have also launched the Apprenticeships Diversity Champions Network. The Network, comprised of 27 employers, has been developed to engage employers and communities to ensure apprenticeships are undertaken by those from a range of peoples, including BAME.

We are currently working with Local Enterprise Partnerships to help improve BAME representation in apprenticeships at a local level.

## ■ Children's Centres

**Dan Jarvis:** [\[112696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 24 April 2017 to Question 71018, on children's centres, what recent assessment she has made of the future of children's centres.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The government is committed to ensuring that all children, regardless of background, get the best possible start in life. Children's centres have an important role to play.

Councils have a duty to improve the well-being of young children in their area and to reduce inequalities. However, it is for councils to decide the best solutions for their area.

## ■ Education: Exports

**Bill Esterson:** [\[109387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the level of educational exports from the UK was in each of the last five years.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The table below shows the estimated total value of UK education-related exports and transnational education activity for the last five years with available data. Estimates for 2015 and 2016 are currently unavailable.

**UK revenue from education related exports and repatriated income from transnational education activities, 2010 to 2014, current prices.**

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
£15.8 bn	£16.8 bn	£17.3 bn	£17.9 bn	£18.7 bn

Source: Department for Education Research Report, July 2017, UK revenue from education related exports and transnational education activity 2010-2014

## ■ Free Schools

**Angela Rayner:** [\[112151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the criteria is for a free school to be (a) closed and (b) merged with another school.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

All open free schools have a funding agreement which sets out the circumstances in which that agreement may be terminated and the school may close. The department's model funding agreements are published on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-and-free-school-funding-agreements-single-academy-trust>.



In addition, following the Education and Adoption Act 2016, the Secretary of State has powers to terminate a school's funding agreement if it is judged inadequate by Ofsted – regardless of the terms of the individual school's funding agreement. These powers are set out in the 'Schools Causing Concern' guidance:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/640916/SCC\\_guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/640916/SCC_guidance.pdf).

Advice to academy trusts on what they need to do to make a significant change, including a merger, is published on GOV.UK at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/504321/Making\\_significant\\_changes\\_to\\_an\\_open\\_academy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/504321/Making_significant_changes_to_an_open_academy.pdf).

An assessment of proposals to make a significant change will be made before the Regional Schools Commissioner or the Secretary of State, as appropriate, makes a final decision.

## ■ **Graduates: Employment**

**Angela Rayner:**

**[112636]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 20 October 2017 to Question 108341, on graduates: disadvantaged, whether her Department still intends to complete its work to look at approaches to increasing the number of graduates in the workforce by 2018; how it will report back on that work; and if that work is still focused on the workforce in disadvantaged areas as set out in the strategy.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

We are considering a range of approaches on the number of graduates in the workforce and addressing disadvantage through the early years' sector. This work is still underway. We continue to support graduates into the sector through our funding of the Early Years Initial Teacher Training programme, including bursaries and employer incentives. As set out in the early years workforce strategy we also will review early years initial teacher training routes to ensure we are maximising the impact of the programme.

## ■ **Headteachers: Misconduct**

**Norman Lamb:**

**[111788]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many cases of serious misconduct by headteachers have been reported to her Department by the National College for Teaching and Leadership in each of the last three years; and how many of those cases included inappropriate exclusions.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

In the last three years there have been 57 cases of serious misconduct concluded at a hearing involving a head teacher. The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) does not record inappropriate exclusions as a category of misconduct. We would normally expect this type of misconduct to be dealt with at a local level by employers.

The NCTL considers referrals concerning serious misconduct by teachers. These are recorded at the initial stage according to the type of misconduct being alleged. Inappropriate exclusion is not a type of serious misconduct that is recorded. We do not record the role held by a teacher until an investigation concludes that there is evidence of serious professional misconduct.

## ■ ICT: Secondary Education

**Sir Nicholas Soames:**

[\[112620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to improve the teaching of computing in secondary schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department has reformed the computer science GCSEs and A level so that they provide a stronger foundation for further academic and vocational study, and better prepare students for higher education. The new, more rigorous computer science curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils acquire the knowledge and skills they need to become active creators of digital technology, and the department has funded support for teachers to deliver it.

Since 2012 we have invested £5m in the Network of Teaching Excellence in Computer Science run by Computing at School (CAS), which has built a national network of over 400 'Master Teachers' whom schools can commission to provide bespoke training for their teachers.

An additional £500,000 competitive match-funded scheme has supported innovative approaches to promoting excellent computing teaching with generous additional investment and engagement from industry leaders, including projects backed by Microsoft and Google.

The inclusion of computer science in the English Baccalaureate has also helped to ensure that more pupils obtain a high-quality GCSE qualification in this important subject, preparing them to complete further study in computing-related fields.

## ■ Pre-school Education: Dental Health

**Tracy Brabin:**

[\[112537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that early-years professionals cover oral health as part of their training.

**Tracy Brabin:**

[\[112538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to deliver supervised tooth-brushing sessions for children in nurseries and school breakfast clubs.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

We recognise the importance of healthy teeth - poor oral health can affect a child's ability to sleep, eat, speak, play and socialise with other children. Early Years Educator qualifications must cover the promotion of the health, safety and welfare of

children. All early years' providers have a responsibility to promote the health of children in their setting, set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

Good oral health can form part of this, and Public Health England (PHE) worked with the Department for Education to publish in December 2016 a toolkit for providers considering a supervised tooth brushing programme. PHE has also established a Child Oral Health Improvement Programme Board to ensure that every child grows up free from tooth decay.

## ■ **Primary Education: Nottinghamshire**

**Gloria De Piero:**

**[112612]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many primary schools in (a) Ashfield and (b) Mansfield constituencies were full or oversubscribed in the school years commencing in (i) 2016 and (ii) 2017.

**Gloria De Piero:**

**[112616]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many secondary schools in (a) Ashfield and (b) Mansfield constituencies were full or oversubscribed in the school years commencing in (i) 2016 and (ii) 2017.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department collects information from each local authority on the number of schools, the number of places in those schools and the number of pupils on roll through the annual school capacity survey (SCAP). The Department does not collect school capacity information at parliamentary constituency level.

Data relating to the position in the 2016/17 academic year will be published in the new year. Data for May 2016 (relating to academic year 2015/16) can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-capacity-academic-year-2015-to-2016>.

As at May 2016 (which relates to academic year 2015/16), 63 of 281 primary schools in Nottinghamshire were full or had at least one pupil in excess of capacity.

As at May 2016 (which relates to academic year 2015/16), 5 of 46 secondary schools in Nottinghamshire were full or had at least one pupil in excess of capacity.

The individual schools can be identified in the underlying data for each publication by comparing the capacity of the school with the number on roll.

The Department does not have a measure for over-subscription. The admissions and offers process is run by the local authorities who are responsible for ensuring that the admissions criteria are applied for all schools.

## ■ **Pupil Exclusions**

**Norman Lamb:**

**[111784]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many unrecorded or illegal school exclusions were reported to her Department in the last academic year.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Department does not routinely collect data on unrecorded or illegal exclusions.

There is a statutory process to follow when pupils are formally excluded from their school. Where an exclusion decision is challenged and an independent review panel (IRP) is appointed, the Department collects and publishes data on whether panels decide to uphold the exclusion decision, recommend that the governing body reconsider their decision, or quash the decision and direct that the governing body/academy trust considers the exclusion again:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2015-to-2016> (table 12). One of the reasons that an IRP could direct the governing body/academy trust to reconsider is if they believe the exclusion to be illegal, but we do not collect data on the reason for an IRPs decision.

We do not collect data on pupils who are prevented from attending a school outside of the formal exclusion process.

**■ Pupil Exclusions: Appeals****Norman Lamb:****[111787]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance has been issued by her Department to ensure that school governors give appropriate consideration to autism and SEND when considering exclusion appeals.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The department publishes statutory guidance for head teachers and governors on exclusion: 'Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England'. The guidance covers the process from start to finish, and includes specific requirements in relation to pupils with special educational needs (SEN). In particular, head teachers should make additional efforts to consider what extra support may be required to avoid exclusion of pupils with special educational needs and disability, and as far as possible, should avoid permanently excluding pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement.

In reaching a decision on whether or not a pupil should be reinstated, the governing board should consider whether the decision to exclude the pupil was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair, including considering whether a head teacher has complied with the guidance in relation to pupils with SEN.

**■ Steve Lamey****Gordon Marsden:****[112624]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation was first made aware of allegations on the management and leadership of Steve Lamey, Chief Executive at the Student Loans Company.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation was informed in June that allegations had been made against the Chief Executive of the Student Loans Company, Steve Lamey.

**Gordon Marsden:**[\[112626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what consultation she or officials of her Department had with her counterparts in the devolved administrations on the suspension and termination of the contract of the Chief Executive of the Student Loans Company, Steve Lamey.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The Student Loans Company (SLC) took the decision to terminate Steve Lamey's contract as SLC Chief Executive Officer. This was as a result of the findings of an independent investigation into particular allegations made and following an internal SLC process.

SLC has provided updates on the progress to the department and Devolved Administrations at appropriate points in time.

**Gordon Marsden:**[\[112627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, who commissioned the investigation into Steve Lamey's performance as Chief Executive of the Student Loans Company; who took the decision to terminate Steve Lamey's contract as Chief Executive of the Student Loans Company; and when that decision was made.

**Joseph Johnson:**

Investigations into allegations received about aspects of Steve Lamey's management and leadership were commissioned jointly by the Student Loans Company (SLC) and the department.

The SLC took the decision to terminate Steve Lamey's contract as SLC Chief Executive Officer as a result of the findings of those independent investigations, and following a formal internal SLC process. His contract was terminated on 7 November 2017.

**Gordon Marsden:**[\[112628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what monitoring the Minister State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation or her officials carried out on the performance of Steve Lamey during his term as Chief Executive of the Student Loans Company.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The Chair of the Student Loans Company (SLC) assesses the performance of the Chief Executive.

The department regularly engages with the SLC to monitor its performance against its organisational objectives.

**■ Student Loans Company****Gordon Marsden:** [112625]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what meetings HM Revenue and Customs have had with the Student Loans Company in the last 12 months.

**Joseph Johnson:**

Officials and staff from HM Revenue and Customs and the Student Loans Company have frequent meetings to discuss the operation and performance of the Student Loan system. These include regular formal Board and Governance meetings, attended by senior officials from both organisations.

**■ Students: Loans****Gordon Marsden:** [112292]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 31 October 2017 to Question 109926, how much her Department spent marketing advanced learner loans in (a) 2014-15, (b) 2015-16 and (c) 2016-17.

**Anne Milton:**

Since the introduction of loans, training providers have been offered a toolkit to help them develop their communications with potential loan-funded learners. The latest toolkit is available via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-24-advanced-learning-loans-toolkit..>

In total, the Government invested circa. £24,000 in 2014-15 and circa. £71,000 in 2015-16 in materials for training providers to use, including leaflets and media. There has been no additional outlay for 2016-17 but the Student Loans Company and Education and Skills Funding Agency are continuing to provide a support service to all training providers.

**Angela Rayner:** [112639]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what is the ring-fenced allocation from her resource departmental expenditure limit for the resource accounting and budgeting charge for higher education student loans for each financial year of the current spending review period.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The allocated budget for the Resourcing, Accounting and Budgeting charge expenditure, forms part of the total resource departmental expenditure limit. It is disclosed within the depreciation figure set out within the annual report and accounts. In the 2016-17 annual report and accounts, this was £3.5bn for 2017-18, £3.9bn for 2018-19 and £4.3bn for 2019-20. As in prior years, the 2017-18 budget will be reviewed as part of the Supplementary Estimates process.

The cost of the system is a conscious investment in young people. It is the policy subsidy required to make higher and further education widely available, achieving the Government's objectives of increasing the skills in the economy and ensuring access to university for all with the potential to benefit.

**Angela Rayner:**

**[112640]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of changes to Government policy on the repayment thresholds for graduate debt on the total resource departmental expenditure limit of her Department in each of the next three fiscal years.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The long-term cost of the student loan system is reflected in the Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB) charge, which measures the proportion of loan outlay that we expect not to be repaid when future repayments are valued in present terms. In each of the financial years (a) 2017-18, (b) 2018-19 and (c) 2019-20, the RAB charge for higher education loans is expected to change from around 30% under the previous policy to between 40% and 45% under the new policy. For Advanced Learner Loans, the RAB charge is expected to change from around 40% to between 50% and 55%.

The allocated budget for RAB expenditure forms part of the total resource departmental expenditure limit. It is disclosed within the depreciation figure set out within the annual report and accounts. In 2016-17 annual report and accounts, this was £3.5bn for 2017-18, £3.9bn for 2018-19 and £4.3bn in 2019-20. As in prior years, the 2017-18 budget will be reviewed as part of the Supplementary Estimates process.

The cost of the system is a conscious investment in young people. It is the policy subsidy required to make higher and further education widely available, achieving the Government's objectives of increasing the skills in the economy and ensuring access to university for all with the potential to benefit.

**Angela Rayner:**

**[112692]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Written Statement on student finance of 9 October 2017, HCWS145, what estimate she has made of the effect on non-repayment of graduate loans of the changes to the repayment thresholds in each of the financial years (a) 2017-18, (b) 2018-19 and (c) 2019-20.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The long-term cost of the student loan system is reflected in the Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB) charge. This measures the proportion of loan outlay that we expect not to be repaid within its thirty-year term (when future repayments are valued in present terms).

The RAB charge associated with higher education loans issued in each of the financial years (a) 2017-18, (b) 2018-19 and (c) 2019-20, is expected to change from around 30% under the previous policy to between 40% and 45% under the new policy.

This long-term cost of the system is a conscious investment in young people. It is the policy subsidy required to make higher education widely available and so achieve the Government's objectives of increasing the skills in the economy and ensuring access to university for all with the potential to benefit.



**Teachers: Training****Sir Nicholas Soames:****[112494]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure consistency in the training teachers receive on mental health illnesses in children.

**Nick Gibb:**

From our Supporting Mental Health in Schools and Colleges survey (2017), we have identified many schools that offer training to staff on mental health.

([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/634726/Supporting\\_Mental-Health\\_survey\\_report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/634726/Supporting_Mental-Health_survey_report.pdf)).

The Children and Young People's Mental Health Green Paper, to be published before the end of the year, will consider how we secure consistent and quality training.

Round Two of the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund (TLIF) is planned to launch in January 2018, with funding of up to £45 million. The TLIF seeks to fund high-quality professional development for teachers and school leaders in the schools and areas of England that need it most. Round Two will focus on a range of specific policy areas, including promoting good mental wellbeing and supporting good mental health in schools. More information on the TLIF Round Two will be available in due course.

**Vocational Education: Reviews****Gordon Marsden:****[112293]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 19 October 2017 to Question 110700, if she will hold a full consultation for the technical education review.

**Anne Milton:**

During the review of higher level technical education, the government will consult widely with employers, education providers, students, and others with expertise in this area.

We are actively seeking evidence on best practice in higher level technical education, and we will publish further details about the review in due course.

**Wakefield City Academies Trust****Angela Rayner:****[111967]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 30 October 2017 to Question 109401, what evidence she has to suggest that the publication of the ESFA report into Wakefield City Academies Trust would be obstructive to the process of ensuring all the schools are placed with new trusts; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

We are working to ensure we get a solution in place as quickly as possible for the pupils and the parents who are currently living with uncertainty around the future of their respective schools.



The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) routinely visits academy trusts to assess their financial management and governance arrangements; this includes multi-academy trust reviews. We do not routinely publish these assurance reports. All Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) monitor the performance of their schools on an ongoing basis, and where they have concerns, will work with trusts to find solutions. Following a disappointing set of results in 2016, RSCs became concerned about the Trust.

The ESFA undertook such a review of Wakefield City Academies Trust (WCAT) between June and September 2015 and made a follow-up visit in July 2016. We do not intend to publish the ESFA report into WCAT, as this could be obstructive to the process of ensuring that all the schools are transferred to new trusts that will be able to provide an excellent education for children.

Like all multi-academy trusts, WCAT publishes its annual report and financial statements online found here: <http://www.wcatrust.org/key-documentation/>.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Agriculture: EU Grants and Loans

**Kate Green:**

**[112141]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with other Departments on continued funding for EU structural and investment projects that provide strong value for money and are in line with domestic strategic priorities signed since the Autumn Statement 2016.

**George Eustice:**

My Department is in regular contact with all Government departments responsible for European Structural and Investment Funds. All Rural Development Programme and European and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund projects signed to date deliver value for money and are in line with domestic strategic priorities and will be guaranteed by the Government after the UK leaves to EU.

### ■ Animal Breeding: Licensing

**Henry Smith:**

**[111822]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when his Department plans to publish draft regulations on single animal establishment licences.

**George Eustice:**

We intend to lay draft regulations on animal activity licensing schemes before Parliament early next year. Since the end of the public consultation last year and the publication of the Next Steps document setting out the way forward in February 2017, Defra has been working closely with key sectors and stakeholders to refine the regulations.

## ■ Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control

**Dr David Drew:**

[\[112635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many cattle slaughtered as a result of severe interpretation skin tests were subsequently found to be clear of bovine TB in each of the last three years.

**George Eustice:**

It is not possible to conclude that any bovine animal which is positive to the tuberculin skin test, whether at normal or severe interpretation, is clear of the disease. It is very likely that those cattle are infected with bovine TB, even if no visible TB lesions are found at post-mortem meat inspection. This is because the skin test used in the UK and Ireland is very specific, meaning it is very unlikely to generate a false positive result. TB researchers have estimated this likelihood to be approximately one false positive result for every 5,000 TB-free cattle tested using the standard interpretation of the skin test, and one for every 1,200 using the severe interpretation. Reactors to the skin test may therefore not have any visible lesions because they are either in the early stages of the disease, or the lesions are too small to be detected by the naked eye.

## ■ Cats and Dogs: Sales

**Henry Smith:**

[\[111821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what conversations his Department has had with the HM Revenue and Customs taskforce on puppy and kitten online sales.

**George Eustice:**

My officials have held several discussions with HM Revenue and Customs on the work of their Task Force to tackle issues relating to tax evasion and puppy and kitten sales. HM Revenue and Customs continues to work with many Agencies to tackle those individuals involved in the illicit puppy and kitten trade.

## ■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Telephone Services

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[111476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which public telephone lines for his Department's services are charged at higher rates; and how much was taken by each such telephone line in the last 12 months.

**George Eustice:**

Core Defra does not provide any public telephone lines that are charged at higher rates.

## ■ Dogs: Republic of Ireland

**Mr Alister Jack:**

[112121]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with his counterparts in the Irish Government on tackling the smuggling of puppies from the Republic of Ireland into the UK.

**George Eustice:**

The UK Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) has regular meetings with the Ireland CVO which cover a range animal health and welfare issues. At their most recent meeting on 25 July 2017 they discussed operations to tackle the smuggling of puppies into the United Kingdom from the Republic of Ireland and elsewhere.

## ■ Fisheries

**Sue Hayman:**

[112588]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with which organisations within the commercial fishing sector on which dates Ministers of his Department have had meetings since the 2017 General Election.

**Sue Hayman:**

[112589]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with which organisations within the recreational fishing sector on which dates Ministers of his Department have had meetings since the 2017 General Election.

**Sue Hayman:**

[112591]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many times and on which dates Ministers of his Department have met representatives from Fishing for Leave since the 2017 General Election.

**George Eustice:**

Departments routinely publish details of Ministers meetings' which contain the names of external organisations.

The data is available here and the next set will be published in due course:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ministers-hospitality-gifts-meetings-overseas-travel>.

## ■ Game: Animal Welfare

**Jared O'Mara:**

[112149]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the enforcement of the welfare code on purpose-breeding of pheasants and partridges.

**George Eustice:**

The welfare of gamebirds is protected by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 which makes it an offence to cause any unnecessary suffering to a captive animal or to fail to provide

for its welfare. The statutory Gamebird Code, which was made under the 2006 Act, provides additional protection and provides keepers with guidance on how to meet the welfare needs of their gamebirds. Failure to follow the code's recommendations can be used in evidence in court to support a welfare prosecution.

Inspectors from the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) refer to the code when asked to inspect a game farm. When required, APHA officials advise farmers on achieving compliance and, if appropriate, legal action will be taken.

## ■ Marine Environment: Conservation

**Sue Hayman:**

[112590]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with which organisations within the marine conservation sector on which dates Ministers of his Department have had meetings since the 2017 General Election.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Departments routinely publish details of Ministers meetings' which contain the names of external organisations.

The data is available here and the next set will be published in due course:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ministers-hospitality-gifts-meetings-overseas-travel>.

## ■ Neonicotinoids

**Zac Goldsmith:**

[112535]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the timetable is for the implementation of the full ban on the use of neonicotinoid insecticides announced on 9 November 2017.

**George Eustice:**

The Government has stated that it supports further restrictions on neonicotinoids based on recent advice from the UK Expert Committee on Pesticides

The European Commission has made a proposal which is under EU consideration.

Any changes are likely to take effect in 2018 and to affect crops harvested from 2019.

## EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

### ■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Staff

**Ian C. Lucas:**

[111797]

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many staff appointed after 24 June 2016 in his Department hold a post that includes work on the UK leaving the EU.

**Mr Steve Baker:**

The Department for Exiting the European Union is responsible for overseeing negotiations to leave the EU and establishing the future relationship between the UK and EU. As such all staff in the Department are dedicated to planning or supporting the work on EU exit. All departments are equipping themselves with the resources they need to get the best deal for the UK. The Department for Exiting the European Union now has just over 500 staff.

**Economic Situation: Wales****Jonathan Edwards:**[\[111329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what discussions his Department has had with the Welsh Government on the effect of the UK leaving the EU on the Welsh economy.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The Government is committed to negotiating the best possible deal for the entire United Kingdom - a deal that works for Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and all parts of England. We have been clear from the start that the devolved administrations should be fully engaged in this process and we have been engaging with the Welsh Government both bilaterally and in formal multilateral structures such as the Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations. On 6 November I joined the Secretary of State for Wales in giving evidence to a joint session of two National Assembly for Wales committees on the EU (Withdrawal) Bill and its implications for Wales. As part of the same trip we also met with the EU expert advisory group made up of stakeholders from different sectors of the economy.

**Exports: Standards****Barry Gardiner:**[\[111315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether notified bodies in the UK will carry out conformity assessments for products exported from the UK to the EU after the UK leaves the EU.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

As set out in the Government's August 2017 position paper 'Continuity in the availability of goods for the EU and the UK', we want compliance activity, including conformity assessments, carried out prior to exit to be recognised in both the UK and the EU to support a smooth exit and the move to a deep and special future relationship. We want our future relationship to build on the convergence between our regulatory systems and gives business the maximum freedom to trade with and operate within European markets. However, the approach to conformity assessments and other compliance activity is a matter for future negotiations, and it would not be appropriate to prejudge the outcome of those negotiations.

**■ UK Trade with EU****Bill Esterson:**[\[112749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what representations he has received from business organisations about (a) a free trade agreement with the EU and (b) a strictly time-limited implementation period after the UK leaves the EU.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

HMG has held numerous meetings with the business community since the Referendum in June last year. This has included over 350 individual meetings, roundtables and other types of engagement with sectors across the economy and in every region of the UK. Engagement with business has included discussions on a wide range of issues.

A cross-government Business Advisory Group, consisting of the five main business representative organisations, has also been established to ensure business is not only heard but is influential throughout the negotiations. The Prime Minister chairs a quarterly Business Advisory Council to hear directly from senior business leaders on the key issues across EU exit, and the wider economy. This engagement has helped to inform our positions on the implementation period and the deal we are seeking with the EU. The insight and analysis provided as a result of this close dialogue is incredibly valuable as we seek a bold and ambitious future partnership with the EU.

**FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE****■ Algeria: Foreign Relations****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[112546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he last met his Algerian counterpart; and what was discussed at that meeting.

**Alistair Burt:**

I refer the honourable member to my response to his question of 19 October (Named Day PQ 108765, answered 24 October).

**■ Ascension Island: Biodiversity****Zac Goldsmith:**[\[112532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to protect the biodiversity of those waters to the north of Ascension Island which are open to fishing.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

Through the Blue Belt Programme, the UK Government is working with the Ascension Island Government to ensure the effective implementation of its sustainable fisheries management regime around Ascension. This includes using near real-time analysis of satellite data to build intelligence on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and to allow targeted enforcement during fishery patrols. Data

collected will be used in conjunction with research currently underway as part of a scientific approach to determine the final size and location of any Marine Protected Area around Ascension. We are also working through the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas to improve regional management and ensure sustainable harvest levels of tuna, billfish and pelagic shark, species.

■ **Ascension Island: Fisheries**

**Zac Goldsmith:**

[\[112533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many licences have been issued to whom for commercial fishing in the waters around Ascension Island in the last six months; and how much accrues to the public purse from each such licence.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The Ascension Island Government are responsible for issuing commercial fishing licences around Ascension's waters. Within the last six months, no licences have been issued for fishing within the Ascension Exclusive Economic Zone.

■ **British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies: Sanctions**

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[111746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to paragraph 1.9 of his Department's consultation response, Public consultation on the United Kingdom's future legal framework for imposing and implementing sanctions: government response, published in August 2017, what the outcomes were of his consultations with UK Overseas Territories and Crown dependencies on the future legal framework for implementing sanctions in those territories; and if he will make a statement.

**Boris Johnson:**

The Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies have been engaged from the start of the consultation process and we continue to discuss with them on a regular basis. This has been reflected in the drafting of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Bill and, notably, in the power in clause 51 to extend its provisions, and any sanctions regulations, to those jurisdictions where appropriate.

■ **Israel: Visits Abroad**

**Tom Watson:**

[\[112609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when officials of his Department in (a) Israel and the Palestinian Territories and (b) London first became aware that the Right hon. Member for Witham visited Israel in the summer of 2017.

**Alistair Burt:**

I refer the Rt Hon Member to my answer to written question 112026 of 13 November.

**Tom Watson:**

[112611]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his officials in Israel or the Palestinian Territories met the Right hon. Member for Witham between 13 and 25 August 2017.

**Alistair Burt:**

It is longstanding practice under successive Governments that we do not routinely disclose information relating to internal discussion and advice. My Rt Hon. Friend the member for Witham (Ms Patel) resigned as Secretary of State for International Development on 8 November. I refer the Hon Member to the exchange of letters between my Rt Hon. Friend the member for Witham (Ms Patel) and the Prime Minister on her resignation; and to the statement issued by my Rt Hon. Friend on 6 November, a copy of which is available on the [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) website.

■ **Jagtar Singh Johal**

**John Spellar:**

[112630]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has made on behalf of Jagtar Singh Johal who is in custody in India.

**Mark Field:**

The British High Commission has raised this case with the Indian authorities immediately on notification of Mr Johal's detention. We have urgently requested consular access so that officials can check on his welfare.

■ **Madagascar: Bubonic Plague**

**Sir Edward Davey:**

[112270]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what travel and health advice his Department is providing to British citizens visiting Madagascar since the outbreak of plague on that island.

**Rory Stewart:**

FCO travel advice was updated on 4 October to reflect the recent outbreak of bubonic and pneumonic plague in Madagascar. We continue to monitor the situation closely.

■ **Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe**

**Patrick Grady:**

[112728]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will list the occasions on which Ministers or officials in his Department have met representatives of the Iranian Government to call for the release of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

**Alistair Burt:**

The Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and I regularly raise all our dual national detainee cases, including Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe, at the highest levels and at every



opportunity. I last raised our cases with the Iranian Ambassador on 14 November. Officials in London and Tehran, including our Ambassador also regularly raise these cases.

## ■ Sanctions

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[111743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to subsection 2 of Clause 1 of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Bill, for what reasons the list of purposes for which the Government may impose sanctions does not include an explicit commitment to promoting human rights.

**Boris Johnson:**

The Government is committed to promoting and protecting human rights. We publish an annual Human Rights and Democracy Report which focuses on how the Government is striving to protect and promote human rights around the world. The 2016 report was laid before Parliament on 20 July. The purposes in subsection 2 of Clause 1 of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Bill are broad enough to allow the imposition of a sanctions regime in order to address human rights violations. We would always consider if sanctions were the most appropriate tool to use in this regard before imposing them.

## ■ Weapons: Proliferation

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[111748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to section 3.1 of his Department's guidance, Counter Proliferation Programme objectives, published in March 2017, for what reasons single-country projects are no longer eligible for support unless the target countries can self-fund the relevant proposals.

**Boris Johnson:**

For financial year 2017/18 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has delegated a portion of its policy programme funding directly to the Embassies in its network, in order to better align financial accountability and policy delivery responsibility with programme activity and spend. Funding requests from the network were submitted to London and assessed by the policy strategy leads. Where country-specific programme activity is appropriate, the funding is managed by UK officials in country. Where a multi-country, regional or global programme approach is more appropriate, then the funding is managed by the directorate with the policy lead in London.

**HEALTH****■ Abortion****Diana Johnson:**[\[112595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the oral contribution by the Under-Secretary of State for Health of 6 November 2017, Official Report, column 1306, what progress has been made on looking into the matter of the length of abortion waiting times; and if the Government will (a) set maximum waiting times for abortions and (b) publish regular statistics on abortion waiting times.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The Secretary of State for Health approves independent sector providers to perform abortions and all providers must agree to comply with the Department's Required Standard Operating Procedures (RSOPs). Under the RSOPs set:

- Women should be offered an appointment within five working days of referral or self-referral;
- Women should be offered the abortion procedure within five working days of the decision to proceed; and
- The total time from access to procedure should not exceed ten working days.

These good practice standards are in line with clinical guidance from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

Women can choose to delay appointments/booked procedures and this should always override issues of timeliness.

**■ Abortion: Health Services****Mary Glendon:**[\[112541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what post-abortion support is provided by his Department; and if he will make a statement.

**Mary Glendon:**[\[112542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans to increase the availability of post-abortion support provided by his Department; and if he will make a statement.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The Department does not directly provide post-abortion support. The Secretary of State for Health approves independent sector providers to perform abortions and all providers must agree to comply with the Department's Required Standard Operating Procedures (RSOPs). The RSOPs require all providers to have protocols in place covering the support that should be in place for women following an abortion procedure, including post-abortion counselling for those women who require it.

Arrangements for post-abortion support in National Health Service hospitals is a matter for local policy.

## ■ Accident and Emergency Departments

**Sir Kevin Barron:**

[\[112622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the range of illnesses included in type three attendances to accident and emergency departments; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

There has been no such assessment.

## ■ Antibiotics: Drug Resistance

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

[\[111558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to (a) encourage and (b) fund research into new antibiotics to tackle antimicrobial resistance.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

Through the implementation of the United Kingdom's Five-Year Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) strategy (2013-18) the Government continues to encourage and invest in research and development of new antimicrobials. The Government also works closely with industry through a Joint Government/Industry AMR working group, with specific focus on appropriate use of existing antibiotics and innovative reimbursement models for new antimicrobials.

An AMR Funders' Forum, overseen by the Medical Research Council, brings together the principal funders of UK investment into AMR research and development to ensure a coordinated approach. Central Government is represented by several departments (The Department of Health, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department of International Development), along with arms' length bodies and other key stakeholders. The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is funding research themes on antimicrobial resistance and infection of at least £19.1 million (over five years from April 2017) in four NIHR Biomedical Research Centres. NIHR is also providing more than £7 million of funding over five years for two NIHR Health Protection Research Units on antimicrobial resistance related research.

Along with its funding of UK research and development (R&D), the Government is committed to working with the international finance and health security communities to develop global solutions which address the antibiotic market failure and better preserve existing drugs and products. The Department leads the Government's work with the G7, G20, the European Union, other countries and international organisations to advocate for increased and sustained AMR R&D funding. The UK's £50 million Global AMR Innovation Fund has been established and aims to focus on global R&D priorities, providing access to finance for those who struggle to access traditional funding sources.

## ■ Autism: Medical Treatments

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[112048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department has taken to prohibit the promotion, sale and use of MMS chlorine dioxide bleach as a cure for autism.

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[112049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to prohibit the promotion, sale and use of Turpentine, GcMAF and Rerum as treatments for autism.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

There are no circumstances in which sodium chlorite or bleach, or these other substances, should be used as a treatment for autism.

We have been clear that these compounds have no proven or conceivable health benefit and may cause serious damage to health.

The Food Standards Agency has issued advice on sodium chlorite to local authorities to take appropriate action and placed consumer advice for oral products on its website.

Local authorities have responsibility for preventing the sale of these products through retail outlets under trading standards legislation.

Where there is any threat to the safety and wellbeing of a child, this may lead to offences of child cruelty being considered, requiring a wider safeguarding response involving the police, children's services and relevant partners. Such a threat could include any harm caused by the administration of a potentially noxious substance.

## ■ Autism: Southwark

**Ms Harriet Harman:** [\[112041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people in (a) Camberwell and Peckham constituency and (b) the London Borough of Southwark have been diagnosed with autism in each of the last five years.

**Ms Harriet Harman:** [\[112042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many children and young people aged under 19-years olds with autism spectrum disorder in (a) Camberwell and Peckham constituency and (b) the London Borough of Southwark have waited longer than three months after referral to be diagnosed in each of the last five years.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

This data is not collected centrally.

## ■ Baby Care Units

**Luciana Berger:** [\[112698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many perinatal beds have been available in each year since 2010.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

Information is not available in the format requested. NHS England publishes quarterly data from all National Health Service organisations that are open overnight or day only. This includes the number of maternity beds, which includes a count of perinatal beds within this. The latest data published is from Quarter 1 from 2017-18. This data is available at the link below:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/bed-availability-and-occupancy/>

**■ Blood: Contamination****Diana Johnson:****[112592]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of English registrants of the (a) Caxton Foundation, (b) Macfarlane Trust, (c) Eileen Trust, (d) Skipton Fund and (e) MFET Ltd have not yet registered with the NHS Business Services Authority to receive support under the England Infected Blood Support Scheme.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

Less than 2% of the beneficiaries of the payment schemes that have been contacted to seek their consent to have their personal data transferred to NHS Business Service Authority have not responded. Efforts are being made to ensure that all beneficiaries who wish to continue receiving support have given their consent for their data to be transferred.

**Diana Johnson:****[112593]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how the England Infected Blood Support Scheme (EIBSS) plans to make arrangements for NHS prescription pre-payment certificates for people affected by the contaminated blood scandal; and if he will take steps to ensure that all EIBSS primary beneficiaries are universally entitled to prepayment certificates without the need for a means-test.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

As part of the discretionary support arrangements being put in place under the England Infected Blood Support Scheme (EIBSS), being run by NHS Business Services Authority, any beneficiary who is not entitled to receive free prescriptions will be able to apply for a pre-payment certificate which will be paid for by the EIBSS; this provision will not be means tested. These arrangements continue the pre-existing support provided by the former payments schemes.

**Diana Johnson:****[112594]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to ensure that the bereaved former partners, widows and widowers of people now deceased who were infected by contaminated blood who subsequently (a) marry another person, (b) cohabit with a new partner or (c) form a civil partnership with a new partner will be eligible for financial support under the England Infected Blood Support Scheme on the same basis as people who do not so marry, cohabit or form a civil partnership.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

All widows, widowers and bereaved former partners of people who were historically infected with hepatitis C and/or HIV from National Health Service supplied blood or blood products may still qualify for support and assistance payments from the England Infected Blood Support Scheme irrespective of changes in their personal circumstances, such as re-marriage. The widow, widower or bereaved former partner should apply for discretionary support as previously.

**Chronic Illnesses****Jim Shannon:****[112631]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with Public Health England on improving the health and well-being of people living with multiple, serious long-term health conditions.

**Jim Shannon:****[112632]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he has taken to meet the needs of people who live with multimorbidity.

**Steve Brine:**

Ministers routinely meet the system leaders to discuss a broad range of issues concerning population health, including multiple, serious long-term health conditions.

In 2016, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published a new best practice guideline on the assessment and management of multimorbidity. Aimed at clinicians, it is designed to put patients with complex health issues at the heart of decisions about their care, including how to decide between different medicines and treatments. NICE has also published a separate guideline to reduce problematic polypharmacy in patients with multimorbidity that aims to ensure that medicines provide the greatest possible benefit to people by encouraging medicines reconciliation, medication review, and the use of patient decision aids. Both sets of guidance can be found at the following links:

[www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng56/resources/multimorbidity-clinical-assessment-and-management-pdf-1837516654789](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng56/resources/multimorbidity-clinical-assessment-and-management-pdf-1837516654789)

[www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng5/resources/medicines-optimisation-the-safe-and-effective-use-of-medicines-to-enable-the-best-possible-outcomes-pdf-51041805253](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng5/resources/medicines-optimisation-the-safe-and-effective-use-of-medicines-to-enable-the-best-possible-outcomes-pdf-51041805253)

In meeting the needs of patients with multimorbidity, NHS England's Next steps on the Five Year Forward View, published in March 2017, sets out progress and action in range of areas including increasing the number of clinical pharmacists working in general practitioner (GP) surgeries from almost 500 to over 900 by March 2018 and over 1,300 by March 2019, improving medicines management and patient care and freeing up GP time to focus on those patients with complex needs who need it most. The next steps publication can be found at the following link:

[www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/NEXT-STEPS-ON-THE-NHS-FIVE-YEAR-FORWARD-VIEW.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/NEXT-STEPS-ON-THE-NHS-FIVE-YEAR-FORWARD-VIEW.pdf)

## ■ Clinical Trials

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[112739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to ensure access to cross-border clinical trial data after the UK leaves the EU.

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[112740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he has taken to prepare for the implementation of the EU Clinical Trials Regulation in 2019.

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[112741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to maintain access to new medicines from clinical trials after the UK leaves the EU.

**Steve Brine:**

The Government values the strong collaborative partnerships that we have across the European Union in the areas of science, research and innovation, and as part of Exit negotiations is working to ensure that we have the best possible environment in which to support clinical trials and new medicines after we leave the EU.

On 3 November, the Government published its response to the Accelerated Access Review. It set out plans to give patients quicker access to life-changing treatments; and, make the United Kingdom the best place in the world for industry to invest and innovate. From April 2018, the new Accelerated Access Pathway will mean selected products with the greatest potential to change lives could be available up to four years earlier by reducing the time taken to negotiate the evaluation and financial approvals necessary before the National Health Service can purchase them.

In the UK, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, Health Research Authority, ethics services, National Institute for Health Research and NHS have been working towards implementation of the new European Clinical Trials Regulation (CTR) since it was agreed in 2014. The application date of the CTR across the EU will be set by the European Commission. The current regulatory approval legislation will stay in place until such time as any changes are needed so there will be no interruption in UK clinical trials approval.

The UK anticipates continuing to work with EU partners on sharing of clinical data across borders where applicable under legal frameworks and with the consent of the data subject. While we cannot pre-empt the outcome of the negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU, our aim will be to ensure that patients continue to access the best and most innovative medicines.

## ■ Coeliac Disease: Prescriptions

**Dan Jarvis:** [\[112718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Answer of 27 April 2017 to Question 71681, on Coeliac disease: prescriptions, what plans he has to protect those



who manufacture gluten-free products from the effect of the proposed removal of gluten-free products from prescriptions.

**Steve Brine:**

In March this year, the Department ran a 12 week public consultation on the availability of gluten free foods on prescription. Nearly 8,000 responses were received and these are currently being analysed. The Government is committed to ensuring maximum value for patients and service users from every pound spent in the National Health Service. While we would not want to see manufacturers disadvantaged as a result of any decision we may take, no decision has yet been made on the removal of gluten-free products from prescriptions and we cannot pre-empt the outcome of the consultation.

■ **Compulsorily Detained Mental Patients: Medicine**

**Sandy Martin:**

[\[111935\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that people who have been returned to their homes on condition of receiving medication after having been detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 do proceed to take that medication.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

Decisions around the continuing treatment of patients who are or who have been subject to the Mental Health Act 1983 are a matter for clinicians.

Community Treatment Orders (CTOs), introduced by The Mental Health Act 2007, may be used in certain circumstances when a patient's responsible clinician and an Approved Mental Health Professional agree that the risk of harm arising from the patient's disorder is sufficiently serious to justify having the power to recall the person to hospital. These Orders may include a condition that a patient complies with arrangements made to ensure that he or she continues to receive medical treatment for their mental illness.

The responsible clinician may recall a patient on a CTO to hospital for treatment if the patient needs to receive treatment for mental disorder in hospital; or if there would be a risk of harm to the health or safety of the patient or to other persons if the patient were not recalled. The fact that the patient has failed to comply with a treatment condition can be taken into account when deciding whether to recall the patient.

Restricted patients are offenders who are detained in hospital for mental health treatment and who are subject to special controls by the Secretary of State for Justice. For these patients, Section 41 of the Mental Health Act 1983 provides for a "restriction order" which operates like a community section. This means that restricted patients who are conditionally discharged can be supervised in the community generally by a psychiatrist and a social worker, with a number of conditions imposed. The Secretary of State for Justice has a broad power of recall that applies to any conditionally discharged restricted patient. A condition of such a discharge may be



compliance with treatment, on a voluntary basis, provided the patient has capacity to give consent.

Non-compliance with medication will lead to consideration of recall. Whether a recall takes place will, of course, turn on the circumstances of the particular case.

## ■ **Dental Health: Children**

**Tracy Brabin:**

[\[112536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the reasons for inequalities in children's oral health across the UK.

**Steve Brine:**

National dental surveys show that inequalities in children's oral health are associated with deprivation, geography and ethnicity. For example, children in the north of England have higher levels of tooth decay than those in the south; and those from Chinese and Eastern European backgrounds have higher levels of tooth decay than other ethnic backgrounds.

Oral health inequalities are influenced by socio-economic factors, for example, differences in levels of income and employment experienced by different groups; and by behaviours such as, having a poor diet high in sugar and low access to fluoride.

## ■ **Farmers: Suicide**

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[111642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to reduce farmers' suicide rates.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The Cross-Government Suicide Prevention Strategy (2012) identified farmers as being at higher risk of suicide. We updated the strategy this year to strengthen its key areas for action. This included a commitment to use the excellent work done by organisations such as the British Transport Police and Network Rail in engaging other sectors where people may be at higher risk of suicide.

The Office for National Statistics published research this year on suicide risk in occupational groups and identified low skilled and skilled agricultural workers as being at higher risk of suicide than the general population. Therefore, we want to look at ways we can engage with the wider agricultural sector on suicide awareness and risks.

## ■ **Mental Health Services**

**Luciana Berger:**

[\[112697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many and what proportion of clinical commissioning groups met NHS England's planning guidance to increase their proportion of spend of mental health in (a) 2015-16 and (b) 2016-17.

**Luciana Berger:**

**[112699]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the data made available by clinical commissioning groups to meet the Mental Health Investment Standard; and what steps he is taking to improve the quality and comprehensiveness of that data.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are required to achieve the Mental Health Investment Standard to demonstrate they have increased their spending on mental health in line with the growth in their overall allocation. The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health Dashboard shows which CCGs achieved the standard and which did not at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/taskforce/imp/mh-dashboard/>

In 2015/16, 167 (80%) of CCGs achieved the standard, and 177 CCGs achieved the standard in 2016/17 (85%).

All CCGs are required to submit details of their mental health expenditure plans for each year as part of the National Health Service annual planning process, and then to provide details of their actual spend at the end of each quarter throughout the year to NHS England. NHS England has developed guidance to support the reporting process to produce consistent information and for assuring the quality of data submissions. NHS England continues to work with CCGs to improve the quality of data provided.

**Luciana Berger:**

**[112700]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the report published by the Centre for Mental Health, entitled Adult and older adult mental health services 2012 to 2016: An analysis of Mental Health NHS Benchmarking Network data for England and Wales, published in September 2017.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The Department welcomes the report, which recognises successes as well as highlighting areas for further improvement. The report recognises the impact of the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health, stating that “it brought with it extra investment in both Improving Access to Psychological Therapies and community mental health services”.

The Government has recognised the need for improved mental health crisis care. The investment accompanying the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health will strengthen support for 24/7 crisis teams and accident and emergency liaison psychiatry. Additionally we have invested almost £15 million in improved health based Places of Safety for those detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 and a further investment of £15 million will be made available from next year.

The Mental Health Investment Standard also requires clinical commissioning groups to increase investment in mental health services in line with their overall increase in allocation.

The report raises issues to do with rising detentions under the Mental Health Act 1983, an issue that we have asked Professor Sir Simon Wessely to address in his Independent Review of the Act.

#### ■ **Mental Health Services: Barnsley**

**Stephanie Peacock:**

**[112128]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment has he made of the adequacy of access to mental health services for children and young people in (a) Barnsley East constituency and (b) Barnsley; and will he make a statement.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The Five Year Forward View Dashboard for Mental Health monitors progress against the delivery of the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health. The dashboard is published every quarter and data can be broken down to show performance for individual clinical commissioning groups.

The Five Year Forward View Dashboard for Mental Health can be found here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/mental-health-five-year-forward-view-dashboard/>

#### ■ **Mental Health Services: Children and Young People**

**Luciana Berger:**

**[112701]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much was spent from the public purse on the Future in Mind programme in (a) 2015-16 and (b) 2016-17; and how much is planned to be spent on that programme in (i) 2017-18, (ii) 2018-19 and (iii) 2019-20.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The Department provided NHS England with funding allocations of £173 million in 2015/16, £262 million in 2016/17 and 2017/18 for children and young people's mental health.

NHS England reported small underspends in 2015/16 and 2016/17 but is forecasting full spend against funding allocations for future years.

#### ■ **Mental Health Services: Discharges**

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[111850]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people, by gender, undergoing a community programme approach received follow-up post-discharge support from a mental health hospital within (a) 48 hours and (b) seven days in 2016-17.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The information requested is not collected centrally.

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[111851]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people, by gender, received follow-up post-discharge support from a mental health hospital within (a) 48 hours and (b) seven days in 2016-17.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The information requested is not collected centrally.

## ■ Neuromuscular Disorders: Physiotherapy

**Anneliese Dodds:**

**[112488]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to increase the provision of specialist physiotherapy for children and adults with muscle-wasting conditions.

**Steve Brine:**

The provision of specialist physiotherapy for muscle-wasting conditions, or neuromuscular disorders, is a local matter. NHS England has published service specifications for neurological care for both children and adults. These include exemplar service specifications for neuromuscular conditions, inclusive of muscle-wasting conditions, and set out what providers must have in place to offer evidence-based, safe and effective services. This includes access to physiotherapy. This guidance can be found by following the links below:

[www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/e09-paedi-neurology.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/e09-paedi-neurology.pdf)

[www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/d04-neurosci-spec-neuro.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/d04-neurosci-spec-neuro.pdf)

## ■ NHS: Drugs

**Alex Cunningham:**

**[112617]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will take steps to ensure that for each originator medicine procured by the NHS there are standard and publicly available reporting requirements of (a) the final negotiated net price charged to the NHS, (b) the research and development (R&D) costs attributable to that medicine, (c) any public contributions to R&D costs and (d) that medicines manufacturing costs.

**Steve Brine:**

The Department agrees the National Health Service list price for new medicines, which are public. We do not intend to publish negotiated net prices. These are market sensitive and so must be treated as commercial in confidence to allow the NHS to secure the best value arrangements from the manufacturer.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence assesses important, new medicines through a robust evaluation process, which ensures they are priced in a manner that is cost-effective for the value they provide to patients and to the NHS. The costs and source of financial support in developing medicines is not a relevant part of this assessment, and there are no plans to include this. Research and development funding will come from a wide range of sources, both in the United

Kingdom and internationally. Funding for research initially directed towards the development of a product that is unsuccessful in clinical trials may contribute to a subsequent breakthrough, so it is not practical to accurately attribute the contribution made by public investment or private investment in bringing each product to market.

## ■ Pain: Health Services

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[112633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with the (a) Welsh Government, (b) Scottish Government and (c) Northern Ireland Assembly members about supporting the provision of the Escape Pain programme in all nations of the UK.

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[112634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans to roll out the Escape Pain self-management and rehabilitation programme in the NHS in England.

**Steve Brine:**

Health is a devolved matter, and no discussions have taken place between ministers and the devolved administrations of Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland about the Escape Pain programme.

Escape Pain is a group-based, six week rehabilitation programme which combines exercise and education to help patients manage chronic joint pain using exercise and coping techniques. The programme is endorsed by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, and has received Best Practice Awards from the British Society of Rheumatology and Royal Society of Public Health.

The programme, which is running at over 30 sites across England, can be provided in physiotherapy departments, the community and places of work, and lessons can also be accessed via an app that is free to download.

## ■ Patients: Disclosure of Information

**Conor McGinn:**

[\[112563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the criteria was for the issue of a confidentiality agreement with a Primodos patient; and if he will make a statement.

**Steve Brine:**

We have interpreted that the Hon. Member's question relates to confidentiality agreements for those who participated in the Expert Working Group on Hormone Pregnancy Tests.

Under the Human Medicines Regulations 2012, express restrictions are placed on the disclosure of any information by a person who obtains it by virtue of those Regulations (which includes those participating in meetings of the Commission on Human Medicines and its Expert Working Groups).

All participants of the Expert Working Group on Hormone Pregnancy Tests were required to sign a confidentiality declaration form to confirm their understanding that

the paperwork, any other correspondence and discussions of the Group are strictly confidential, and must not be disclosed. Observers on the Expert Working Group, including patient representatives, were also asked to sign the form.

The report of the Group was published on 15 November 2017. All the supporting evidence, will be published once it has been reviewed in line with duties under data protection legislation, and common law duty of confidence.

## ■ Patients: Transport

**Jo Platt:** [111963]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 7 November 2017 to Question 110827, if his Department will commit to monitor the average duration of transfers of care.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The Government has no plans to monitor the average duration of transfers of care.

NHS England does collect and publish information on transfers of care that have been delayed. This shows the total delayed days during the month for all delayed patients. The information is available at the following link:

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

## ■ Prisoners: Mental Illness

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [112086]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many prisoners were diagnosed with a mental health condition in each year since 2010.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The information requested is not collected centrally.

## ■ Prisoners: Rehabilitation

**Richard Burgon:** [111869]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people in prison in England and Wales (a) requested and (b) received drug and alcohol treatment in each quarter for the last five years.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

Secure setting treatment figures are currently only available for 2015-16. Figures are not available for people who requested treatment, only for those starting or already receiving treatment.

Data in secure setting statistics from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System for England showed there were 60,254 adults in contact with drug and alcohol treatment services within secure settings during 2015-16, and most (56,803) of these were within a prison setting:

<http://www.nta.nhs.uk/uploads/secure-setting-statistics-from-the-national-drug-treatment-monitoring-system-2015-2016.pdf>

There were a further 3,124 in contact with treatment services within Youth Offending Institutions and 327 within Immigration Removal Centres.

Of all the people in contact with treatment services in secure settings in this year, there were 40,382 people starting a new treatment programme.

## ■ Prisons: Mental Health Services

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

**[112089]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with (a) HM Prison Service, (b) the Secretary of State for Justice and (c) NHS England on funding for research into the provision of mental health services in prisons.

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

**[112090]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of (a) research and (b) data on incidents of mental health issues in prisons.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

The Secretary of State for Health meets with many people and organisations to discuss a wide variety of topics. Specific details of these conversations are not available.

It is recognised there is a need to improve both research activity and the quality of data on mental health needs of people in prison. Recent reports from both the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman and the National Audit Office have highlighted these issues. The last comprehensive survey of mental health needs in prisons was commissioned by the Department in 1997.

The Department, NHS England and Public Health England are working with the National Institute for Health Research to address this deficit, identifying key research priorities. Recently, NHS England has commissioned research on self-inflicted deaths in prisons as this is a priority issue due to high levels of self-harm and suicide recorded in prisons currently.

Further work is currently underway by the Department, Public Health England, NHS England, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service and the Ministry of Justice to improve the quality of health data from prisons with a specific focus on mental health data.

NHS England's new clinical IT system will facilitate improvements in data quality and reporting on all aspects of healthcare in prisons, including mental health. To support this, NHS England is implementing clinical templates across the secure estate including mental health templates, as well as reviewing the current data set. A new and revised quality indicator set will be reported on from April 2018.

**■ University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[112543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what additional support his Department plans to provide to University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust during Winter 2017.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust has been supported by NHS England and NHS Improvement to make improvements in its urgent and emergency care performance, ensuring it is best placed to deal with challenges this winter.

The Trust receives weekly support from NHS Improvement's Emergency Care Intensive Support Team, who provide hands-on support with service improvement.

**HOME OFFICE****■ Counter-terrorism: Police****Louise Haigh:**[\[111941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the National Police Chiefs Council on additional funding requirements for counter-terror policing; and if she will make a statement.

**Louise Haigh:**[\[112147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information she has received from the National Police Chiefs' Council on the total cost to Greater Manchester Police of the terrorist incident in May 2017; and what proportion of that cost was accrued by that force's budget.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The Government is in regular dialogue with the police, including the National Police Chiefs' Council, to ensure that the right powers, capabilities and resources are in place across all areas of policing.

The 2015 Spending Review settlement protected counter-terrorism policing spend until 2020-21, and included a significant capital increase to deliver growth of key counter-terrorist policing capabilities.

In recognition of the pressures on policing following this year's terrorist attacks, the Home Secretary has already announced a further £24 million for counter-terrorism policing

The Home Office is working closely with Greater Manchester Police and the National Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters to identify and manage the cost of the immediate response to the recent attacks. This work is ongoing



The Mayor of Greater Manchester has applied for Special Grant funding to support the financial consequences of the terrorist attack on the Manchester Arena, and this application is being considered

In addition, work is currently under way to review the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, including drawing on the lessons learned from the attacks in London and Manchester.

## ■ **Drugs: Misuse**

**Vernon Coaker:**

[\[112499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the prevalence of drug dealers using business cards to advertise the availability of black mamba and spice; and if she will make a statement.

**Vernon Coaker:**

[\[112500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the police on the steps they are taking to tackle the availability of black mamba and spice on the streets; and if she will make a statement.

**Vernon Coaker:**

[\[112501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the prevalence of the drugs (a) black mamba and (b) spice; and if she will make a statement.

**Victoria Atkins:**

We have regular conversations on tackling illegal drugs with the National Policing Lead for Drugs, including on the prevalence of synthetic cannabinoids, such as those sold under the brand names of Spice and Black Mamba.

We recognise how dangerous synthetic cannabinoids can be and the devastating impact that they can have on communities, families and the individuals taking them.

That is why we acted to control these substances as class B drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act and give the police the powers they need to take action, including making possession illegal and delivering longer sentences for dealers.

We are monitoring the prevalence of these drugs, and new psychoactive substances more widely, through a range of sources such as survey data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, and data on the numbers of people in treatment.

## ■ **Emergency Calls**

**Louise Haigh:**

[\[112161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of 999 calls reaching the two-minute point and remaining unanswered in September (a) 2015, (b) 2016 and (c) 2017.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

HMICFRS annually publish data on the volume of 999 calls as part of their Value for Money profiles.

[www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/data/value-for-money-data/](http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/data/value-for-money-data/)

■ **Fireworks****Mr Charles Walker:****[112621]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she has taken to reduce the nuisance caused by fireworks; what plans she has to reduce instances of nuisance and abuse; and if she will make a statement.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Government's approach to the safe use of fireworks and reducing nuisance is to encourage industry, retailers and others to promote responsible use through guidance and public education. There is also significant regulation in place covering the supply, storage, possession and use of fireworks, which helps to reduce instances of nuisance and abuse. This includes restrictions on when fireworks can be sold, curfews which limit the hours during which fireworks can be used, local authority powers to deal with excessive firework noise and a prohibition on setting off or throwing fireworks in the street or other public places. In addition, the police or local authorities can consider the use of the powers provided by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, if they are satisfied that the relevant legal tests are met, to tackle those who cause alarm or distress to others through their misuse of fireworks.

■ **Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority****Rachel Reeves:****[112360]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to ensure that the recruitment policies of the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority board will include trade union experience as a desirable competence for future board members; and if she will make a statement.

**Rachel Reeves:****[112361]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions her Department has had with trade unions on the effectiveness of the board of the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority; and if she will make a statement.

**Rachel Reeves:****[112466]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons the Board of the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority does not include any members with recent trade union experience.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Board of the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) is constituted under The Gangmasters (Licensing Authority) Regulations 2015. Recruitment to the

Board follows a fair and open process in line with the Government's code of practice on public appointments.

Anyone with relevant experience and ability to contribute to the GLAA Board, including those with trade union experience, is able to apply to recruitment rounds.

The Department has not discussed the effectiveness of the GLAA Board with trade union representatives.

## ■ Grenfell Tower: Fires

**Stuart C. McDonald:**

**[111739]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications have been received each week for discretionary leave to remain as a survivor or other individual directly affected by the Grenfell Tower fire since 5 July 2017.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The dedicated Grenfell immigration policy is a targeted scheme that we expect to benefit a limited number of people. We have plans to publish statistics on the Grenfell immigration policy in due course and will not be providing updates on numbers in the meantime.

## ■ Immigration

**Tulip Siddiq:**

**[112540]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information her Department holds on the number of people in the UK with (a) discretionary and (b) indefinite leave to remain; and how many such people that have been granted such leave in each of the last seven years have previously participated in acts classified as crimes against humanity.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The number of grants of Discretionary Leave and Indefinite Leave to Remain are available in published immigration statistics, which are available at

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/638594/extensions-apr-jun-2017-tables.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/638594/extensions-apr-jun-2017-tables.ods) and

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/638595/settlement-apr-jun-2017-tables.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/638595/settlement-apr-jun-2017-tables.ods).

Statistics on the UK's resident population and its characteristics (where collected) is a matter for the independent Office for National Statistics.

An assessment of previous crimes against humanity is just one element of the application consideration. Serious reasons and evidence for considering if someone has committed such an act would fall under Article 1F of the Refugee Convention or 339D of the Immigration Rules. The Home Office does not separate out data on crimes against humanity from other international crimes. In those cases where the Home Office believes there to be serious reasons for considering they may have participated in international crimes under these provisions, such individuals would not normally qualify for Discretionary Leave or Indefinite Leave to Remain.

**■ Immigration: Married People****Keith Vaz:** [111495]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average length of time taken was to process a visa for a spouse of a British citizen.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The published information on processing times for visa applications is published as part of the Migration Transparency data, available at

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-operations-transparency-data-august-2017](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-operations-transparency-data-august-2017)

**Ben Lake:** [111890]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effect on non-UK citizens wishing to bring non-EU spouses into the UK of plans to make them subject to the same income requirements as British citizens once the UK has left the EU.

**Brandon Lewis:**

We set out our proposals for safeguarding the rights of EU nationals living in the UK and UK nationals living in the EU in our policy document published on 26 June.

Negotiations on citizens' rights are ongoing and we are now within touching distance of an agreement. Whilst there remain differences on the issue of family reunion, we have been clear that we are willing to consider what further reassurance we can provide to existing families of EU residents here - even if they are not currently living together in the UK

Whilst no formal assessment has been made of the effect of income requirements on EU citizens wishing to bring non-EU spouses into the UK after the UK has left the EU, the Supreme Court has endorsed the policy on the basis that it prevents burdens on the taxpayer and ensures migrant families have the financial means to support themselves and their family.

**■ Northamptonshire Police****Mr Jim Cunningham:** [111368]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the timetable is for the roll-out of the police welfare service for Northamptonshire Police.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

Policing, by its nature, can be a uniquely demanding job and it is the responsibility of chief officers in Northamptonshire and elsewhere – supported by the College of Policing - to ensure that good management systems are in place to support officers in their work

The Government takes the issue of police welfare very seriously and has invested in programmes which offer help directly to officers. For example, in July 2017, the Home Secretary awarded £7.5million from the Police Transformation Fund over three years to pilot and, if it is successful, fund a dedicated national service to help provide

enhanced welfare support. The timing of any roll out will, in part, depend upon the outcomes of the pilot.

## ■ Police

**Edward Argar:**

**[111622]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will list by police force area the (a) number of officers of superintendent rank or above in each local force and (b) proportion of each local police force's warranted strength that is of superintendent rank or above.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of police officers employed by each police force in England and Wales on a bi-annual basis. These data are published in the 'Police workforce, England and Wales' statistical bulletins, which can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2017>

Data on the number of police officers by rank and by police force area, as at 31 March each year, can be found in the Open Data Tables accompanying the main release:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/629362/open-data-table-police-workforce.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/629362/open-data-table-police-workforce.ods)

## ■ Police and Crime Commissioners

**Louise Haigh:**

**[112038]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether police and crime commissioners are required to consult the public on changes to their Police and Crime Plan within the plan's timeframe.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

Police and Crime Plans are an important strategic planning tool for Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and were introduced as a statutory requirement for commissioners as part of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The legislation is clear that their development should be informed by a comprehensive understanding of local needs, resources and priorities and consider the views of the public, partners and other stakeholders.

The 2011 Act sets out that PCCs may vary their Police and Crime Plan at any time, the frequency with which this is done is determined on the basis of local need. The legislation requires PCCs to consult the chief constable on any proposed variation to the plan. PCCs must also send the draft variation to the Police and Crime Panel for the area for local scrutiny and must then have regard to any report or recommendation made by the panel.

PCCs are also required to produce an annual report at the end of each financial year to provide the public with an update on the progress which has been made in meeting the police and crime objectives contained within the plan.

## ■ Police Community Support Officers

**Louise Haigh:** [\[112037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the contribution of police community support officers to crime prevention and neighbourhood policing.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

It is for operationally independent Chief Constables to make decisions on the size, composition and deployment of the workforce including police community support officers, in line with local needs and priorities. Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) are elected by the public to hold Chief Constables and the force to account; making the police answerable to the communities they serve.

The Government supports local policing through a variety of ways, such as; increasing workforce flexibility; supporting collaboration and investing in digital transformation programmes. The Home Secretary announced that £175m would be allocated to the Police Transformation Fund (PTF) for the 2017/18 financial year. This will provide PCCs with a real opportunity to transform policing to respond to a changing crime mix.

## ■ Police: Horses

**Keith Vaz:** [\[111489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many police horses there are in each police constabulary in the UK.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The Home office does not hold any information centrally on the number of police horses in each constabulary.

## ■ Police: Recruitment

**Keith Vaz:** [\[111492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people applied for the superintendent direct entry scheme in each of the last three years.

**Keith Vaz:** [\[111493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to launch the next round of the next direct entry scheme for superintendent recruitment.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The College of Policing, which is responsible for delivery of the direct entry schemes, has provided the number of applications to the superintendent direct entry scheme for each of the last three years in the table below. The next recruitment round for direct entry superintendents and inspectors will open in January 2018.

YEAR	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS
2015	542
2016	640
2017	567

## ■ Refugees: Children

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[112618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has received any representations from Coventry City Council on the provision of more places for unaccompanied child refugees under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016.

**Brandon Lewis:**

We are grateful to Coventry City Council for their work in looking after unaccompanied asylum seeking children, including their active participation in the National Transfer Scheme (NTS).

Any offers of further placements for unaccompanied asylum seeking children will be utilised to fulfil all of our existing commitments, including under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 and our broader work through the NTS of ensuring a more equal allocation of the approximately 4,500 unaccompanied children already in care in the UK.

## ■ Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013: Small Businesses

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[112738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the implications of the Home Office report on the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 for small businesses operating scrap metal dealerships.

**Victoria Atkins:**

We have not undertaken an assessment of the implications of the Home Office report. The Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 introduced a regulatory regime for the metal recycling sector in order to tackle the trade in stolen metal. Making it more difficult for unscrupulous dealers to trade benefits all legitimate scrap metal dealers, whatever the size of their business. We will publish our report on the findings of our review of the Act later this year and we will continue to work with partners through the National Metal Theft Working Group to support legitimate dealers.

## ■ Slavery

**Alex Norris:**

[\[112637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 6 November 2017 to Question 110772, on slavery, whether she will publish a list of the

10,000 businesses her Department wrote to reminding them of their obligations and pointing them towards relevant guidance in relation to the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

**Alex Norris:** [\[112638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 6 November 2017 to Question 110772, on slavery, what criteria her Department applied when selecting 10,000 businesses to write to reminding them of their obligations and pointing them towards relevant guidance in relation to the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

**Alex Norris:** [\[112730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 6 November 2017 to Question 110772, on slavery, if she will place in the Library a copy of the letter her Department sent to 10,000 businesses reminding them of their obligations and highlighting guidance on the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Home Office estimates that between 9,000 and 11,000 businesses are required to publish a slavery and human trafficking statement. The correspondence was also shared with NGOs and trade associations to share with their members

The Government does not hold a definitive list of eligible organisations and used private sector data to identify relevant businesses and filtered the data based on turnover size. This data is not comprehensive and the Government does not own this data to publish it

I will arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the House Library.

**Alex Norris:** [\[112716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many times the civil proceedings for an injunction provision under Section 54(11) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 has been used since it came into force in March 2016.

**Victoria Atkins:**

No injunctions have yet been used. New legislation takes time to embed and the first year of compliance has just passed. Thousands of statements have been published and the Government wrote to 10,000 businesses who may be required to publish statements to remind them of their obligations. We expect this activity will further increase the number of statements published.

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### ■ Department for International Development: Staff

**Ian C. Lucas:** [\[111801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many staff appointed after 24 June 2016 in her Department hold a post that includes work on the UK leaving the EU.



**Rory Stewart:**

To support work on the UK leaving the EU, DFID's Europe Department has increased its staffing by 5.

**■ Department for International Development: Working Conditions****Chris Ruane:**[\[112412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to improve the (a) physical and (b) mental wellbeing of staff employed in her Department.

**Rory Stewart:**

The Civil Service has set out five priorities for the health and wellbeing of its employees, including priorities in relation to physical and mental wellbeing. In addition, the Civil Service has also committed to being a leading employer on mental health support, in line with the recommendations set out in the recently published independent review *Thriving At Work*. DFID is committed to supporting these priorities and examples of where DFID supports physical wellbeing include the provision of gym facilities in both UK headquarters and being a member of the 'Cycle to Work' initiative. Examples where steps are being taken to improve mental wellbeing include the support of both the 'Time to Change' campaign in England and 'SeeMe' campaign in Scotland.

**■ Developing Countries: Leprosy****Fiona Onasanya:**[\[112472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what discussions (a) Ministers and (b) officials of her Department have had with experts on neglected tropical diseases on funding priorities for tackling leprosy.

**Fiona Onasanya:**[\[112489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department holds regular meetings with Governments of nations affected by leprosy.

**Fiona Onasanya:**[\[112492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what discussions Ministers of her Department have had with ministerial counterparts in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on the UK's response to combating leprosy worldwide.

**Alistair Burt:**

DFID officials have regular discussions on Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) with a range of partners, including experts both within the World Health Organisation and with officials of countries affected by NTDs. Ministers have engaged with experts internationally on tackling on NTDs, including, participation in the NTD Summit in April 2017.

As well as being the minister with responsibility for global health in DFID, I am also a minister in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

**Fiona Onasanya:**

[\[112490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what funding her Department makes available for leprosy with reference to (a) education, (b) medicines and (c) social programmes.

**Alistair Burt:**

DFID provided £1,127,646 between 2015 and 2018 to the Leprosy Mission England and Wales to improve the livelihoods and food security of poor people in Mozambique, including people affected by leprosy.

DFID has also committed up to £570,915 between 2016 and 2019 to LEPRO, for work in rural Bangladesh. This project provides early detection services and improved access to quality health services for people who are at risk of contracting leprosy or lymphatic filariasis.

DFID also provides funding for the World Health Organisation's work on NTDs, and more generally supports the strengthening of health systems, helping to ensure that countries are better able to detect and treat all causes of ill health, including leprosy.

**Fiona Onasanya:**

[\[112491\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department defines leprosy as a neglected tropical disease.

**Fiona Onasanya:**

[\[112493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to achieve the World Health Organisation's 2020 target on leprosy.

**Alistair Burt:**

Leprosy is a neglected tropical disease, as defined by the World Health Organisation. DFID supports progress towards the WHO 2020 targets on leprosy through our funding to civil society organisations such as Leprosy Mission England and Wales and LEPRO and to the WHO's NTD programme. In addition, DFID supports the strengthening of health systems, helping to ensure that countries are better able to detect and treat all causes of ill health, including leprosy.

## ■ European Development Fund

**Tom Brake:**

[\[112240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether the Government plans to maintain its contributions to developing countries through the European Development Fund after the UK leaves the EU.

**Rory Stewart:**

While the UK remains a member of the EU, our commitments to the European Development Fund continue unchanged. There will be no decisions on the future distribution of UK aid until the Government's negotiations on exiting the EU have concluded.

On 12 September the Government published a Future Partnership Paper setting out how we might work with the EU on security, foreign policy and development after we have left the EU. We look forward to discussing our future partnership when the European Council is ready.

## ■ **Madagascar: Bubonic Plague**

**Sir Edward Davey:**

[\[112272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what support her Department has offered to the Government of Madagascar since the outbreak of plague on that island.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID has helped the Government of Madagascar monitor and respond to the plague outbreak through our support to the World Health Organisation (WHO). This has included sending 114 experts, mobilising 1.2 million doses of antibiotics, and establishing nine specialist treatment centres. Protocols on clinical management, safe burials, and airport screenings have been developed and are being implemented. DFID and the FCO have been closely monitoring the outbreak response in Madagascar, including during a visit by DFID officials.

In addition, the Department of Health deployed the ODA funded UK Public Health Rapid Support Team to Madagascar in the early stages of the outbreak, which provided expertise in epidemiological surveillance, case management, infection prevention and control measures. The team have now returned to the UK as the outbreak has tailed off and the response has moved to a more steady state.

## ■ **Palestinians: Cartoons**

**Ian Austin:**

[\[112564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the memorandum of understanding between the Palestinian Authority and her Department, what discussions her Department has had with the Palestinian Authority as a result of the publication of cartoons showing the UK Prime Minister (a) with a pig's snout and carrying a Star of David and (b) drinking a glass of Palestinian blood, published on a Fatah Facebook page on 2 November 2017 and in the Palestinian Authority's official daily newspaper, Al-Hayat Al-Jadida on 1 November 2017 respectively.

**Alistair Burt:**

Our partnership with the Palestinian Authority includes a commitment from the Palestinian leadership to adhere to the principle of non-violence and to tackle language and avoid actions that could incite violence or hatred. The UK continues to urge the Palestinian leadership to uphold this principle. The UK Government deplores any act of incitement to violence; I raised the issue of incitement with senior Palestinian counterparts during my visit to the region in August.

**JUSTICE**■ **Companies: Criminal Liability**

**Fiona Bruce:** [\[112242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions he has had with the Law Commission on reviewing the UK's corporate liability regime.

**Dominic Raab:**

The Secretary of State for Justice has had no discussions with the Law Commission on reviewing the UK's corporate liability regime.

■ **County Courts: Judgements**

**Peter Grant:** [\[10500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that county court judgments are recorded against the correct individual or company.

**Dominic Raab:**

The Civil Procedure Rules require claimants to take reasonable steps to ascertain the defendant's correct details, including their current address. Claimants must sign a statement of truth confirming that the details in their claim are true. Proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

The Government is considering whether any further action is needed to help ensure that county court judgments are recorded against the correct individual or company.

■ **HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Debt Collection**

**Jared O'Mara:** [\[112052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress his Department has made on plans to outsource the work of civilian enforcement officers employed by HM Courts and Tribunals.

**Dominic Raab:**

HM Courts and Tribunals Service are in the process of re-procuring existing services provided by Approved Enforcement Agencies (AEA) for the execution of criminal enforcement warrants. That procurement process is also exploring the potential to further extend the volume of arrest warrants executed by AEA. As part of the re-tendering process a decision was made to explore the possibility of extending the existing provisions and implementing a contract to cover all Civilian Enforcement Officer functions – primarily arrest warrants. This will allow HMCTS to consider a whole range of options about how best to deliver this service, making informed decisions about what is in the best interests of the service and the taxpayer. These services are already carried out by the current Approved Enforcement Agencies in several areas of England and Wales under the existing contract.

The Invitation to Tender was issued on the 3 August inviting suppliers to submit bids by the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017. The procurement process is currently in the evaluation period. HMCTS will fully evaluate all proposals submitted by potential AEs as part of the bidding process before making a final decision on this.

## ■ Legal Aid Scheme

**Richard Burgon:** [\[112130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to respond to the consultation on reforming the advocates' graduated fee scheme which closed on 2 March 2017.

**Dominic Raab:**

We are carefully considering all responses to the consultation, and will publish our response in due course.

## ■ Legal Representation

**Richard Burgon:** [\[111870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people were litigants in person in England and Wales in each of the last five years in (a) civil and (b) criminal cases.

**Dominic Raab:**

The Department publishes County Court, Family Court and Crown Court figures on defendants or parties with no (or unknown) representation. This data does not represent the number of litigants in person, however, because a party may be without representation for only part of a case or may be entitled to legal help but not full representation. Information on unrepresented defendants in Magistrates Courts is not held centrally.

Data on the number of parties with and without representation in cases with at least one hearing is published in Table 9 in the Family Court Statistics Quarterly, and trend analysis since 2011 is also given. The latest edition is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-court-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2017>

Figures on the number of no (or unknown) representation in the Crown Court, including trends since 2010, is published in table AC11 of the annual publication, link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-january-to-march-2017>

Figures on the number of civil defended claims with and without representation, since 2013, are published in table 1.6 of the quarterly publication, link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/civil-justice-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2017>

**■ London Community Rehabilitation Company****Richard Burgon:** [\[112531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what meetings he has had with the London Community Rehabilitation Company on recent reports that 15,000 appointments have been missed by offenders; and what plans he has to tackle that issue.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

Senior officials regularly meet with London CRC to hold them to account for delivery, including through actions of the HMPPS Contract Management Team. The performance of London Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) has been below our expectations. That is why a taskforce was established in 2016 as a result of the concerns raised by our contract compliance team and HMI Probation. Since then, London CRC has developed a comprehensive action plan and bolstered its senior leadership. They have revised their staffing structures to ensure that caseloads are manageable and robust action is being taken in relation to under-performance.

Further work is also being carried out by HMPPS Contract Management team to drive better performance in the area of enforcement across all CRC contracts.

Public protection is our top priority and we will take all necessary action to make sure the probation system is reducing reoffending and preventing future victims.

**■ Ministry of Justice: Brexit****Ian C. Lucas:** [\[111803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many staff appointed after 24 June 2016 in his Department hold a post that includes work on the UK leaving the EU.

**Dominic Raab:**

The UK's departure from the European Union impacts upon most areas of departmental business. Whilst staff within the Department's Global Britain Directorate lead on providing advice to Ministers on EU Exit and exit-related issues, a number of staff across the department also provide advice and analysis on EU Exit issues as required.

Given the interactions between EU exit work and the Department's other priorities, it would not be possible to give a precise figure.

**■ Ministry of Justice: Finance****Richard Burgon:** [\[112641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the charge has been to his Department's budget in real terms in each year since 2010; and what the projected charge will be in real terms in each year to 2022.

**Dominic Raab:**

The table below shows the annual change in the Ministry of Justice's funding from HM Treasury in real terms to 2019/20, this information is available on gov.uk.

Budgets for the years 2020/21 and 2021/22 will be set in the next Spending Review.

	2010/1 1	2011/1 2	2012/1 3	2013/1 4	2014/1 5	2015/1 6	2016/1 7	2017/1 8	2018/1 9	2019/2 0
Total Resource DEL *	8.3	8.1	7.7	7.4	7.0	6.2	6.5	6.4	6.0	5.8
<b>Total Resource DEL (restated in 2017/18 prices)</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>5.6</b>
Annual real terms increase/(decrease)		-4%	-7%	-6%	-7%	-12%	3%	-3%	-7%	-6%
Cumulative real terms decrease		-4%	-10%	-15%	-21%	-31%	-29%	-31%	-36%	-40%

\* excludes depreciation/reserve claims/machinery of government changes/budget transfers

## ■ Offenders: Suicide

**Richard Burgon:**[\[112148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Government's paper, Deaths of offenders in the community, published on 26 October 2017, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the incidents of deaths classified as self-inflicted of people under the supervision of community rehabilitation companies.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

In 2016/17 there were 233 self-inflicted deaths of offenders in the community. This represents a decrease of 9% on the previous year.

Probation services are now supporting an additional 40,000 offenders each year after release from custody. Probation staff work hand-in-hand with other agencies – including local authorities and health services, and in higher-risk cases the Police – to help ensure offenders with mental health or substance misuse issues have the right level of support. We have developed a joint protocol with the Department of Health setting out how probation, health and treatment services should work together to provide treatment and support to offenders. We will be trialling the protocol in test-bed areas in England later this year.

**■ Prison Officers: Recruitment****Jared O'Mara:**[\[111735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress his Department has made towards achieving its target of employing 2,500 extra prison officers by the end of 2018.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

As part of the Prison Safety and Reform White Paper published in November 2016, the Government committed to an increase of 2,500 prison officers by the end of 2018.

Between the end of October 2016 and the end of August 2017, there has been a net increase of 1,264 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Band 3 to 5 prison officers. As at the end of August, there were a further 872 people who had been offered jobs and were expected to start their training by January 2018.

**■ Prison Officers: Vetting****Grahame Morris:**[\[112124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what is the average time taken to complete vetting processes for a prison officer recruit.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The average time for a new prison officer recruit to receive a full security check in 2017 is 46 calendar days. This is for new officer recruits who are recorded as starting work in a Prison (data up to the end of September 2017), who applied between the 1st January and 30th September 2017.

**■ Prison Sentences: Scotland****Imran Hussain:**[\[105578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the Scottish Government's plans to restrict sentences of less than 12 months on (a) overcrowding, (b) safety and (c) reoffending.

**Dominic Raab:**

Sentencing law in Scotland is different from that in England and Wales, and is devolved to the Scottish Government.

In England and Wales, unlike in Scotland, we already have a requirement in law that custody should be reserved for the most serious offences.

Under the Criminal Justice Act 2003, a court is required, before considering imposing any kind of custodial sentence, to be satisfied that the offence is so serious that only a custodial sentence can be justified. Even when a court considers an offence to be so serious that custody is merited, it is required to consider whether community sentence would be better in that particular case, for example, for the purposes of rehabilitation. The law also requires that when the court has decided to impose a custodial sentence, it should be for the shortest time possible commensurate with the seriousness of the offence.



## ■ Prisoners: Older People

**Richard Burgon:**

[\[111877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners aged (a) 60 to 69, (b) 70 to 79, (c) 80 to 89 and (d) over 90 have been sentenced to sentences of (i) six months or less, (ii) 12 months or less, (iii) two years or less and (iv) five years or less in the last 12 months.

**Dominic Raab:**

The number of custodial sentences issued to offenders aged 60 or over, by requested breakdown of sentence length, in England and Wales, in 2016 (latest available), are in the table below:

### Custodial sentences issued to offenders aged 60 or over, England and Wales, 2016<sup>(1)(2)</sup>

Sentence length	Age			
	60 to 69	70 to 79	80 to 89	90 +
Up to and including six months	531	74	6	-
Over six months and up to and including 12 months	172	48	7	-
Over 12 months and up to and including two years	192	68	12	1
Over two years and up to and including five years	286	124	21	-

'-' = Nil

(1) Sentence shown is the most severe sentence given for the principal offence (i.e. the principal sentence), secondary sentences given for the principal offence and sentences for non-principal offences are not counted in the tables.

(2) Every effort has been made to ensure the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. Consequently, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

## ■ Prisoners: Russia

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[\[111777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Russian passport holders are currently serving sentences in British prisons; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

As at 30 September 2017, there were 35 Russian nationals in prisons and HMPs-run Immigration Removal Centres in England and Wales; 27 of these were serving a sentence. The remainder were on remand or detained under immigration powers.

**■ Universal Credit****Stephen Timms:**[\[110504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what categories of claimants of universal credit are entitled to claim (a) help with prison visiting costs, (b) legal aid and (c) remission from court fees; and whether he plans to change those entitlements.

**Dominic Raab:**

The Assisted Prison Visits Scheme (APVS) provides financial assistance to prisoners' close relatives, partners or sole visitors who meet qualifying rules on income. Those in receipt of Universal Credit are eligible for the scheme if their income does not exceed £1,250 a month, and those in receipt of Working Tax and Child Tax Credits are eligible if their annual household income does not exceed £17,474.

Legal aid eligibility is subject to statutory tests of the applicant's financial means, and the merits of their case. All recipients of universal credit are currently deemed automatically to have passed the income element of the means test for legal aid, and will be eligible for legal aid subject to tests of their capital and the merits of their case. The government recently ran a consultation exercise on universal credit and legal aid, which closed on 11 May 2017. Ministers are carefully considering the responses and will publish the Government response to consultation in due course.

Eligibility for courts and tribunals fee remissions is based on an assessment of the applicant's disposable capital and gross monthly income. Those in receipt of universal credit with earnings of up to £6,000 per annum are deemed automatically to meet the income test for a full fee remission under the Help with Fees scheme. The government is considering the wider implications of the Supreme Court's ruling in the case of *R (Unison) v the Lord Chancellor*, including the Help with Fees scheme.

**NORTHERN IRELAND****■ Blood: Contamination****Lady Hermon:**[\[112755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether the remit of the contaminated blood inquiry extends to Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement.

**James Brokenshire:**

The inquiry will be a full statutory public inquiry, created under the 2005 Inquiries Act. A further announcement will follow before the end of the year on its establishment.

## ■ Health Services: Northern Ireland

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

**[10356]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what the timescale is for allocating the additional funding for health as part of the Government's agreement with the Democratic Unionist Party in the absence of the Northern Ireland Executive.

**James Brokenshire:**

*[Holding answer 9 October 2017]:* Earlier this year, in recognition of the unique circumstances in Northern Ireland, the UK Government made clear that it was prepared to make available additional financial support following the confidence and supply agreement between the Conservative Party and the Democratic Unionist Party.

That agreement made clear our desire to see the money decided upon and spent by a restored Executive for the benefit of all in Northern Ireland. In the meantime, though, we acknowledge that Northern Ireland's unique circumstances cannot simply be ignored, especially given the pressures that we have seen in the continued absence of an Executive.

That is why I announced during the Second Reading of the Northern Ireland Budget Bill on 13 November our commitment to make available £50m from the Confidence and Supply Agreement for addressing immediate health and education pressures in the 2017/18 financial year. If the Northern Ireland administration confirm that they would access this in 2017/18, that funding would form part of the Supplementary Estimates process in the New Year and be subject to the full authorisation of the House of Commons.

## ■ Offences against Children: Northern Ireland

**Lady Hermon:**

**[112756]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what representations he has made to the head of the Northern Ireland civil service about the payment of compensation to survivors and victims of historical institutional abuse in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement.

**James Brokenshire:**

I fully recognise the frustration felt by victims and survivors at the lack of progress in taking forward Sir Anthony Hart's recommendations, and deeply regret that due to the lack of a devolved administration, there has been no movement on redress. I continue to believe that the best outcome for victims and survivors of child abuse is a fully functioning Executive where strategic decisions can be made in responding to Sir Anthony's report recognising that it was the Executive which commissioned this report.

I have regular meetings with the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service where we discuss a range of issues. He is aware the HIAI remains a devolved issue. The HIAI is one of the many reasons I remain determined to continue working with all Northern

Ireland parties to get an Executive back up and running as soon as possible so that a response can be provided to Sir Anthony's report at the earliest opportunity.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Aviation

**Dame Caroline Spelman:**

[\[112349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's policy paper, UK Airspace Policy: A framework for balanced decisions on the design and use of airspace, published in February 2017, what the timetable is for introducing the proposals in that paper; and what progress has been made on establishing an independent commission on civil aviation noise.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The government response to the consultation on UK Airspace Policy: A framework for balanced decisions on the design and use of airspace was published on 24 October 2017, together with a suite of related documents detailing the introduction of proposals. The response includes confirmation that an Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise will be established by Spring 2018.

### ■ Carlisle Airport

**John Lamont:**

[\[111868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on opening Carlisle airport to domestic flights as part of the proposed Borderlands Growth Deal.

**Mr John Hayes:**

No such discussions have taken place. UK airlines and airports operate in a competitive, commercial environment, and it is for individual airlines to decide what air services they operate based on their assessment of commercial and market conditions. Stobart Air was offered support under the Regional Air Connectivity Fund to set up new routes from Carlisle Airport in 2016. As yet these new routes are not in operation. Any decision to start operation of these routes would be for the airline to decide.

### ■ Department for Transport: Staff

**Ian C. Lucas:**

[\[111806\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many staff appointed after 24 June 2016 in his Department hold a post that includes work on the UK leaving the EU.

**Mr John Hayes:**

It is not possible to estimate the proportion of staff time dedicated to EU exit due to the interdependencies and synergies between EU exit and the Department's other

priorities. The Department will continue to ensure there is an appropriate level of resource to deliver its EU exit programme.

**Sir David Crausby:**

[\[112247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many of his Department's staff have been employed in each region in each of the last five years.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The number of people employed in each region in each of the last five years is laid out in the following table:

REGION	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
London	2128	2054	2027	2242	2447
South East	1853	1825	1842	1247	1268
South West	1347	1173	1100	671	673
West Midlands	1317	1190	1379	367	373
East Midlands	946	801	768	635	672
North East	869	750	684	485	497
North West	1151	973	970	455	495
Yorkshire & the Humbers	676	562	629	300	310
East of England	1012	867	935	363	384
Wales	5637	6030	6283	6636	6563
Scotland	597	480	459	460	486
Northern Ireland	38	41	40	40	39
Overseas	11	13	12	12	10
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0

The figures above represent the headcount figures at the end of each financial year, by region, for the central Department and the Executive Agencies. Note that up to and including 2014/15, the above figures include Highways Agency staff, but these staff are not included from 2015/16 onwards when the Highways Agency became a government company, Highways England.

## ■ Department of Transport: Telephone Services

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[111486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which public telephone lines for his Department's services are charged at higher rates; and how much was taken by each such telephone line in the last 12 months.

**Mr John Hayes:**

DVLA has three premium rate telephone lines, two of which are available to the public. The two public telephone lines were set up in May 2015 and provide customers with a translation service. The third telephone line is used exclusively by the motor trade and is not available to the general public.

The total amount of income for the three telephone lines for the financial year 2016-17 was £798k. It has not been possible to extract the income from the motor trade telephone line from the two public telephone lines.

By way of context, the Department, including its Agencies, has 3,187 public phone-lines which, aside from the three lines referred to above, are all charged at the standard or local rate.

## ■ High Speed Trains

**Alex Norris:**

[\[111370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department has taken to prepare for the two-year gap between current high speed trains becoming non-compliant in 2020 and new bi-mode trains being available in 2022.

**Paul Maynard:**

Any trains in passenger service after 31 December 2019 must comply with modern accessibility standards. The Department is closely monitoring the progress that industry and operators are making to ensure that the rights of passengers are protected by upgrading and renewing older rolling stock which will continue in service or replacing non-compliant trains by the end of 2019.

## ■ M20: Accidents

**Helen Whately:**

[\[112243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many (a) fatal accidents and (b) serious accidents took place on the M20 between junctions 6 and 7 and 8 and 9 London-bound and coast-bound in (i) 2013-14, (ii) 2014-15, (iii) 2015-16 and (iv) 2016-17; and how that figure compares to the average number of such accidents for all UK motorways.

**Jesse Norman:**

The information requested for 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 is set out in the table below.

Highways England responds to requests for collision data using validated STATS19 data, which forms part of the National Statistics.

FINANCIAL YEAR (APR-MAR )

<b>Fatal accidents</b>	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
M20 between junctions 0 6 and 7 ( coast-bound)		0	0
M20 between junctions 0 7 and 6 ( London – bound )		0	2
M20 between junctions 0 8 and 9 ( coast-bound)		0	0
M20 between junctions 1 9 and 8 ( London – bound )		0	0
<b>SERIOUS ACCIDENTS</b>	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
M20 between junctions 0 6 and 7 ( coast-bound)		0	0
M20 between junctions 0 7 and 6 ( London – bound )		0	0
M20 between junctions 4 8 and 9 ( coast-bound)		1	3
M20 between junctions 4 9 and 8 ( London – bound )		1	1

The equivalent accident numbers for all UK motorways in each of these years is as follows:

NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS - MOTORWAYS

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fatal</b>	<b>Fatal and Serious</b>
2013	97	641
2014	85	680
2015	96	712

NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS - MOTORWAYS

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2016	87	769
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Highways England do not currently have the data available by route for 2016-17.

■ **Merchant Shipping: Certification**

**Sammy Wilson:**

[\[111550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans his Department has to review the issuing of Certificates of Equivalent Competency to non-UK resident officers in the British merchant shipping industry.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has a specialist team that checks that any seafarer, who applies for a Certificate of Equivalent Competency to allow them to work on a UK-flagged ship, meets the necessary standards.

The MCA continues to engage with stakeholders and social partners, through groups such as the Merchant Navy Training Board, so that the next generation of seafarer can meet the needs of a global industry. I have asked the Chief Executive of the MCA to undertake a review of the current arrangements.

**Karl Turner:**

[\[112212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the performance of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in administering the Certificate of Competency process for seafarers in the last 12 months.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) is responsible for administering the Certificate of Competency process for seafarers. I am aware that the MCA regularly reviews its procedures against customer feedback to improve levels of service.

■ **Motorways: Noise**

**Helen Whately:**

[\[112396\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which parts of the motorway network his Department defines as noise important areas; when Junctions 6 to 9 of the M20 were last assessed to establish whether noise exceeded the levels of the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006; and how noise levels between Junctions 6 to 9 of the M20 compare to such levels on other parts of the motorway network.

**Jesse Norman:**

Noise important areas are defined by the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs, under the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006. There are 13 noise important areas between junctions 6 and 9 of the M20. There are no noise levels defined in these Regulations so it is not possible to state how many areas are



in exceedance, but noise levels along this stretch of motorway are broadly similar to other parts of the motorway network with similar levels of traffic flow.

## ■ **Public Transport: East Midlands**

**Gloria De Piero:**

**[112613]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the expenditure on public transport per head of population in the East Midlands; and how that level of expenditure compares with the level of expenditure in other English regions.

**Jesse Norman:**

It is extremely difficult for technical reasons to compare public expenditure across regions. Among other things, when expenditure is presented on a “per head of population” basis, it does not take into account the pressure that large numbers of commuters and visitors from other regions can add to public transport networks. The scale and urban density of some regions can also make a significant difference.

Figures on public sector expenditure at a regional level are part of the Government’s Country and Regional Analysis (CRA) statistics. These statistics attempt to allocate the spending according to where the benefits of that spend are accrued. They include spend on transport by all public sector organisations including the Department for Transport, Local Authorities, Public Corporations (in the case of transport, mainly spend by London Underground) and other Government Departments (including the devolved administrations).

The data showing the expenditure on public transport per head of population in the East Midlands and other English regions in 2016/17 can be found in table A.15 of the 2016/17 CRA statistics November 2017 -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/country-and-regional-analysis-2017> .

## ■ **Railways: Staff**

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[111519]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many people aged (a) under 20, (b) 21 to 30, (c) 31 to 40, (d) 41 to 50, (e) 51 to 60 and (f) over 61-years old work for each train operating company.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Department does not have access to any information on the age of employees across train operating companies.

## ■ **Road Traffic Control**

**Diana Johnson:**

**[111780]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much the Government plans to spend on the Congestion relief programme in each NUTS 1 region of England and Wales.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government is committed to tackling congestion across the country's road network, and has recently announced its intention to form a Major Road Network (MRN) comprising the most important local authority A roads.

The MRN will receive a dedicated portion of the National Roads Fund (NRF), which will be established in 2020/21. The NRF is derived from revenue raised from Vehicle Excise Duty in England only and therefore MRN funding will not be spent in Wales.

We will be consulting on our proposals for the creation of a MRN before the end of the year. The results of the consultation will determine the process of how the funding will be allocated across England's regions.

**Rolling Stock: Alternative Fuels****Alex Norris:**[\[111614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress is being made on developing alternative fuel trains.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Department is committed to improving energy efficiency as well as reducing emissions and the carbon impacts of transport.

The Department supported a recent successful trial of an independently powered train, an electric train with batteries to enable it to run across the entire rail network. It is also introducing Bi-Mode trains so that it is no longer necessary to run diesel power units when trains are running on electrified sections of the network. It is also closely monitoring trials in Germany of a hydrogen fuel cell powered train, which could be used on the UK rail network.

The Department funds the industry to conduct research; particularly to support the Industry Technical Strategy, which has objectives to develop new, efficient, clean power sources.

**Solent****Mr Bob Seely:**[\[112816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the Government classifies the Solent as (a) an estuary or (b) open water.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The body of water defined as The Solent is neither classified as an estuary nor as open-water. The Solent is a strait that separates the Isle of Wight from mainland England. For the purposes of safe navigation and equipment requirements for ships, the Solent is classified as Category D waters, defined as 'tidal rivers and estuaries where the significant wave height could not be expected to exceed 2.0 metres at any time'.

## ■ Taxis

**Wera Hobhouse:**

[\[112198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the number of taxi and private hire vehicles which are working cross-border despite having their licences revoked by a local licensing authority.

**Wera Hobhouse:**

[\[112199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to put in place additional measures to empower local licensing authorities to ensure public safety in taxi and private hire vehicles.

**Mr John Hayes:**

I announced in a Westminster Hall debate that I would be setting up a working group to consider current issues concerning taxi and PHV licensing. That group is considering both cross-border working and enforcement and passenger safety as two of key areas for discussion and will report its findings to me in the new year.

The Department for Transport does not currently hold any data on the number of taxi or private hire vehicle (PHV) drivers who have had their licences revoked. The Department has not made any estimate of the number of taxis and PHV drivers working cross-border who have had their licences revoked by a local licensing authority.

The Government attaches the utmost priority to passenger safety in the licenced taxi and PHV trade. The Department for Transport will consult on revised best practice guidance and for the first time statutory guidance enabled under the Policing and Crime Act 2017. This guidance will contain robust standards that we expect all licensing authorities to adopt; these will ensure all passengers, particularly children and vulnerable adults, are protected when using taxi and PHV services.

## ■ Taxis: Disability

**Cat Smith:**

[\[111530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 1 November 2017 to Question 110091, on taxis: disability, what his Department's definition is of vulnerable individuals; and whether that definition includes blind or partially sighted people.

**Mr John Hayes:**

For the purposes of the statutory guidance to be issued under 177 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Department intends to use the definition of a vulnerable adult in section 42 of the Care Act 2014, that such a person:

(a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs),

(b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and

(c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

The safeguarding measures in the statutory guidance are aimed at helping the range of vulnerable people and will be consulted upon.

■ **Taxis: Registration**

**Wera Hobhouse:** [\[112196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of establishing a central UK-wide register of taxi and private hire vehicle drivers.

**Mr John Hayes:**

At a Westminster Hall Debate on 5 July, I announced my intention to set up a working group to consider the regulation of the trade and produce focussed recommendations for action. The Task and Finish Group on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing will report its findings to me in the new year.

■ **Taxis: Regulation**

**Wera Hobhouse:** [\[112195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to update regulations relating to taxi and private hire vehicles; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr John Hayes:**

At the request of the Department for Transport, the Law Commission undertook a comprehensive review of taxi and private hire regulation in England and Wales.

Since this report the sector has undergone profound and rapid change. At a Westminster Hall Debate on 5 July I announced the formation of a working group to consider any regulatory issues and remedies, including the Commission's recommendations. The group will report in the New Year.

■ **Taxis: Safety**

**Wera Hobhouse:** [\[112197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the safety of people using taxi and private hire vehicles as a result of the 2015 changes to the rules on cross-border taxi and private hire vehicle use.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Task and Finish Group on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing that I set up is considering cross-border taxi and private hire vehicle use in its discussions, and will report its findings to me in the new year.

At the request of the Department for Transport, the Law Commission conducted a comprehensive review of private hire vehicle and taxi regulation in England and Wales. The ability to sub-contract private hire work across licensing authority boundaries was a recommendation of the Law Commission. Section 11 of the Deregulation Act 2015 enabled this and has allowed private hire operators to work more flexibly to meet the needs of their passengers.

## WALES

■ **EU Grants and Loans: Wales****Chris Ruane:**[\[112562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent discussions he has had with Ministers of the (a) Welsh Government and (b) UK Government on funding mechanisms to replace EU structural and investment funding after 2020 in the West and Valleys regions of Wales.

**Alun Cairns:**

I hold regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues and with the Welsh Government to discuss a range of issues, including the impact on Wales of the UK leaving the European Union.

Our manifesto committed to creating a UK Shared Prosperity Fund and work is ongoing across Government to consider how best this can be achieved. As per our commitment, we will of course work with the Welsh Government and other stakeholders across Wales and the UK.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

■ **Children: Maintenance****Helen Hayes:**[\[112558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reasons the amount of child maintenance debt collected fell by 88 per cent between May 2010 and 2014-15.

**Caroline Dinanage:**

The Child Maintenance Group does not recognise the quoted 88% reduction in debt collected. For the period specified, there has been a slight decrease under the CSA as outlined by the numbers below however they do not represent such a significant drop and in actuality the amount collected against arrears has increased. Statistics on the maintenance collected under the CSA scheme are published in table 14 of the Child Support Agency quarterly summary of statistics, available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-support-agency-quarterly-summary-of-statistics-june-2017>

Maintenance Collected under CSA

QUARTER ENDING	MAINTENANCE COLLECTED (£M)	OF WHICH, CONTRIBUTION
		TOWARDS ARREARS (£M)
June 2010	188.9	32.3
March 2015	179.5	33.2

In addition to this, £5.8m of maintenance was collected under CMS through the Collect and Pay service in the quarter to March 2015. Statistics on the maintenance collected under the CMS are published in table 9 of the 2012 statutory child maintenance quarterly publication, available online at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/2012-statutory-child-maintenance-scheme-aug-2013-to-jun-2017-experimental>

**Helen Hayes:**

**[112559]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much child maintenance debt was collected in the financial years (a) 2015-16 and (b) 2016-17.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

Child Maintenance is collected by both the Child Support Agency and the Child Maintenance Service. The total amount of child maintenance collected and the contribution towards arrears for the Child Support Agency is outlined below:

YEAR	MAINTENANCE COLLECTED (£M)	OF WHICH, CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ARREARS (£M)
2015/16	629.2	106.7
2016/17	391.5	81.9

Statistics on the Maintenance Collected are published in table 14 of the CSA Quarterly Summary of Statistics for Great Britain, which can be found online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-support-agency-case-closures-june-2014-to-june-2017>

The total amount of child maintenance collected and the contribution towards arrears for the Child Maintenance Service is outlined below:

YEAR	MAINTENANCE COLLECTED (£M)	OF WHICH, CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ARREARS (£M)
2015/16	32.6	7.1
2016/17	56.3	12.0

Figures for maintenance collected are published in Table 9 of the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) Experimental Statistics, which can be found online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/2012-statutory-child-maintenance-scheme-aug-2013-to-jun-2017-experimental>

■ **Department for Work and Pensions: Official Hospitality**

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[112336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to his Department's publication Ministerial hospitality, 1 April to 30 June 2017, published on 13 October 2017, whether (a) representatives or employees of the firm which offered that hospitality and (b) lobbyists or contractors of those firms were present at those events.

**Damian Hinds:**

Representatives, employees, lobbyists or contractors of these firms would have been present at these events. Consistent with the Ministerial Code, Ministers meet many people and organisations and consider a wide range of views as part of the formulation of Government policy.

■ **Department for Work and Pensions: Staff**

**Ian C. Lucas:**

[\[111809\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many staff appointed after 24 June 2016 in his Department hold a post that includes work on the UK leaving the EU.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Department's EU exit work is being centrally co-ordinated but the breadth of issues to be considered, and the interactions between EU exit work and the Department's other priorities, mean that it is not possible to provide an estimate of how many staff have an element of their work in this area.

■ **Employment and Support Allowance: Ashfield**

**Gloria De Piero:**

[\[112614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of employment and support allowance support group appeals in Ashfield constituency resulted in decisions to reject applications being overturned in the last 12 months for which data is available.

**Gloria De Piero:**

[\[112615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of employment and support allowance work-related group appeals in Ashfield constituency resulted in decisions to reject applications being overturned in the last 12 months for which data is available.

**Sarah Newton:**

This information is not readily available at constituency level and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

**■ HSBC: Occupational Pensions**

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[112544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent representations he has received on the HSBC pension clawback policy.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[112545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent representations he has received on the defined benefit occupational pension scheme at HSBC.

**Guy Opperman:**

The Department for Work and Pensions has received a number of recent representations on the HSBC defined benefit occupational pension about its pension clawback policy from individuals and from Members of Parliament writing on their behalf.

This is one of a number of what are sometimes called integrated pension schemes. These schemes were designed to avoid additional contributions from sponsors and members by taking account of some or all of the State Pension when calculating the amount of occupational pension payable. The arrangement is set out in scheme rules which would have been available to members when they joined the scheme.

Such arrangements are not a requirement of Department for Work and Pensions legislation. It would not be right to compel schemes to withdraw this integration arrangement. That would amount to a retrospective change imposing significant additional unplanned costs. Pension scheme rules on the calculation of benefits are many and varied, and must remain a matter for employers and scheme trustees to decide.

**■ Jobcentre Plus: Procurement**

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[112602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assistance his Department provides to Jobcentre Plus managers to help (a) locate and (b) employ specialist support providers in their local areas.

**Damian Hinds:**

In every Jobcentre district there are Local Employer and Partnerships Teams dedicated to identifying skills needs, building and sharing labour market intelligence and advising on local recruitment opportunities.

Jobcentre staff are made aware of the specialist help available within their area, including information on services and support and referral arrangements, via the District Provision Tool. This digital tool lists available provision and support, in a district and nationally, delivered by Jobcentre Plus, Skills Funding Agency, Skills Development Scotland, Careers Wales, other providers, local authorities, independent and volunteer organisations.



**Chi Onwurah:**

**[112603]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much his Department has spent from the public purse through the dynamic purchasing system to employ local specialist support over the last 12 months; and what estimate he has made of the funding available for that specialist support in the next six months.

**Damian Hinds:**

A Dynamic Purchasing System was introduced in July 2016 as an additional way to purchase ad hoc Flexible Support Fund provision. Expenditure on contracts via this route is not separated from Flexible Support Fund provision purchased via other routes, and these figures could only be provided through a manual review of contracts at disproportionate cost.

The total budget available for the provision of the Flexible Support Fund in 2017/18 is £70m.

**Chi Onwurah:**

**[112604]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions his Department has had with the Employment Related Services Association supporting Jobcentre Plus managers to access specialist providers of employment support.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Department has regular discussions with the Employment Related Services Association (ERSA) about aspects of Employment Support and engage with them and the wider market when looking at provision.

## ■ **Jobcentre Plus: Training**

**Chi Onwurah:**

**[112601]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what training his Department provides to Jobcentre Plus work coaches to help them support people in the Work and Health Programme.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Work and Health Programme provides a tailored service specific to claimants' needs, focusing on individuals that can be supported by a contracted provision to address work and health barriers. The Department for Work and Pensions' communication teams are delivering tailored information to support the new process and to signpost staff to local support and the relevant instructions.

## ■ **Mortgages: Interest Payments**

**Frank Field:**

**[112519]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the number of claimants who will be affected by the Government's change of policy of switching support for mortgage interest to loan payments from April 2018.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave on 13 September 2017 to Question 9506 (<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-09-07/9506/>).

**Frank Field:****[112520]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he has conducted a distributional impact analysis of the Government's change of policy of switching support for mortgage interest to loan payments from April 2018.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

The Department has not undertaken a distributional analysis of impacts. All existing claimants will be offered a support for mortgage interest loan paid at the same rate that is currently available as part of their benefit entitlement. The new loans-based support for mortgage interest will only affect claimants' financial situation on the sale or transfer of the property, when the loan will be recovered from any available equity.

The Impact Assessment and Explanatory Memorandum published alongside the Loans for Mortgage Interest Regulations in July 2017 provide information on the affected groups ( <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/725/impacts> ).

**■ Pensions: Regulation****Stephen Lloyd:****[112253]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions his Department has had with the Financial Conduct Authority on making the provision of a pensions dashboard a new regulated activity.

**Guy Opperman:**

The DWP is leading a feasibility project to explore a range of issues that need to be considered in order to deliver the pensions dashboard.

Pensions dashboard would involve using and sharing personal information about pensions. Therefore, we would need to ensure that appropriate governance is in place so that the information on a dashboard is presented and used in a way that is in the customer's best interest.

The DWP is working with other government departments, industry, consumer facing organisations and the regulators – The Pensions Regulator and Financial Conduct Authority – to carry out the feasibility work, and is committed to publishing its findings by March 2018.

**■ Personal Independence Payment****Craig Tracey:****[111710]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Written Statement of 2 November 2017, HCSW218, what additional training and support will be made available to personal independence payment (PIP) assessors and other relevant healthcare professionals in light of the updated PIP assessment guidelines.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Department has engaged closely with the PIP Assessment Providers to ensure that the impact of the Upper Tribunal ruling has been fully understood. Both Assessment Providers have enhanced their existing training packages to ensure that when Health Professionals are assessing whether a person can carry out an activity safely, they also consider both the likelihood of the harm occurring and the severity and nature of the harm that might occur. This same approach also applies to the assessment for a need for supervision.

**Craig Tracey:**[\[111711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Written Statement of 2 November 2017, HCSW218, when the updated guidance will be applied to new and existing personal independence payment claimants; and when those claimants will receive the additional support outlined in that Statement.

**Kate Green:**[\[111724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Written Ministerial Statement of 2 November 2017, on social security, HCWS218, whether new and existing claimants will have to wait until 2022-23 for any additional support they are entitled to under the updated Personal Independence Payments Assessment Guidelines.

**Kate Green:**[\[111725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Written Ministerial Statement of 2 November 2017, on social security, HCWS218, whether previous personal independence payment (PIP) applicants with epilepsy who were unsuccessful under the previous PIP Assessment Guidelines will have their claims automatically reassessed in accordance with the updated PIP Assessment Guidelines.

**Kate Green:**[\[111726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Written Ministerial Statement of 2 November 2017, on social security, HCWS218, whether a fast-tracked reassessment process will be made available for previously personal independence payment (PIP) applicants with epilepsy within the updated PIP Assessment Guidelines.

**Kate Green:**[\[111727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Written Statement of 2 November 2017, HCWS218, on social security, how existing personal independence payment (PIP) claimants who were considered ineligible for support as a result of previous PIP assessment guidelines will be (a) identified and (b) assessed according to the updated PIP assessment guidelines.

**Sarah Newton:**

Claimants of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) will not have to wait until 2022/23 to benefit from these changes. New claimants will be assessed under the updated guidance from the 13<sup>th</sup> of November.

Existing claimants will have their awards reviewed under a separate exercise to ensure that their awards take into account the changes to the term 'safely' and the severity of harm. Those who were previously assessed as being ineligible for PIP from 9<sup>th</sup> of March will also have their award looked at again as part of this exercise. For those who see an increase in their award or are now entitled to PIP, we will be paying claimants their full entitlements back to the date of the judgment (9 March 2017).

This will be a complex exercise and it's important we get it right so we will begin testing the process from the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2017.

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[112629]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to his Department's personal independence payment (PIP) assessment guidance updated on 2 November 2017, how many PIP claimants in (a) the Brighton and Hove area and (b) nationally have been identified to date as being entitled to a higher rate of PIP following the decision to change the rules on claimants' ability to carry out unsupervised daily tasks safely; by what date his Department will have completed the task of going through all existing cases to identify people who might be entitled to a higher rate of PIP as a result of the judgment handed down on 9 March 2017; by what date all people entitled to that higher rate will be contacted by his Department; and if he will make a statement.

**Sarah Newton:**

New claims have been benefitting from the changes since the 13 November 2017; The exercise to ensure that all claims made prior to that are receiving the correct award based on the judgment handed down on the 9 March 2017 will be complex and it's important we get it right so we will begin testing the process from the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2017. Due to the scale involved in reconsidering approximately 1.5million claims, the exact duration will depend upon a number of factors such as the number of people affected.

At this time, we cannot say how many claimants in either the Brighton or Hove area, or nationally, have been identified as being entitled to a higher rate of PIP following the changes on claimants' ability to carry out unsupervised daily tasks safely.

## ■ Personal Independence Payment: Epilepsy

**Craig Tracey:**

**[111634]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 5 April 2017 to Question 69580, on personal independence payment: epilepsy, of the 7,100 re-assessment claims for people with a primary disabling condition of epilepsy, how many of those initial decisions were (a) upheld and (b) overturned.

**Sarah Newton:**

Of the 7,100 Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Mandatory Reconsiderations raised following Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claimants re-assessment for PIP where the primary disabling condition is epilepsy, referenced in the answer to PQ 69580;

- a) 6,100 were upheld
- b) 1,000 were overturned

### ■ **Poverty: Children**

**Dan Jarvis:**

[\[112731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 30 March 2017 to Question 69357, on poverty, how he plans to improve outcomes for disadvantaged children.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families, published on 4 April, provides a framework for a continued focus on improving long-term outcomes for workless families and their children. It set out national statutory and non-statutory indicators to track progress in tackling worklessness and associated disadvantages that can affect families' and children's lives: parental conflict, parental mental health, parental drug and alcohol dependency, problem debt and homelessness.

### ■ **Social Security Benefits**

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[112747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his policy is on continuing his Department's Your Simple Payment account service.

**Guy Opperman:**

The Simple Payment service contract with Citibank is due to end in March 2018. We are actively encouraging customers to use an existing bank account or to provide new bank, building society or credit union account details into which their payments can be transferred.

For those customers unable to provide an alternative method of payment a replacement service will be available. Contact with customers has already begun and there will be further contact and information as we approach transition. Customers will transition to the new service by the end of the current Citibank contract.

### ■ **Social Security Benefits: Glasgow South West**

**Chris Stephens:**

[\[112750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the benefits freeze on constituents in Glasgow South West.

**Chris Stephens:**

[\[112751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect of the benefits freeze on levels of homelessness; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Stephens:** [112752]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect of the benefits freeze on health and well-being; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Stephens:** [112753]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he has made an assessment of the effect of the benefits freeze on lone parent families; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Stephens:** [112754]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he has made an assessment of the effect of the benefits freeze on families with two or more children; and if he will make a statement.

**Caroline Dinanage:**

The analysis published at the time of the 2015 Budget assesses the impact of the measures in the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 including the benefit freeze. This includes an estimate that the benefit rate freeze would save £3.5 billion in 2019-20 (<https://www.parliament.uk/documents/impact-assessments/IA15-006C.pdf>). We are not able to provide constituency-level analysis for the full range of measures covered by our welfare reforms.

Our welfare reforms to working-age benefits are part of the Government's commitment to incentivise work and support working families. We know that work is the best route out of poverty and have strong evidence that a person's employment status has a direct impact on their mental health and wellbeing.

We are supporting people who have additional needs as a result of disability or illness and have maintained the value of payments to meet the extra costs they face. We now spend over £50 billion a year on benefits to support disabled people and people with health conditions, which represents an increase of more than £7 billion since 2010.

DWP is committed to ensuring homeless people get the appropriate support they need to move into work so they can succeed and rebuild their lives. The department provides a range of support to help homeless people into work, including access to the Jobcentre Plus employment offer with individual tailoring, access to hardship payments for claimants who have received sanctions and the homelessness easement to job-seeking requirements to be temporarily put on hold whilst homeless claimants find accommodation.

The Government is tackling the root causes of child poverty and disadvantage. We know that children living in workless households have significantly poorer outcomes than those in working families. Since April 2016, the Universal Credit childcare element has covered up to 85% of eligible childcare costs, compared with 70% in Working Tax Credit. The number of children living in households where no one is in work is now at its lowest level since comparable records began.

## ■ Universal Credit

**Luke Pollard:**

**[112498]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what guidance and training is available to work coaches to advise them on the circumstances in which they can temporarily switch off a universal credit claimant's work search and availability (a) in the case of a bereavement and (b) otherwise.

**Damian Hinds:**

All Work Coaches complete learning designed specifically for their role. This learning combines the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to coach claimants effectively so that they are able to identify for themselves what they need to do to find work and how best to do it.

Work Coaches are expected to recognise and consider the impact of complex circumstances, including emergency situations. By using the guidance available to them, along with their own discretion, Work Coaches are able to adjust the requirements they expect from claimants.

A copy of the Universal Credit Full Service guidance on 'Switching off work availability and work related activities' has been placed in the House of Commons library, and is available at the following link:

[http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2017-0556/24\\_CC-Switching\\_off\\_work\\_availability\\_and\\_work\\_related\\_activities.pdf](http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2017-0556/24_CC-Switching_off_work_availability_and_work_related_activities.pdf)

**Lesley Laird:**

**[112502]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that all eligible claimants who have been on one of the legacy benefits take up universal credit.

**Damian Hinds:**

Jobcentres engage ahead of and once Universal Credit Full Service has gone live to explain the changes. However, unless there is a relevant change of circumstance that would previously have prompted a new claim to another existing benefit, claimants will remain on their existing benefit until we begin transferring all claimants to Universal Credit in 2019.

## ■ Universal Credit: Appeals

**Luke Pollard:**

**[112497]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many universal credit sanctions were appealed on the grounds that a claimant's child had died or been stillborn within the last two years.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Department does not hold information on the reasons for appeals within its statistical datasets.



**■ Universal Credit: Complaints****Stephen Timms:** [\[112695\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many complaints his Department has received about online applications for universal credit being lost in the most recent month for which figures are available.

**Damian Hinds:**

The DWP complaints system does not collect information at this level of detail.

The only way to obtain specific complaints information about online applications for Universal Credit (UC) being lost would be to investigate each UC complaint on a case by case basis. This could only be retrieved at disproportionate cost to the Department.

**■ Universal Credit: Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath****Lesley Laird:** [\[112530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department plans to make an assessment of the effect of the roll-out of universal credit in Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath constituency; and if he will make a statement.

**Damian Hinds:**

We have made no assessment in Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath specifically, however we continue to evaluate progress as we roll out the full Universal Credit service nationally, in a careful and co-ordinated way, reviewing against key measures, to ensure safe and secure delivery.

**■ Universal Credit: Wolverhampton****Emma Reynolds:** [\[112495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people in Wolverhampton who will (a) receive universal credit, (b) qualify for an advanced payment of that benefit and (c) qualify for the maximum advance payment allowed of that benefit in its first year of roll-out.

**Lesley Laird:** [\[112529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the number of new claimants of universal credit in Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath constituency in (a) the next six months and (b) each year until 2022.

**Damian Hinds:**

Forecasts for Universal Credit below national level are not available.



## ■ Veterans: Means-tested Benefits

**Grahame Morris:**

**[111854]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will estimate the cost to the public purse of applying a disregard for Armed Forces Pensions when considering the eligibility for income-related benefits for former members of the Armed Forces.

**Damian Hinds:**

As I set out in my previous answer, on 27 October 2017 (to PQ [108445](#)), the Government has no plans to introduce a disregard for Armed Forces Pensions when considering the eligibility for income-related benefits for former members of the Armed Forces. It is not possible to provide an accurate estimate of the costs of introducing a disregard without incurring disproportionate costs. Any estimate would require a number of assumptions about who was receiving an armed forces pension and their needs, circumstances and income.

## ■ Voluntary Work: Charities

**Margaret Greenwood:**

**[111879]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking at (a) national and (b) regional level to support effective working relationships between jobcentres and charity retailers in the placement of volunteers in charity shops.

**Damian Hinds:**

Jobcentre Plus (JCP) employer and partner facing staff tailor their approach according to each location. A key part of their role is to promote volunteering and the Work Together initiative, and to engage on a regular basis with the voluntary sector, including charity retailers/shops to identify opportunities.

- The DWP National Employer and Partnership Team (NEPT) has 10 of the largest charity retailers on its portfolio including the British Heart Foundation, Mind and Scope.
- Between them these organisations have over 3,500 outlets bringing in over 62,000 volunteering and work experience opportunities across a range of job roles.
- Stores are nationwide so each district will have a variety of charities to choose from.
- The charities are happy to welcome all customers regardless of age or benefit.
- NEPT broker national agreements with the charities, encouraging each organisation to support Government initiatives.
- NEPT cascade these agreements through Jobcentre Plus District Managers to the local jobcentres so that work coaches can talk to their customers about the range of opportunities on offer.
- The cascaded information will detail specific opportunities e.g. volunteer campaigns, qualifications, new store openings, role specific campaigns.

- NEPT will also encourage and support regular and ongoing communication between local outlets and individual Jobcentre Plus offices
- At a District level Jobcentre Plus Employer Advisers also actively identify and engage with local employers and charitable organisations to source work experience opportunities.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ **Notification to Parliament of Contingent Liability: Mercator Ocean**

**Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation (Joseph Johnson):**

[\[HCWS255\]](#)

Today I will lay before Parliament a departmental minute describing the purchase of a shareholding in Mercator Océan and the resulting contingent liability.

Copernicus is the EU Earth Observation programme that monitors the global health of the planet. Mercator Océan is the 'Coordinating Entity' for the Copernicus Marine Services which provides free and open access to constantly updated information about the global ocean and the seas of the European region. Mercator-Océan is currently owned by five French public institutions with an interest/obligation to deliver research aligned to operational oceanography. It is broadening its ownership structure to be more in line with other delegated authorities.

The Secretary of State, acting through the Met Office, intends on 29 November 2017 to buy a 5% (€100k) share of Mercator Océan, alongside equivalent organisations from Norway, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

The organisation is a "Société Civile" (a not for profit organisation) under French law, meaning it has unlimited liability, and its shareholders are exposed to liability risk in proportion to their shareholding. A remote contingent liability will therefore exist as long as the Secretary of State retains a shareholding in Mercator Océan.

The organisation protects its shareholders through contractual mechanisms and through insurance. Also any residual claim would first be met from the assets of the company. Any contingent liability is considered to be extremely remote. In addition any contingent liability will cease to exist should the Met Office dispose of the shares, which it is able to do so at cost at any point within the first 3 years of ownership, and with 6 months' notice after this point.

Regrettably, on this occasion pressing commercial requirements to procure the shares have meant that it has not been possible to provide the full 14 Sitting Days prior to taking on the contingent liabilities.

### CABINET OFFICE

#### ■ **Social Care Update**

**First Secretary of State (Damian Green):**

[\[HCWS258\]](#)

Today the Government is setting out plans to publish a Green Paper by summer recess 2018 presenting its proposals to reform care and support for older people. Reform of this

vital sector has been a controversial issue for many years, but the realities of an ageing society mean that we must reach a sustainable settlement for the long-term.

To achieve reform where previous attempts have failed, we must look more broadly than social care services alone, and not focus narrowly on questions of means-testing, important though these are. Our vision for care must also incorporate the wider networks of support and services which help older people to live independently, including the crucial role of housing and the interaction with other public services. It must consider how care is provided at present and challenge the system to embrace new technology, innovation and workforce models which can deliver better quality and value.

To deliver a lasting solution, it is right that we take the time needed to debate these complex issues and listen to a range of perspectives to build consensus. For this reason, over the coming months, we will work with experts, stakeholders and people using care and support services to shape the long-term reform which is urgently needed. The Government has already established an Inter-Ministerial Group to oversee development of the Green Paper, and as part of this initial engagement we have asked a number of independent experts in this area to provide their views to the group. The Government will also engage closely with representatives from local government, the NHS, the voluntary sector and care providers, as well as with people who use care and support, to underpin development of the Green Paper. And when the Green Paper is published, it will then be subject to a full public consultation, providing a further opportunity for interested parties to give their views.

We recognise that many MPs and Peers are already engaging in the debate about the future of care and support, and we want to hear their views. I am therefore writing today to invite the Chairs of relevant All Party Parliamentary Groups to meet with me in the coming weeks to listen to their perspectives and priorities for the reform agenda.

Whilst the Green Paper will focus on care for older people, the Government recognises both the challenges faced by people of working age with care needs and the many common questions about the sustainability of the care system. Many of the discussions on the Green Paper reforms will impact on care and support for adults of all ages. However, to ensure that issues for working-age adults with care needs are considered in their own right, the Government will take forward a parallel programme of work, led jointly by the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government, which will focus on this group. This work will also be overseen by the Inter-Ministerial Group to ensure alignment with the Green Paper.

The Green Paper presents a unique opportunity to build consensus around reforms which can last. There is no escaping that building a sustainable care and support system will require choices about what that system should provide and how it is paid for. But getting this right promises a better system that everyone can have confidence in, where people understand their responsibilities, can prepare for the future, and know that the care they receive will be to a high standard and help them maintain their independence and wellbeing.

## COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Local Plans

#### **Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Sajid Javid):**

**[\[HCWS254\]](#)**

On 7 February we published our Housing White Paper in which we made clear that the housing market in this country is broken, and the cause is very simple: for too long, we haven't built enough homes. We have identified three systemic problems: not enough local authorities planning for the homes they need; house building that is simply too slow; and a construction industry that is too reliant on a small number of big players.

Up-to-date plans, including local plans, are essential because they provide clarity to communities and developers about where homes should be built and where not, so that development is planned rather than the result of speculative applications. At present too few places have an up-to-date plan.

On 21 July 2015 we made a Written Ministerial Statement to the House on this same subject. At that point 82 per cent of authorities had published a Local Plan under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 regime. Today that figure stands at 92 per cent.

In the 13 years that have passed since the 2004 Act received Royal Assent, over 70 local planning authorities have yet to adopt a plan and of those 27 authorities still have failed to reach the publication stage. I am particularly concerned about the 15 local planning authorities that have recently either failed the duty to cooperate or failed to meet the deadlines set out in their Local Development Schemes, the public timetable that all local planning authorities are required to put in place.

I am therefore writing today to the local planning authorities of:

Basildon, Brentwood, Bolsover, Calderdale, Castle Point, Eastleigh, Liverpool, Mansfield, North East Derbyshire, Northumberland, Runnymede, St Albans, Thanet, Wirral and York.

These letters will start the formal process of intervention we set out in the Housing White Paper. We set out that we will prioritise intervention where:

- the least progress in plan-making has been made
- policies in plans had not been kept up to date
- there was higher housing pressure; and
- intervention would have the greatest impact in accelerating Local Plan production

We also made clear that decisions on intervention will also be informed by the wider planning context in each area (specifically, the extent to which authorities are working cooperatively to put strategic plans in place, and the potential impact that not having a plan has on neighbourhood planning activity).

I am writing today to give the local authorities the opportunity to put forward any exceptional circumstances, by 31 January 2018, which, in their view, justify their failure to produce a Local Plan under the 2004 Act regime. I will take responses received into account before any final decisions on intervention are taken.

The remaining authorities who are not making progress on their plan-making and fail to publish a plan for consultation, submit a plan to examination or to keep policies in plans up to date are on notice that consistent failure to make sufficient progress will no longer be tolerated. My Department will begin formally considering the case for intervention as deadlines are missed.

We will also bring forward the important provisions we legislated for earlier in the year through the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. I will shortly lay the Regulations under section 12 to prescribe that local planning authorities must review their plans every five years.

We will also shortly be commencing Section 8 of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 which will place a requirement on all local planning authorities to have plans in place for their area which set out their strategic policies. Those strategic priorities are set out at paragraph 156 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

As we set out in July 2015 we recognise that production of Local Plans is resource intensive. On 19 October 2017 we laid the regulations which, subject to approval of both Houses, will bring forward our White Paper commitment to increase planning fees by 20%. This delivers on our commitment to increase resources for local planning authorities where they commit to invest the additional fee income in their planning department. All local planning authorities in England have given this commitment. We will shortly announce details of the £25m of funding to help local authorities plan for new homes and infrastructure in their area that we announced in the White Paper.

We have, and we will continue to, support local planning authorities in plan-making, through the Planning Advisory Service, with support from officials of my Department and the Planning Inspectorate.

Where local planning authorities continue to fail to produce a plan to provide certainty to their community on where future development will be brought forward, we will use our intervention powers to ensure plans are put in place.

## DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Civil Society Strategy

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport**  
**(Tracey Crouch):**

[\[HCWS252\]](#)

I wish to inform the House today of the government's intention to develop a Civil Society Strategy.

Civil society plays a vital role in the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities across our country, and in helping to address some burning injustices.

This Strategy will provide an opportunity to explore ways to build new partnerships within and between sectors and communities, so that we can better mobilise resources and expertise and find practical new solutions to the problems we face. It will reaffirm the value that government places on civil society. It will explore what more government can do to support its work.

Civil Society in England is broad. It encompasses the work of individuals, charities, youth organisations and communities. Civil Society is increasingly diverse, with growing numbers of social enterprises, mission led businesses and public service mutuals, as well as many more private businesses and investors that want to make a meaningful contribution.

I would like the Strategy to help shape the future direction for our work with and for civil society, and encompass all who have a role to play in building a stronger and fairer society.

It will be developed through dialogue and debate with people, groups, and organisations across government, businesses and wider civil society. It will build on engagements to date, including work with young people and youth organisations, as well as work to grow social impact investing, among others.

The Office for Civil Society, in the Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport, will lead this work, with input from the Department for Communities and Local Government and other departments. A listening exercise will be launched in the new year and findings reported later in the year.

## ■ Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council

**Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Karen Bradley):**

[\[HCWS250\]](#)

The Education, Youth, Culture and Sport (EYCS) Council will take place in Brussels on 20 and 21 November 2017. The UK's Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU will represent the interests of the UK at the Youth, Culture and Sport sessions of this Council.

**Youth** The Council will seek to gain a General Approach among EU Member States on the proposals laying down the framework for the European Solidarity Corps. The UK is proposing to vote in favour, subject to scrutiny. Also tabled is the adoption of draft Council conclusions on Smart Youth Work, which the UK supports. This will be followed by a policy debate as proposed by the Presidency. The Commission will also provide information on a new narrative for Europe.

**Culture/Audiovisual** The Council will begin by presenting, for adoption, draft Council conclusions on promoting access to culture via digital means, which will have a focus on audience development. The UK intends to support the adoption of these conclusions. This will be followed by a policy debate on the role of culture in building cohesive societies in Europe, as proposed by the Presidency.

On Audiovisual, the Presidency is expected to provide an update on the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD). This update will act as the first reading since the

General Approach was achieved at the last EYCS Council in May 2017. The discussion is expected to focus on the progress, thus far, of Trilogue discussions between the Council and the European Parliament.

In addition to these files, the German delegation will provide information pertaining to the file on the Regulation of the Import Cultural Goods. This file is at an early discussion stage, however it is anticipated that it will be implemented by January 2019, DCMS and HMRC are engaging with the Member States in developing this policy.

Additional agenda items include for information items on international cultural relations, offences relating to cultural property, defense of cultural heritage, re-establishing Europe through culture and the mobility of artists.

**Sport** There will be two non-legislative activities tabled regarding sport. Firstly, the adoption of the draft Council conclusions on the role of coaches in society. Secondly, adoption of the Council resolution on the EU structured dialogue on sport. The UK intends to support the adoption of both sets of conclusions. These will be followed by a policy debate on the main challenges facing sport in the 21st century and cooperation between the EU, governments and sport movement, as proposed by the Presidency in accordance with the Council Rules of Procedure

Information will be provided from the EU Member States representatives in the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA Foundation Board). This will act as a follow up to WADA meetings in Seoul on 15-16 November 2017. The Greek delegation will also provide information to the Council on supporting the Olympic Truce during the 2018 Winter Olympic Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

**Other** The Council will be receiving information from the Bulgarian delegation, as the incoming presidency in the first half of 2018, to set out their work programme for the next six months.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Schools and Early Years update

**Minister of State for Children and Families (Mr Robert Goodwill):** [\[HCWS260\]](#)

Today the Government is launching a public consultation on its proposed approach to revising the entitlement criteria for free school meals and the early years pupil premium, in light of the national roll out of Universal Credit.

Universal Credit is replacing a number of qualifying benefits for free school meals, such as Job Seeker's Allowance, Child's Tax Credit and Income Support.

Subject to the outcome of this consultation, we propose to introduce a net earned income threshold of £7,400 per annum for those in receipt of Universal Credit. A typical family earning around £7,400 per annum would, depending on their exact circumstances, have a total household income between £18,000 and £24,000 once benefits are taken into account. A threshold of £7,400 will increase the free school meals cohort by approximately 5% once Universal Credit is fully rolled out and in steady state. This



equates to approximately 50,000 additional pupils being eligible to receive a nutritious free school meal than currently.

Furthermore, to ensure that no child who currently benefits from a free school meal loses this entitlement as a result of this criteria change, we aim to protect current beneficiaries' eligibility up until the end of the roll-out of Universal Credit. From that point on, all children should retain this protection for the rest of their current phase of education.

The economic eligibility criteria for the early years pupil premium are the same as for free school meals. We believe that this consistency is important so that the most disadvantaged families benefit from this additional funding across the whole age range. As such, we propose to apply the same threshold as mentioned above for free school meals to the early years pupil premium, and to mirror the protection arrangements for current beneficiaries during the UC roll-out period.

If, following the public consultation and subject to the will of the House, the Government decides to take forward its proposals, we expect the revised regulations to come into force in April 2018.

The '*Eligibility for free school meals and early years pupil premium under Universal Credit*' consultation will commence today and run for eight weeks. The consultation document containing full details of the proposals and inviting responses will be published on the Department for Education's website. Copies of the consultation document will also be placed in the House Libraries.

**Attachments:**

1. Consultation on FSM and EYPP eligibility under UC [Consultation - Free school meals and EYPP under Universal Credit.pdf]

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Water protocol in England and Wales

**Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Michael Gove):**  
[\[HCWS251\]](#)

In conjunction with the Secretary of State for Wales I will today lay before the House a water protocol for England and Wales, agreed between the UK government and the Welsh Government. The protocol, which the Welsh Ministers are laying in the National Assembly for Wales in parallel, is made under section 50 of the Wales Act 2017.

The protocol reaffirms the close working between the two governments on matters relating to water resources, water supply and water quality. It underlines our commitment that no action or inaction by either administration should have any serious adverse impact on either England or Wales and crucially, that the interests of water consumers on both sides of our borders are safeguarded.

Agreement of the protocol paves the way for the Secretary of State's powers of intervention in relation to water to be repealed. These powers, in the Government of Wales Act 2006, enable the Secretary of State to intervene if they believe an Assembly

Bill, or the exercise of a devolved function, risks having a serious adverse impact on water resources, water supply or water quality in England.

The protocol replaces these intervention powers with a reciprocal agreement. The intervention powers will be repealed when the new reserved powers model of Welsh devolution come into effect on 1 April 2018.

## EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

### ■ General Affairs Council November 2017

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Mr Steve Baker):** [\[HCWS248\]](#)

My hon. Friend, the Lord Callanan, Minister of State for Exiting the European Union, has made the following statement:

I will be attending the General Affairs Council in Brussels on 20 November 2017 to represent the UK's interests. Until we leave the European Union, we remain committed to fulfilling our rights and obligations as a full member.

The provisional agenda includes:

#### **Preparation of the European Council, 14-15 December 2017**

There will be a discussion on the agenda for the December European Council. This includes: defence, focusing on the launch of PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) and a review of EU-NATO cooperation; social, education and culture, which includes a follow up to the November Gothenburg Social Summit; migration, involving a leaders' debate on both the internal and external dimensions of migration as part of Donald Tusk's Leader's Agenda; and external relations.

#### **European Council follow-up**

The Presidency will give an update on the implementation of the October European Council Conclusions on migration, digital Europe, security and defence, and external relations.

#### **Legislative Programming - Commission's Work Programme for 2018 (CWP 2018)**

Commission First Vice-President Frans Timmermans will present the CWP 2018, which sets out the legislation and other initiatives that the Commission intends to present to the Council of Ministers and European Parliament over the coming year.

#### **Interinstitutional Agreements (IIA) Implementation**

The Presidency will lay out what progress has been made on the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making (IIA), signed by the Presidents of the European Council, Commission and Parliament in April 2016. The IIA set out the commitments of these institutions regarding better regulation, interinstitutional relations and the legislative process.

## European Semester 2018

The Presidency will introduce the timetable for the European Semester 2018, which will provide a framework for the coordination of economic policies across the EU.

## HOME OFFICE

### ■ Disclosure and Barring Service Annual Report and Accounts 2016-17

**The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability (Victoria Atkins):** [\[HCWS256\]](#)

The 2016-17 Annual Report and Accounts for the Disclosure and Barring Service (HC 178) is being laid before the House today and published on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). Copies will be available in the Vote Office.

### ■ Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000: Consultation on revised Codes of Practice

**The Minister of State for Security (Mr Ben Wallace):** [\[HCWS257\]](#)

I am today publishing three revised codes of practice for consultation under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

The consultation is in relation to the following codes:

1. The Covert Surveillance and Property Interference Code of Practice.
2. The Covert Human Intelligence Sources Code of Practice

These codes provide guidance on the authorisation of directed surveillance, intrusive surveillance and covert human intelligence sources under Part 2 of RIPA, as well as property interference under the Police Act 1997 and Intelligence Services Act 1994. These powers are available to law enforcement and intelligence agencies as well as a number of other public authorities specified under RIPA, for use where necessary and proportionate for purposes such as the prevention or detection of crime, and the protection of national security. The codes reinforce the safeguards provided by the Acts, for the careful and lawful deployment, management and oversight of the powers.

3. The Investigation of Protected Information Code of Practice

This code sets out guidance on the use of powers under Part 3 of RIPA governing the investigation of protected electronic information, usually in pursuance of a criminal investigation.

The three codes are being updated to reflect changes in the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 which will impact on the use of the powers covered by the codes. In particular the codes reflect the creation of the new Investigatory Powers Commissioner, who has replaced the three existing oversight bodies, the requirement for public authorities to report errors to the Commissioner, and the new arrangements for authorisation of equipment interference which will apply in future to some techniques currently authorised under property interference provisions, and be relevant for use of the power under Part 3

of RIPA. At the same time the guidance in the codes under Part 2 of RIPA are being updated to reflect best practice in authorisation and management of the powers, to strengthen the safeguards relating to handling of confidential or legally privileged material, and to clarify the application of the RIPA framework to online investigation and research.

The consultation will last for six weeks. Copies of the consultation document and draft codes will be placed in the House Library. Online versions will be available on the [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### ■ Northern Ireland Universal Credit implementation - non-consensual conception exception

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Chloe Smith):**  
[\[HCWS259\]](#)

In the light of recent questions in the House, I wish to set out the policy and respective responsibilities regarding the non-consensual conception exception to the policy to provide additional support in Child Tax Credit and Universal Credit, and its interaction with Northern Ireland criminal law.

There has been particular focus on section 5 of the Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967. This provides that where a relevant offence has been committed, it shall be the duty of every other person who knows or believes that the offence has been committed and that has information which is likely to secure, or to be of material assistance in securing the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of any person for that offence, to give the information, otherwise they shall be guilty of an offence, unless they have a reasonable excuse. This provision is not new, nor has it been affected in any way by the implementation of Universal Credit in Northern Ireland. Its implications for those who are victims of crime, including rape, date back to 1967. And as criminal law is a devolved matter, the UK Government has no role in determining the appropriateness of this particular provision, nor in proposing any amendment to it. What is more, we understand that there has not been a single prosecution of a victim of rape under section 5 of the 1967 Act in 50 years. That means that there is no recorded case where it has been considered that those limbs of the prosecutorial test have been met since 1967.

As to the non-consensual conception exception more broadly, it is an important part of the two-child limit policy. It is in place to protect those who are not always able to make choices about the number of children in their family. But given its complex and sensitive nature, great care is taken in its application right across the United Kingdom. And we have worked with the Department for Communities, given that the administration of Universal Credit is a devolved matter, to ensure the same is true in Northern Ireland.

In particular, the legal position is made very clear on the forms and guidance for Child Tax Credits and Universal Credit, so that both the claimant and the third party professional are clear before any disclosure is made:

*“Please be aware, that in Northern Ireland, if the third party knows or believes that a relevant offence (such as rape) has been committed, the third party will normally have a duty to inform the police of any information that is likely to secure, or to be of material assistance in securing, the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of someone for that offence”.*

In addition, claimants applying for this exception will be told that they do not have to tell the third party professional the name of the child’s other biological parent. Nor is there a requirement on the approved third party professional to seek any further evidence to confirm the circumstances around the conception of the child beyond what the claimant has described to them. The role of a third party professional will simply be to confirm, by ticking boxes on a form, that the claimant has made a declaration to them which is consistent with the criteria for the non-consensual conception exception in relation to their child. No officials of either the UK Government or the Northern Ireland Civil Service will question a claimant about an incident. You can find details of the guidance and the forms online ( <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/form-ncc1niis-support-child-conceived-without-your-consent> ).

Taken as a whole, therefore, the implementation of Universal Credit in Northern Ireland has been undertaken in a way that reflects the interests of claimants on the one hand, and the interests of those taxpayers who support themselves solely through work on the other. Ultimately, however, given the devolution settlement, the questions raised are properly for a restored Northern Ireland Executive.

## PRIME MINISTER

### ■ Machinery of Government Change: Gender Recognition Act

**Prime Minister (Mrs Theresa May):**

**[[HCWS253](#)]**

This written statement confirms that responsibility for the Gender Recognition Act 2004 will transfer from the Ministry of Justice to the Government Equalities Office. This change will be effective immediately.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Pensions

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Pensions & Financial Inclusion (Guy Opperman):**

**[[HCWS249](#)]**

The Government has now completed the examination of the cap that applies to member-borne charges in default investment funds within defined contribution (DC) pension schemes used for automatic enrolment (AE).

After seeking a range of industry and consumer views and considering the findings of the recent Pension Charges Survey, which captures data from providers covering 14.4 million

scheme members, we do not feel that now is the right time to change the level or scope of the cap.

The cap is working broadly as intended, helping to drive down member-borne costs, whilst allowing flexibility to allow asset diversity or tailored services for members and employers. It appears some small schemes are less able to take advantage of the most competitive market rates, and we have launched proposals to simplify the scheme consolidation process. This will allow smaller schemes who cannot secure value for money in the long term to exit the market and secure a better deal for their members elsewhere.

There continues to be a lack of transparency on transaction costs, which is hindering trustees and Independent Governance Committees' (IGC) attempts to monitor and evaluate whether these represent value. We believe that it is vital to get disclosure right before deciding on whether a cap on transaction costs is appropriate. Recently announced DWP legislative proposals will ensure trustees have sight of these costs and can give that information to members. The FCA is developing similar rules for providers.

The Government remains committed to ensuring AE members are protected from unreasonable and unfair charges, and recognises that there is on-going concern amongst consumers.

We will actively monitor the situation, by reviewing the information which trustees of DC schemes will be required to publish from April 2018, and which providers will publish in due course, to monitor whether the downward trend in charges is continuing.

That will also inform our next review. In 2020 we intend to examine the level and scope of the charge cap, as well as permitted charging structures, to see whether a change is needed to protect members. This will also allow us to evaluate the effects of the next stage of AE and the new master trust and transaction costs regimes.

Whilst we are not pre-judging the decision, we expect there to be a much clearer case for change in 2020.