



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 11 January 2018 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:26 P.M., 11 January 2018). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ **British Business Bank: Loans****Diana Johnson:****[121468]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much loan funding was provided by the British Business Bank by NUTS 1 region in each year since 2013-14.

Andrew Griffiths:

The British Business Bank provides funds and guarantees to private sector partners, enabling them to finance a greater number of smaller businesses (either through debt or equity).

Additionally the Bank delivers a number of regional funds including Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund and Midlands Engine Investment Fund, and anticipates the launch of Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Fund in Spring 2018. These funds include a mixture of debt and equity funding.

The following tables shows figures for debt programmes for each FY since 2013/14:

BBB FLOW OF DEBT FUNDING BY FY*

	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17
East Midlands	72,386,366	140,250,914	308,530,985	183,988,271
East of England	143,190,179	55,802,099	424,220,179	400,741,313
London	1,038,250,763	776,330,176	1,038,618,734	1,670,112,945
North East	193,138,738	37,732,958	43,427,554	218,883,429
North West	201,053,761	351,155,990	430,621,254	326,036,311
South East	341,467,807	609,890,567	701,148,582	377,032,104
South West	141,141,660	70,948,681	180,186,344	232,027,294
West Midlands	146,797,170	229,676,477	243,970,679	347,596,847
Yorkshire and Humber	450,408,230	189,189,923	561,138,552	319,446,648

CTD Devolved Admins and Other

	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17
Scotland	90,299,306	55,354,003	65,638,590	244,079,333
Wales	25,764,981	40,634,299	227,020,046	83,795,193
Northern Ireland	8,057,260	11,916,650	14,704,296	15,588,272
Not Available	1,559,500	3,155,090	180,514,809	36,264,010
Total	2,853,515,720	2,572,037,827	4,419,740,604	4,455,591,970

* Includes all Investment programme figures for each FY, which will include equity funding.

* Figures included from the following programmes: Enterprise Finance Guarantee, H2G, Investment Programme and ENABLE programmes

* The SUL programme is included on a separate tab as the Bank is unable to produce figures matching NUTS1 boundaries

STARTUP LOAN CO. FLOW OF LENDING BY FY*

	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17
East Midlands	3.99	3.24	3.65	5.00
East of England	4.09	4.17	3.86	6.28
London	24.36	16.13	15.10	20.17
North East	3.27	2.85	3.33	4.89
North West	10.63	7.65	6.13	9.55
South East	6.20	6.06	5.59	8.45
South West	4.05	6.21	6.03	8.24
West Midlands	5.25	5.74	5.79	7.94
Yorkshire and Humber	5.50	5.20	5.75	8.31
Scotland	0.85	4.04	3.98	6.16
Wales	1.29	4.05	3.87	4.77

STARTUP LOAN CO. FLOW OF LENDING BY FY*

Northern Ireland	0.35	1.19	1.05	1.48
Total	69.84	66.53	64.11	91.25

* the geographical boundaries used to report lending in this table differ slightly from the NUTS1 definition.

■ British Business Bank: Staff

Diana Johnson: [\[121469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many full time equivalent staff are employed by the British Business Bank in each NUTS 1 region.

Andrew Griffiths:

As at January 2018, the British Business Bank has 229 FTE employees in the Yorkshire and Humber, and London NUTS1 regions – 80 in Yorkshire and Humber; and 149 in London. This includes figures for SULCo, who merged with the Business Bank on 1st April 2017.

As noted in the Industrial Strategy White Paper, British Business Bank are rolling out a network of regional managers by autumn 2018 to ensure businesses across the UK know how to access sources of investment. The network will cover England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, with managers responding to a region's particular needs and acting as convenors to improve collaboration, sharing of expertise and the creation of networks of private and public partners.

■ Business: Government Assistance

Nic Dakin: [\[121437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Industrial Strategy, published in November 2017, (a) what additional funding will be made available and (b) what the length of the funding settlement will be for Growth Hubs.

Andrew Griffiths:

Through the Industrial Strategy White paper we have announced our intention to ensure all businesses in every region have access to a 'Growth Hub'. We will build on this programme, providing continued funding to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) for Growth Hubs to enable them to carry on building their reach, developing peer to peer networks and signposting businesses to the best support available from the private and public sectors.

We will confirm the level and duration of funding to be awarded to LEPs for their Growth Hubs at the earliest possible opportunity.

Nic Dakin:

[\[121438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the time period is for the funding settlement for Growth Hubs which the Government committed itself to in its Industrial Strategy.

Andrew Griffiths:

Through the Industrial Strategy White paper we have announced our intention to ensure all businesses in every region have access to a 'Growth Hub'. We will build on this programme, providing continued funding to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) for Growth Hubs to enable them to carry on building their reach, developing peer to peer networks and signposting businesses to the best support available from the private and public sectors.

We will confirm the level and duration of funding to be awarded to LEPs for their Growth Hubs at the earliest possible opportunity.

■ **Construction: Industrial Health and Safety**

Bill Esterson:

[\[121627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 22 December 2017 to Question 120511, on Construction: Industrial Health and Safety, what steps he is taking to support the implementation by industry of the Construction Skills Certification Scheme.

Andrew Griffiths:

The Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) board, which is representative of Trade bodies in the sector and employee representatives, is best placed to continue the development of the scheme. The CSCS board has successfully run the scheme for over 20 years.

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

Tom Brake:

[\[120829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the (a) amount of time and (b) resources that his Department allocated to the production of impact assessments on the UK leaving the EU; and on what date work on those impact assessments started.

Andrew Griffiths:

Impact Assessments, typically related to specific new primary legislation before Parliament, are narrowly defined. For example, the Government laid an impact assessment alongside the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill, which can be found on our website.

Civil servants conduct any Impact Assessments related to legislation as business as usual. Our broader analysis continues.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Public Expenditure**Tommy Sheppard:** [\[121505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which fruitless payments in excess of £30,000 her Department has made by (a) recipient of each such payment, (b) purpose of each such payment, (c) value of each such payment and (d) reason that payment was classified as fruitless in the 2017-18 financial year to date.

Andrew Griffiths:

Disclosure of any fruitless payments made in 2017-18 will be made in accordance with the requirements set out in Managing Public Money and published in the Department's 2017/18 Annual Report and Accounts, planned for July 2018. The Department waits until its Annual Accounts to publish this information so that the National Audit Office can verify to the House that any disclosures made meet audit standards.

■ Electricity Generation: Carbon Emissions**Tom Brake:** [\[121302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of (a) replacing the Emissions Trading System modernisation funding and (b) redirecting investment in coal power stations to clean energy after the UK leaves the EU.

Claire Perry:

Regarding (a), as the Clean Growth Strategy sets out, the Government is considering the UK's future participation in the EU Emissions Trading System after our exit from the EU and we remain firmly committed to carbon pricing as an emissions reduction tool. We will seek to ensure that any future approach is at least as ambitious as the existing scheme and provide a smooth transition for the relevant sectors.

Regarding (b), the Government makes no investment in coal power. We have this month set out our proposals for ending unabated coal power generation from 2025. This policy sends a clear signal to investors in new generation capacity that we are moving to a cleaner electricity system, guaranteeing reductions in CO2 and air pollution by 2025.

■ Energy: Prices**Drew Hendry:** [\[121182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy what steps his Department is taking to ensure that consumers on default or standard variable energy tariffs get a fairer deal.

Drew Hendry: [\[121183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to address the loyalty penalty faced by consumers who do not switch energy providers.

Andrew Griffiths:

The Government published the draft Domestic Gas & Electricity (Tariff Cap) Bill which would require Ofgem to impose a tariff cap on domestic standard variable and default tariffs with some exceptions. The draft Bill is currently undergoing pre-legislative scrutiny by the BEIS Select Committee.

Green Deal Scheme: Fraud**Dr Lisa Cameron:**[\[120837\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his Department's policy is on tackling incidences of mis-selling of green energy deals.

Claire Perry:

The Department takes very seriously the issue of mis-selling.

To help improve quality and consumer confidence, the Government commissioned the independent Each Home Counts review, led by Dr. Peter Bonfield, which published its findings in December 2016. Implementation of Each Home Counts is being led by industry with the support of Government, in line with the recommendations of the review. One of the main recommendations from the Review was to establish a quality mark for retrofit energy efficiency and renewable energy measures to help offer a clear and consistent standard for consumers. Those businesses who wish to use the quality mark will need to adhere to a customer charter and code of conduct which will ensure appropriate levels of consumer protection including around mis-selling.

The Department has specific responsibilities for certain schemes and I set out below steps taken to protect consumers in key areas.

Green Deal: The Green Deal helps consumers make energy-saving improvements to their properties with the cost repaid via the consumer's electricity bill. There is an established process for handling complaints. In the first instance, consumers should approach their Green Deal Provider. Where the Green Deal Provider is unable to resolve the complaint satisfactorily, the consumer may approach the Green Deal Ombudsman or for complaints relating to the mis-selling of credit, the Financial Ombudsman Service. The consumer redress process is set out in The Green Deal Framework (Disclosure, Acknowledgment, Redress etc.) Regulations, and is supplemented by the Green Deal Code of Practice. Under certain circumstances, where a consumer is not satisfied with the decision of the relevant Ombudsman, the regulations also allow for cases to be referred to the Secretary of State, who may impose reduction or cancellation of Green Deal plans.

Renewable Heat Incentive and Feed-in Tariff: The Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme provides financial incentives to install renewable heating systems to support the transition to low-carbon heating in the UK. The Feed-in Tariff scheme is a programme designed to promote the uptake of small-scale renewable and low-carbon electricity generation technologies. It is a key condition of both schemes that the renewable energy technology product and the installer are certified to the

standards of the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS), a third party certification scheme. This ensures that people who buy renewable energy systems and apply to these schemes are covered by consumer protection schemes governing the quality and performance of the products, as well as the quality of the installation and service they receive from the installer.

Installers are required to be a member of a Consumer Code, backed by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute, which covers advertising and promotion, behaviour of sales staff, proposals, estimates and quotes, terms of business, cancellation rights, deposits and prepayments, guarantees, maintenance and service agreements and service and repair.

Complaints about the installed product, the installation, or the installer can be submitted to the MCS. A Complaint Guidelines document is published on the Scheme's website. Depending on the nature of the complaint, it is then dealt with by the MCS Administrator, the relevant Certification Body which certificated the product or the installer, or the Consumer Code of which the installer is a member.

Consumers not covered by the protections above should contact their local Trading Standards.

Dr Lisa Cameron:

[\[120838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what powers are available to Ofgem to protect consumers against fraud by green deal energy providers.

Claire Perry:

The Green Deal is administered by the Green Deal Oversight and Registration Body (GD ORB) under The Green Deal Framework (Disclosure Acknowledgement, Redress etc) Regulations 2012. The GD ORB assesses applicant Green Deal Providers against the criteria set out in the Regulations to determine whether they are a fit person to act as a Green Deal Provider. The GD ORB also monitors compliance against the Green Deal Code of Practice and use of the Green Deal Quality Mark. These processes seek to ensure that Green Deal Providers operate to a high standard for the benefit of all scheme stakeholders, and that consumers entering Green Deal plans are appropriately protected. Where things go wrong, the Green Deal Ombudsman is available to consumers to seek redress and the Regulations provide remedies for consumer redress. We are exploring ways to improve consumer protection in the area through the Each Home Counts Review and the call for evidence on the Green Deal Framework which closed on 23 November 2017. Ofgem does not have powers under the Framework Regulations.

■ Green Finance Task Force

Dr David Drew:

[\[121301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish the membership of the Green Finance Taskforce and each such member's business interests and affiliation.

Claire Perry:

The list of Green Finance Taskforce members, including their full job titles and organisations, is published on the Department's webpage on green finance:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/green-finance>

■ Home Energy and Lifestyle Management**Alan Brown:****[121266]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2017 to Question 120003, what steps he has taken to ensure that the installation of photovoltaics at those home complied with the funding rules of the Green Deal; and if he will make a statement.

Claire Perry:

[Holding answer 10 January 2018]: All Green Deal Providers are required by legislation to follow the Green Deal Code of Practice, which is designed to ensure that all Green Deal Participants operate fairly and transparently, deliver good customer service and provide appropriate redress mechanisms for customers. Where such Providers fail to adhere to the Code of Practice, sanctions may be imposed by the Secretary of State. Providers may be subject to audit by the Green Deal Oversight and Registration Body to assess their compliance with the Code of Practice. The Green Deal Provider referred to in Question 120003, Home Energy and Lifestyle Management Systems (HELMS), was subject to such a sanction in 2015, following an audit and investigation process. The Green Deal Code of Practice requires that Green Deal Installers providing photovoltaics are certified against, and comply with, the requirements of the Microgeneration Certification Scheme and the Microgeneration Installation Standard: MCS 023.

There have been numerous complaints made about HELMS in relation to Green Deal Plans. The cases are complex and take time to resolve. The department is working with relevant parties to seek a satisfactory resolution to them as soon as possible.

Alan Brown:**[121267]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2017 to Question 120003, on Home Energy and Lifestyle Management, how many of those homes received (a) partial write off and (b) full cancellation of Green Deal Finance loans.

Claire Perry:

[Holding answer 10 January 2018]: The answer to question 120003 stated that, since the start of the Green Deal in 2013, photovoltaics were installed in 4,263 homes through Green Deal plans provided by Home Energy Lifestyle Management Systems (HELMS).

To date, there have been no (a) partial write-offs or (b) full cancellation of any of these plans. In respect of one such plan, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State issued in November 2017 a notice of intention to impose a sanction of cancellation. Following this, representations have been made by interested parties and my rt. hon.

Friend the Secretary of State is considering these before taking a final decision regarding any sanction.

■ Independent Industrial Strategy Council

Diana Johnson: [\[121472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, where the independent Industrial Strategy Council will be based when it is created in 2018.

Claire Perry:

We expect the Council's membership to be multidisciplinary and include leading business men and women, investors, economists and academics from across the country. Our aim is for it to start work in spring 2018 and envisage that it will meet four times a year in a convenient location for all members.

■ Industry: Disability

Dr Lisa Cameron: [R] [\[903241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues to ensure that the industrial strategy does not discriminate against disabled people.

Claire Perry:

Cabinet colleagues were consulted on the Industrial Strategy White Paper, as part of the Cabinet Committee write round process.

The White Paper highlights our plans to achieve our ambition to see one million more disabled people in employment in the UK by 2027.

The equality impact assessments on new policies within the White Paper showed no adverse impact on disabled people.

■ Insolvency

Bill Esterson: [\[121628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 22 December 2017 to Question 120505, what discussions he has had with representatives of major banks on reforms to the insolvency framework since the publication of the summary of responses to the consultation.

Andrew Griffiths:

In late 2016 and 2017 officials from the Insolvency Service held meetings with a wide range of interested parties, including members and representatives of the banking and financial services sector, to discuss the proposed reforms to the corporate insolvency framework that were the subject of the 2016 consultation.

In December 2017 the then Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility (Margot James), met with UK Finance to discuss various matters in her ministerial portfolio including the possible reforms to corporate insolvency discussed in the 2016 consultation.

■ Iron and Steel: Manufacturing Industries

Stephanie Peacock: [\[121134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what meetings he has had with trades unions in the past 12 months on developing a commercially sustainable proposition for the steel sector.

Claire Perry:

As part of our on-going engagement with the steel industry, I can confirm that Ministers and officials regularly engage with the three main unions representing the steel industry (Community, GMB, and Unite) to discuss a range of issues concerning the steel industry.

■ Iron and Steel: Research

Stephanie Peacock: [\[121137\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 23 November 2017 to Question 114581 on iron and steel: research, if he will publish the results of the independent capability and capacity study.

Claire Perry:

The Government published the independent study into the 'Future capacities and capabilities of the UK steel industry' on the Gov.uk website on 15 December 2017.

The direct link is <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-steel-industry-future-market-opportunities>

■ Manufacturing Industries: Easington

Grahame Morris: [\[121512\]](#)

To ask the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will provide incentives to (a) businesses and (b) the automotive industry to locate manufacturing facilities in the Easington constituency.

Claire Perry:

Government support for small and medium sized enterprises, including suppliers to Nissan, is provided through a range of measures and funding competitions which make the UK one of the best locations to locate and grow an automotive business. This includes the Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain Initiative, with projects running through to 2019, and the £1bn Advanced Propulsion Centre, which promotes collaborative R&D between suppliers and vehicle makers to develop products to improve efficiency and reduce emissions.

Furthermore, and as part of a programme of long term investment in the North East, the North East LEP Growth Deal, announced on 23 January 2017, was awarded £49.7m. Through the North East LEP Growth Deal we are supporting jobs growth and economic development with £379.6m of Local Growth Fund. This includes £42m of funding for the international Advanced Manufacturing Park, which will provide a world class environment for high tech advanced industries and advanced manufacturing

businesses, including the automotive sector. Since its launch in 2016, the North East Growth Hub has engaged with over 7300 businesses, delivered 117 intensive assists and helped 728 individuals to start a business.

■ Minimum Wage: Arrears

Jo Swinson:

[\[121446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answers of 16 November 2016, 3 March 2017, 12 September 2017 and 18 December 2017 to Questions 52385, 65376, 7533 and 118376, on Minimum Wage: Arrears, if he will publish the (a) sector and (b) size of the 169 employers who paid additional arrears, not included in the sum of arrears for which they were named and shamed, under the self-correction mechanism introduced by HM Revenue and Customs in 2015.

Andrew Griffiths:

A total of 169 employers were instructed to self-correct further arrears in naming rounds 10-13. The sectoral breakdown of those employers is presented in Table 1, below.

Table 1: Employers named under the National Minimum Wage naming scheme (rounds 10-13) and instructed to self-correct by the Low Pay Commission by sector

LPC SECTOR	NO. OF EMPLOYERS INSTRUCTED TO SELF-CORRECT
Childcare	6
Employment Agencies	5
Hairdressing	22
Hospitality	41
Retail	19
Social Care	22
Non low paying sectors	45
Other	9
Total	169

Notes

1. Sectors with less than 5 employers have been included in an 'Other' category to avoid disclosure of self-correction via the naming announcements. Sector definitions are contained within the Low Pay Commission's autumn 2017 report (p231) -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/661195/Low_Pay_Commission_2017_report.pdf

HM Revenue and Customs does not hold complete data on employer size, therefore a breakdown by size is not available.

■ **Minimum Wage: Non-payment**

John Spellar: [\[121253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking (a) to increase the number of inspectors and (b) to raise the level of penalties to deal with employers who pay less than the minimum wage.

Andrew Griffiths:

The budget for enforcing the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) has increased from £13.2 million in 2015/16 to £25.3 million for 2017/18. The increase in HM Revenue and Customs' enforcement resources has enabled an increase in the number of compliance officers available to investigate NMW abuses.

The penalty regime has been significantly strengthened in recent years. The Government raised the penalty calculation up to 200% in 2016; this was previously 50% and more recently 100%. We have also changed the penalty cap to apply on a 'per worker' rather than 'per employer' basis; this ensures that employers who break the law face a penalty equivalent to the arrears they owe their workers, up to £20,000 maximum per worker.

■ **Modern Working Practices Review**

Dan Jarvis: [\[121581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of the 4 December 2017 to Question 116592, when the Government plans to publish its response to the Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices.

Andrew Griffiths:

This Government has made a commitment to consider the issues raised in Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices. Matthew Taylor's report is comprehensive and detailed and we have been giving the report the careful consideration it deserves and will respond in full shortly.

■ **Post Offices: Closures**

Gill Furniss: [\[121573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of temporary closures of post offices after the resignation of a postmaster; and what assessment his Department has made of the viability of re-opening such post office branches.

Andrew Griffiths:

The provision of post offices is the responsibility of Post Office Limited.

■ **Post Offices: Staff****Gill Furniss:**[\[121569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the average income received from the Post Office is for postmasters who host a post office branch.

Andrew Griffiths:

Remuneration arrangements with its postmasters is the responsibility of Post Office Limited.

■ **Solar Power: Kilmarnock and Loudoun****Alan Brown:**[\[121265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2017 to Question 120003, how many photovoltaics installations through Green Deal plans provided by Home Energy Lifestyle Management Systems were undertaken in Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency.

Claire Perry:

[Holding answer 10 January 2018]: Since the start of the Green Deal in 2013, 146 homes in Kilmarnock and Loudoun received photovoltaics through Green Deal Plans provided by Home Energy Lifestyle Management Systems.

■ **Wind Power: Yorkshire and the Humber****Diana Johnson:**[\[121467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government plans to agree a sector deal on wind energy; and which organisations in Humberside his Department has had discussions with on such a deal in the last twelve months.

Richard Harrington:

The Offshore Wind Industry Council is working to develop an ambitious business-led offshore wind proposal for a sector deal.

The Department has not had specific discussions on a potential deal with organisations in Humberside. However, the Offshore Wind Industry Council has conducted an engagement exercise with the wider industry across the UK as part of their work in developing a Sector Deal proposal.

CABINET OFFICE**■ Brexit: Festivals and Special Occasions**

Patrick Grady: [\[121510\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government is planning any ceremonial or official events to mark the formal exit of the UK from the EU.

Mr David Lidington:

The Prime Minister has stated that the United Kingdom will cease to be a member of the European Union on 29 March 2019, at the conclusion of the Article 50 process. There are currently no plans for any ceremonial or official events to mark the formal exit of the UK from the EU, although the Cabinet Office and the Department for Exiting the European Union will keep this under review.

■ Civil Servants: Mobile Phones

Jon Trickett: [\[121211\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his Department has a policy on the use by civil servants of instant-messaging apps for the purpose of completing their work.

Oliver Dowden:

There is no specific policy covering the use of instant-messaging applications, there is however policy that sets out the expected conduct of Civil Servants when making use of electronic communications across OFFICIAL and personal devices. There is also a policy on the use of social media. Whilst these policies do not specifically deal with instant messaging they are clear on what civil servants should be aware of when putting any information out in an official capacity.

■ Civil Servants: Sick Leave

Jon Trickett: [\[121212\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the reasons why the average number of sick days taken by civil servants decreased in the past 12 months; and what assessment he has made of the effect of a potential culture of presenteeism on that trend.

Oliver Dowden:

The Civil Service recognises that good workforce health and wellbeing is fundamental to delivering brilliant public services. We support people so that they can remain at work where possible and to return as soon as they are ready following sickness absence.

Cabinet Office statistics show that Civil Service annual Average Working Days Lost (AWDL) per staff year has reduced from 9.8 days in 2007 to 7.0 days for year ending 31 March 2017, its lowest recorded level. This demonstrates the significant progress made in reducing sickness absence across the Civil Service.

Departments continue to monitor their sickness absence data, in order to take continuing action to improve management of absences and prevention of absence, including through supporting workforce health and wellbeing. While no formal Civil Service wide assessment has been made of the reasons behind the reductions, this continuing attention and action is a key contributor.

As for all employers, presenteeism is potentially an issue in the Civil Service. We have made no assessment of the effect of a potential culture of presenteeism on the long term trend in sickness absence. However we are exploring how to measure presenteeism using the Civil Service People Survey, and this might inform such an assessment in the future.

This is one example of how we are continuously improving our support to managers to help them manage health and wellbeing, including presenteeism, positively and effectively so that the Civil Service delivers the high level of service that the public demand and expect.

Jon Trickett:

[\[121215\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what information the Government holds on the proportion of civil service sick days taken for reasons relating to (a) mental ill-health and (b) physical ill health.

Oliver Dowden:

The Civil Service recognises that good workforce health and wellbeing is fundamental to delivering brilliant public services. We support people so that they can remain at work where possible and to return as soon as they are ready following sickness absence.

For the year ending March 2017, the percentage of absence that was reported as due to mental ill health was 25.8%. The percentage of absence that was reported against categories which relate to physical ill health was 64.9%. The remainder is attributed to cases recorded as unknown or with ill-defined symptoms and to pregnancy complications.

The Civil Service continues to review how it can proactively manage sickness absence and improve health and wellbeing at work even further, ensuring that it consistently delivers the high level of service that the public demand and expect.

■ **Contracts for Services: Small Businesses**

Jon Trickett:

[\[121203\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to his Department's news story of 18 December 2017 about the 200 suppliers who sign up to the Contracts Finder service each week, how many of those suppliers are SMEs; and if he will provide a breakdown of those firms by region.

Oliver Dowden:

In the period 1 September to 8 December 2017, the average number of supplier organisations that registered on Contracts Finder each week was 232, of which 78% were SMEs.

We are currently not able to provide a breakdown of these by region.

Devolution**Deidre Brock:**[\[121428\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, when the minutes of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Devolution for Scotland, Wales and the Regions from 1997 and 1998 will be made public.

Chloe Smith:

The Cabinet Office takes its responsibilities for transparency very seriously, and is releasing more historic records, more frequently than ever before. The Government is now halfway through the transition from a 30-year rule for the release of historic records to a 20-year rule. The schedule for the transition is set out in secondary legislation, namely the Freedom of Information (Definition of Historical Records) (Transitional and Saving Provisions) Order 2012. Under this order, records created in 1997 and 1998, including the minutes of Cabinet Committees and Sub-Committees, will be eligible for release in 2020.

Government Departments: Contracts**Jon Trickett:**[\[121250\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many contracts that involve processing personal data will be affected by Procurement Policy Note 03/17.

Oliver Dowden:

Procurement Policy Note 03/17 applies to all public sector contracts that involve processing personal data and that will be in place after 25 May 2018. Information on the number of such contracts is not held centrally.

Public Sector: Procurement**Jon Trickett:**[\[121455\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what contingency plans his Department has prepared in case of the folding of (a) Carillion and (b) any other strategic supplier.

Oliver Dowden:

We have in place a number of arrangements to ensure the effective management of government's strategic suppliers. These arrangements include working with departments to develop robust contingency plans that enable us to respond to whatever operational issues may arise.

TREASURY**■ Bank Services**

Daniel Zeichner: [\[120738\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to make consumers aware of the forthcoming changes being implemented through the Open Banking standard and the Second Payment Services Directive.

John Glen:

The Open Banking Implementation Entity (OBIE) is ensuring that consumers are aware of the Open Banking project, delivering communications through both its website and planned media engagements. We would expect the OBIE to work together with other interested parties, including the Financial Conduct Authority, third party providers, the banks and the Treasury as they develop their plans.

The Second Payment Services Directive also introduces an automatic ban on debit and credit card surcharging. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has published consumer guidance on the implementation of the surcharging ban.

■ Bank Services: Fees and Charges

David Linden: [\[121121\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with the Markets and Competition Authority on the introduction of a cap on overdraft charges for personal current accounts; and if he will make a statement.

David Linden: [\[121122\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government is taking to encourage banks to impose the voluntary cap on overdraft charges for personal current accounts recommended by the Competition and Markets Authority in 2016; and what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of that cap on reducing repayments by customers where it has been imposed.

John Glen:

Treasury Ministers and officials meet regularly with colleagues across Government, and the various regulators, to discuss a wide range of issues. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Treasury's practice to provide details of all such discussions.

As part of the final report on its retail banking market investigation, published in 2016, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) imposed a series of remedies in relation to overdrafts, including a legal requirement on banks to set a monthly maximum charge for unarranged overdraft charges. Most banks have been required to do this since August 2017. The CMA will monitor compliance with its Order. As recommended by the CMA, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) is reviewing the effectiveness of the monthly maximum charge for unarranged overdrafts.

Following the CMA's investigation, the FCA also committed to look in more detail at both arranged and unarranged overdrafts as part of its broader review into the High Cost Credit sector. The FCA published a Feedback Statement on its review of high-cost credit in July 2017, which concluded that it had concerns about both arranged and unarranged overdrafts.

The FCA will investigate these concerns further, and where intervention is needed and justified, aim to bring forward proposals in Spring 2018 concerning both overdrafts and other forms of high-cost credit. The FCA's review of the effectiveness of the monthly maximum charge for unarranged overdraft charges will inform the FCA's proposals on overdrafts.

The Government supports the FCA's work in this area and will continue to work with it to ensure that all consumers who use high-cost credit products are treated fairly.

■ Bank Services: Standards

Daniel Zeichner: [\[120739\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, which regulator will be responsible for monitoring the performance of the standardised Open Banking Application Programme Interfaces; and how that regulator plans to undertake that monitoring.

John Glen:

The standardised Open Banking Application Programme Interfaces (APIs) are being introduced as a result of the Competition and Market Authority's (CMA) Retail Banking Market Investigation Order 2017.

The CMA is responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with this Order, including the performance of the APIs. The Open Banking Implementation Entity will assist the CMA in delivering this function.

■ Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit

Stephanie Peacock: [\[121138\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how his Department determines main responsibility for receiving child tax credit and child benefit when care is split evenly.

Stephanie Peacock: [\[121139\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what criteria his Department uses to determine which parent has main responsibility for child tax credit and child benefit.

Elizabeth Truss:

For both Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit (CTC), the law provides for one person – the person mainly responsible for the child – to receive the payments. It works on the basis that one person will always have a greater share of responsibility than another.

Where parents separate, it is possible for them to jointly agree who should receive Child Benefit and CTC and for which child. Where parents cannot agree who should receive Child Benefit and CTC and make rival claims, the decision about who is

entitled to such support is taken by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). HMRC considers all the facts in relation to each parent's responsibility for the child, based on the information provided by both parents.

■ Consumers

Laura Smith: [\[121207\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he has taken to make consumer markets operate more fairly to reduce the costs of essential household items.

John Glen:

Competitive markets are the best way of delivering value and choice for consumers. Autumn Budget 2017 announced more resources for the Competition and Markets Authority to enable them to take more cases against companies who are not competing fairly. The government is also taking specific action to ensure that financial services markets work for consumers. For example, to improve access to affordable sources of credit, the government is increasing the number of potential members that a credit union serving a local area can have from 2 to 3 million.

The forthcoming Consumer Green Paper will set out the government's broader approach to ensuring that markets are working well for consumers and businesses.

Where it can, the government is also taking direct action to help families with the cost of essential items. For example, the government has extended the fuel duty freeze for the eighth year. This freeze has saved the average car driver £850 over the last eight years compared to what they would have been paying under the pre-2010 escalator plans.

■ Credit: Fees and Charges

Laura Smith: [\[121209\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to reduce the cap on the cost of credit offered by payday lenders.

Stephen Barclay:

The Government placed a duty on the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to cap the cost of payday loans. As a result, this is a matter for the FCA, who are operationally independent from Government. The question has been passed on to the FCA. The FCA will reply directly to the honourable member by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

■ Debts

Laura Smith: [\[121397\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government's planned Breathing Space scheme will include a full 12-month freeze on interest, charges and debt collection activity.

Stephen Barclay:

The Government committed in its manifesto to establish a breathing space for heavily indebted consumers which would freeze interest, charges and further enforcement action for up to six weeks.

The Government is committed to taking the proposals forward as per its manifesto commitment, and is actively consulting on the policy design with stakeholders.

Electric Vehicles: Finance**Diana Johnson:**[\[121471\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much money from the Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund his Department plans to allocate to each NUTS 1 region.

Elizabeth Truss:

Following the announcement of this fund at Autumn Budget, the Government is engaging with the private sector to ensure that it is set up in the most effective way. Further details will be announced in due course.

Financial Services**Alex Sobel:**[\[120551\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing regulations on the extent to which financial institutions can offer retail customers products that include (a) contracts for difference and (b) other derivative instruments.

John Glen:

The government has not made an assessment. Contracts for Difference (CfDs) and other derivative products are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). The FCA have expressed concerns about the distribution of CfDs to retail clients, and the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) have recently announced that they are considering imposing restrictions on these CfDs. As the independent regulator, the FCA have indicated that they are supportive of these proposals. As ESMA's powers are temporary, the FCA are considering appropriate permanent product intervention measures, which the FCA indicated would take in to account any prospective ESMA measures. The FCA continually reviews all financial products, including derivative products, to assess the risks to investor protection.

Financial Services: Vulnerable Adults**Laura Smith:**[\[121214\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to implement a duty on regulators to identify vulnerable customers within the finance industry.

John Glen:

The government believes that the Financial Conduct Authority's (FCA) existing objectives to protect consumers and to promote effective competition are sufficient to

safeguard the interests of vulnerable consumers. The government therefore sees no need to legislate to impose an additional duty on the FCA.

In November 2017, the FCA published their Future Approach to Consumers Paper. One of the core ideas within this Paper is “Regulating for Vulnerable Consumers”. The FCA expects firms to pay attention to possible indicators of vulnerability and have policies in place to deal with consumers where those indicators suggests they may be at greater risk of harm.

■ **First Time Buyers: Stamp Duty Land Tax**

John Spellar:

[121084]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his Department's estimate is of the annual loss of revenue from the changes to the level of stamp duty for first time buyers; and what the regional distribution of that loss is.

Mel Stride:

The cost of changes to Stamp Duty Land Tax for First Time Buyers is set out in Table 2.1 on page 28 of the Autumn Budget 2017 documentation.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/661480/autumn_budget_2017_web.pdf

The cost of the relief includes the impact of the Scottish fiscal framework and, from April, the Welsh fiscal framework. Figures are not available on a regional basis.

■ **Individual Savings Accounts: Children**

Frank Field:

[120560]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of transferring funds from the Financial Services fines pool to bring the value of Junior ISAs up to the value of Child Trust Funds.

John Glen:

A Child Trust Fund account was opened for each child born between 1 September 2002 and 2 January 2011, with a Government contribution deposited into the account. The total government contribution to each account differed dependent on a variety of factors, such as family income, disability and age. Junior ISAs are voluntary, tax-free savings accounts and therefore not all children hold a Junior ISA. For these reasons, it is not appropriate to compare the balances of these two types of account.

All FCA fine income, after enforcement costs, is passed to HM Treasury and forms part of the governments total revenues to be used for the benefit of the tax paying public.

■ Minimum Wage**Caroline Lucas:****[120608]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answer of 9 September 2016 to Question 44820, how much of the £1.74 million of minimum wage arrears owed by TSS Security Ltd and identified in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's press release of 5 February 2016 has been paid to the workers in question.

Mel Stride:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) do not divulge information relating to an individual or company for reasons of confidentiality. HMRC always take action to ensure workers receive what they are entitled to.

Where arrears are identified HMRC complete assurance checks to ensure employers have repaid the arrears owed to workers. If employers do not repay arrears to workers HMRC will pursue civil recovery of arrears through the courts.

Andrew Gwynne:**[121018]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what information his Department holds on the number of employers that have been fined the maximum penalty for breaches of the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 in each year since 2010.

Mel Stride:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) always applies the maximum applicable penalty to every Notice of Underpayment served on an employer for National Minimum Wage (NMW) arrears owed to workers. How penalties are quantified is set out in NMW legislation, and HMRC has no discretion on the penalty rate or amount.

The penalty applied is based on the value of arrears, and will vary according to the penalty regime that applied to the pay reference period when the arrears were accrued.

Further information on penalties and how they are quantified can be found on pages 10-11 of the NMW enforcement policy guidance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/656568/nmw-enforcement-beis_-_policy_doc_-_full_vFINAL_3_.pdf

■ National Productivity Investment Fund**Diana Johnson:****[121482]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to page 130 of the Industrial Strategy, published in November 2017, how much has funding has been allocated to (a) transport, (b) housing, (c) digital and (d) research & development in each NUTS 1 region by the National Productivity Investment Fund.

Elizabeth Truss:

A large proportion of funding from the NPIF – established at Autumn Statement 2016 and expanded to £31bn at Autumn Budget 2017 – has already been allocated to its four target sectors: transport, housing, digital communications and R&D. Breakdowns

within these sectors can be found on page 44 of the 2017 Autumn Budget document. Specific projects are selected through a variety of mechanisms that are tailored to achieve programme goals and ensure high value for money.

Funding allocations from the NPIF are not specifically made by region. However the NPIF is intended to fund projects that help to boost productivity and prosperity throughout the UK and across regions. For example, at the Autumn Budget 2017, the government made an allocation specifically benefitting the North East, announcing £337m of new funding from the NPIF to replace rolling stock on the Tyne & Wear Metro. It also established a new £1.7bn Transforming Cities Fund. This funding will be widely distributed, with £840m of per capita funding to be transferred to the six Mayoral Combined Authorities with directly elected mayors, and £840m open for competition for transport projects in cities. These announcements and others demonstrate a commitment to invest to improve productivity in all UK regions.

■ Revenue and Customs: Recruitment

Bill Esterson:

[\[121634\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the oral contribution by the hon. Member for Cardiff South and Penarth on 8 January 2018, how many of the 5,000 new customs officials have been recruited.

Mel Stride:

Additional staffing required by HMRC following exit from the European Union will depend on the final outcome of the negotiations. HMRC are looking at all resourcing options including redeployment of existing staff and use of existing reserve lists to fill additional posts before recruiting externally.

■ Royal Bank of Scotland: Small Businesses

Bill Esterson:

[\[120816\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor the Exchequer, pursuant to the Prime Minister's oral contribution of 20 December 2017, who will examine the mistreatment of smaller businesses by RBS.

John Glen:

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has published a detailed summary of the independent report into Royal Bank of Scotland's treatment of small and medium-sized enterprise customers transferred to its Global Restructuring Group (GRG). The FCA announced it is investigating the matters arising from its review of GRG and focussing on whether there is any basis for it to take further action. It would not be appropriate for the Government to comment further whilst this process is ongoing.

■ Tax Avoidance: EU Law

Tonia Antoniazzi:

[\[120660\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 30 November 2017 to Question 116884, on tax avoidance: EU law, how much extra tax will be collected as a result of the implementation of the EU's Tax Avoidance Directive in 2019.

Mel Stride:

The UK Government has taken significant action to counter multinational avoidance and tax-planning.

That includes the introduction of provisions required by the EU Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive, such as rules to limit interest deductibility and counter hybrid mismatches.

These actions are forecast to increase tax receipts by £8bn by 2021.

Visual Impairment: Tax Allowances**Tracy Brabin:**[\[120860\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the ability to transfer a Blind Person's Allowance to long-term partners who live together.

Mel Stride:

Personal tax allowances are given on an individual basis and cannot be transferred from one person to another except in some cases of marriage and civil partnership where specific provisions apply, such as Marriage Allowance and Blind Person's Allowance. Blind Person's Allowance gives blind people an extra amount of tax-free income. Recipients who are married or in a civil partnership and living together, can transfer any surplus allowance to their spouse or civil partner. This ensures that the benefit of the allowance is retained within the blind person's legal household.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS**St Wilfrid's Church Scrooby: Public Lavatories****John Mann:**[\[121283\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what progress has been made on securing visitor toilets for Scrooby church.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

The parish of Scrooby is still currently in interregnum.

As indicated in my answer on the 05 September 2017 to question [6282](#) it is my understanding that the Parish Council, congregation, and the wider community have taken the decision to improve the facilities in the nearby village hall, rather than at St Wilfrid's Church. The decision was in part a consequence of the difficulty of finding a practical and cost-effective way to connect the church with the local sewerage network.

As each church is unique, the Parochial Church Council with the help of the Diocesan Advisory Committee needs to consider how best any new facilities can be accommodated. There may be cases where the space will not comfortably accommodate a toilet or indeed a kitchen, office or meeting room, alongside the liturgical space. There may also be technical or practical difficulties, as in this case.

DEFENCE**■ Armed Forces: Recruitment**

Nia Griffith: [\[121442\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the performance of new online recruitment system for the Armed Forces.

Mark Lancaster:

The Defence Recruiting System went live on 13 November 2017 and will enable a quicker and easier recruitment process for applicants and the Armed Forces. As with any new information system defects have been identified post the go live date. The Ministry of Defence expects Capita to address these issues as soon as possible and I am monitoring their progress closely.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Athletics: Drugs**

Paul Girvan: [\[121003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to work with UK Athletics to ensure the integrity of the sport following recent drug controversies.

Tracey Crouch:

As the UK's designated National Anti-Doping Organisation, UK Anti-Doping, an Arm's Length Body of DCMS, works extensively with UK Athletics to prevent doping by its athletes through its education and testing programmes.

The UK Government remains fully committed to combating doping in sport and protecting the integrity of sport.

■ Charities: Young People

Kate Green: [\[120518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 11 December 2017 to Question 117774 on charities: young people, when she expects the response to be published; and if she will place a copy in the Library.

Tracey Crouch:

The Chair of the review was recently granted a deadline extension by one month, and will report to government by the end of January 2018. Government will respond in due course, and as per standard protocol, a copy will be placed in the Library.

■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Public Expenditure**Tommy Sheppard:**[\[121507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which fruitless payments in excess of £30,000 her Department has made by (a) recipient of each such payment, (b) purpose of each such payment, (c) value of each such payment and (d) reason that payment was classified as fruitless in the 2017-18 financial year to date.

Tracey Crouch:

Figures for 2017-18 will be available once the DCMS Annual Report and Accounts are audited by the National Audit Office, and laid before Parliament.

■ EU Grants and Loans: Social Enterprises**Mr Steve Reed:**[\[120720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an estimate of the amount of EU funding that UK-based charities and social enterprises received in 2016.

Tracey Crouch:

Government is continuing to assess the impact of leaving the EU on charities and social enterprises, including around funding. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations estimate that in 2014/15 charities received between £350-450 million of EU funding. Estimates for 2016 are not yet available.

There are a wide range of EU funding schemes that charities and social enterprises access. Government is actively listening to the views of charities and social enterprises as we develop successor funding schemes to EU programmes

■ Gaming Machines: Gower**Tonia Antoniazzi:**[\[120726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make an assessment of the effect of fixed-odds betting terminals on gambling addiction rates in Gower constituency in the last three years.

Tracey Crouch:

Neither the Department, nor the Gambling Commission, hold information on gambling addiction rates in individual constituencies.

■ ICT: EU Law**Brendan O'Hara:**[\[121144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans her Department has to implement the EU Network and Information Systems Directive.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[121145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what parliamentary scrutiny there will be of the implementation of the EU Network and Information Systems Directive.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[121146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether any sector-specific guidance will be drafted to support the implementation of the EU Network and Information Systems Directive.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[121147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how compliance with the EU Network and Information Systems Directive will be (a) monitored and (b) enforced.

Stephen Timms: [\[121537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans she has to implement the Network and Information Systems Directive.

Margot James:

The EU Network and Information Systems Directive (the 'NIS Directive') will help ensure Britain's essential networks and infrastructure are safe, secure and resilient against the risk of future cyber attacks, helping to make the UK most secure place to live and do business online.

The Government's plans to implement the NIS Directive were set out in a public consultation published on 8 August 2017. This set out that cross-sector security guidance will be published by the National Cyber Security Centre in January 2018, sector specific guidance by Competent Authorities (Regulators) in November 2018, and that compliance will be monitored and enforced by sector based Competent Authorities. The Government is reviewing the responses to this consultation and a formal Government reply will be published shortly.

The Government has kept the European Affairs Committees of both Houses regularly informed of progress on implementation of the EU Network and Information Systems Directive. Secondary legislation implementing the Directive will be laid before Parliament in due course.

■ Libraries Taskforce: Databases

Kevin Brennan: [\[121544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to Answer of 14 December 2017 to Question 118632, for what reason her Department did not publish the full Libraries Taskforce data set before Christmas 2017 as stated was their aim in that Answer.

Michael Ellis:

As per the response to Question 118632, we confirmed that it is the intention of the Department to publish the dataset before the end of January 2018.

■ Olympic Games 2012**Mr Steve Reed:**[\[120724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has produced a written timetable and payment schedule for sales of assets on the Olympic Park.

Tracey Crouch:

The sale of assets on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, including any associated timetable and payment schedule, is a matter for the London Legacy Development Corporation as owners of the Park.

■ Voluntary Work: Young People**Mr Steve Reed:**[\[120515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many National Citizen Service participants there were in 2017.

Tracey Crouch:

99,063 young people participated in the National Citizen Service programme in 2017.

Mr Steve Reed:[\[120516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made the effectiveness of the National Citizen Service Innovation Programme.

Tracey Crouch:

The NCS innovation programme was established in 2017 to identify new ways to grow and improve NCS, and to increase value for money for taxpayers. The programme is administered and evaluated by NCS Trust.

Early pilots have demonstrated some positive impacts. For example, a pilot run in conjunction with the Behavioural Insights Team found that young people who are given a "buddy" before NCS are up to 6% more likely to turn up on programme, reducing unfilled places and unit cost. Another found that when specialist one-to-one support was provided to young people with complex needs, including young people referred through social services, Youth Offending services or Looked After Children services, 72% were able to complete NCS, which brings this group into line with average completion rates.

In 2018, NCS Trust will continue to pilot and evaluate new ways to improve the programme, including through new partnerships with sector organisations such as the Scouts and Sea Cadets.

EDUCATION**■ Free School Meals: Sheffield Central****Paul Blomfield:**[\[121580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of children in Sheffield Central constituency who are currently eligible for free school meals who would not be considered eligible under plans in the consultation entitled Eligibility for free school meals and the early years pupil premium under Universal Credit.

Nadhim Zahawi:

We are currently consulting on proposals for free school meals eligibility under Universal Credit. We will consider the responses to the consultation carefully and will continue to refine our analysis as our policy on this matter develops.

Currently around 1.1 million of the most disadvantaged children are eligible for and claim a free nutritious meal. This government provides significant funding to ensure the most disadvantaged children receive free school meals. Under our proposals, no existing recipients of free school meals should lose their entitlement following the introduction of new eligibility criteria. We have proposed protection arrangements to ensure that every pupil who is eligible and receiving free school meals at the point at which the criteria are changed (or any claimants who gain free school meals during the rollout of Universal Credit) should be protected against losing their meals whilst Universal Credit is fully rolled out nationally. In addition, any protected pupils who are still receiving free school meals once the Universal Credit transition is complete would continue to receive protection until the end of their current phase of education.

In our proposed net earnings threshold, we estimate that around 50,000 more children will become entitled to free school meals than at present, enabling us to target support towards a greater number of families on low incomes. It is right that we make sure that free school meals reach children from the most disadvantaged families, and we are consulting on this issue to make sure this is the case.

■ Pupil Premium**Mrs Louise Ellman:**[\[121586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, in pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2017 to Question 120011, whether she has made an assessment of the accuracy of the Ever 6 model in establishing entitlement to Pupil Premium in schools with growing pupil rolls; and if she will make a statement.

Mrs Louise Ellman:[\[121589\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many representations has she received on the accuracy of the Ever 6 model in assessing the eligibility of Pupil Premium for all pupils in schools with growing pupil rolls; and if she will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The department counts the numbers of pupils eligible for pupil premium using a single census point in January to enable it to allocate pupil premium to schools by June. This gives certainty to schools about their pupil premium budget to allow them to plan its use effectively.

To make in-year adjustments to reflect the movement of pupils would introduce uncertainty. The EVER6 FSM measure is designed as a proxy measure to reflect relative deprivation in schools and is not intended to allocate a specific amount to an individual pupil. Schools have the ability to use their pupil premium allocation flexibly to meet the various needs of all eligible pupils. The funding model does take into account growing pupil numbers for schools that are newly opened or are continuing to grow by year group following opening. The department rarely receives queries from schools on this issue.

■ Pupils: Soft Drinks**Luciana Berger:**[\[121615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools have banned students from consuming energy drinks on school premises; and if she will make a statement.

Luciana Berger:[\[121616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of the consumption of energy drinks by under-18s on their ability to concentrate at school.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The department does not hold information on the number of schools that have banned students from consuming energy drinks on school premises.

The new standards for school food came into force on 1 January 2015. The School Food Standards define the foods and drinks that must be provided, which are restricted, and those which must not be provided. They apply to all food and drink provided to pupils on and off school premises and during an extended school day (up to 6pm), including school trips, breakfast clubs, tuck shops, mid-morning break, vending and after school clubs.

The only drinks permitted are: Plain water (still or carbonated); lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk; fruit or vegetable juice (max 150mls); plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (e.g. yoghurt) drinks; combinations of fruit juice and lower fat milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and lower fat milk; flavoured lower fat milk, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey; tea, coffee, hot chocolate

Combination drinks are limited to a portion size of 330mls. They may contain added vitamins or minerals, and no more than 150mls of fruit or vegetable juice. Fruit or vegetable juice combination drinks must be at least 45% fruit or vegetable juice.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Electricity Generation: Waste****Dr David Drew:**[\[121142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2017 to Question 115103 on electricity generation: waste, what steps he is taking to ensure that less biodegradable waste is disposed of through incineration rather than through (a) composting and (b) anaerobic digestion.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Local councils have a statutory duty to collect household waste and dispose of it according to the waste hierarchy. This requires councils to take all reasonable measures to ensure that biodegradable waste, such as garden waste and food waste, is recycled through a) composting and b) anaerobic digestion, ahead of incineration.

There has been an increase in the provision of garden waste and food waste collections, with 97% of councils in England providing dedicated garden waste collections and 50% providing dedicated food waste collections in 2016/17.

While it is for councils to work with their householders to develop the levels of services required, the Government supports comprehensive collections of materials. In September 2016 the Waste and Resources Action Programme, as part of an industry-led group, published a Framework for Greater Consistency. This outlines a vision where every household in England can recycle a common set of materials including separate food waste.

■ Environment protection: EU Law**Mary Creagh:**[\[121623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the environmental principles contained in EU treaties that are to be retained in UK law via the EU (Withdrawal) Bill will have general application across all environmental policy areas in the UK.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

On 12 November 2017 the Secretary of State set out plans to consult early this year on the creation of a new policy statement on environmental principles to apply post EU withdrawal. This statement will set out environmental principles in one place to underpin future policy-making.

We need to consult as widely as possible on nature of the new policy statement. The proposed consultation will explore the scope and content of a new statement on environmental principles.

■ Nature Conservation

Tom Brake:

[\[121307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if his Department will establish a new strategic framework for designating protected sites and species within UK environmental law after the UK leaves the EU.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The European Union (Withdrawal) Bill will ensure that the whole body of existing EU environmental law, including the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives, continues to have effect in UK law, providing businesses, communities and stakeholders with maximum certainty as we leave the EU. We will then have the opportunity, over time, to ensure our legislative framework is outcome driven and delivers on our overall commitment of improving the environment within a generation.

The UK has a long history of environmental protection and we will safeguard and improve on this record. We will also continue to uphold all our obligations under international environmental treaties. Producing a 25 Year Environment Plan is key to setting out how we will improve our environment as we leave the EU and take control of our environmental legislation again.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Regulation

Priti Patel:

[\[120878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what the title was of each set of regulations introduced by his Department in each month since May 2010; which of those regulations have been (a) subject to the (i) one in one out and (ii) one in two out procedure and (b) (i) revoked and (ii) amended; and what the net cost to (A) the public purse; and (B) business of those regulations is.

Priti Patel:

[\[120909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what processes his Department has put in place to (a) monitor, (b) collate cost information on, (c) review and (d) respond to requests to amend or revoke regulations introduced by his Department.

Mr Steve Baker:

The Department for Exiting the European Union was created in July 2016 and has not made any regulations.

The changes to regulations affecting business during the 2010-15 Parliament are recorded in Statements of New Regulation that were published every six months. These are available on <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/one-in-two-out-statement-of-new-regulation>.

For the 2015-17 Parliament, the Government will shortly publish its final report on the savings to business delivered during that Parliament.

For the current Parliament, the Government is committed to maintaining a proportionate approach to regulation to enable business growth while maintaining public protections. This will be monitored through the target that the Government is required to set under the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015.

■ Trade Agreements

Bill Esterson:

[\[118627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether he has plans to introduce legislative proposals for a free trade agreement between the UK and (a) the EU and (b) countries outside the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Steve Baker:

As we move into the second phase of negotiations we are confident of agreeing a bold and ambitious Free Trade Agreement with the EU that is of greater scope than any such existing agreement. The Government will introduce further legislation where it is needed to implement the terms of the future relationship into UK law.

Leaving the EU also offers us an opportunity to forge a new role for ourselves in the world: to negotiate our own trade agreements and to be a positive and powerful force for free trade. However, we would not bring into effect any new arrangements with third countries which were not consistent with the terms of our agreement with the EU.

We have been considering what we will need to put in place to ensure that the process of negotiating and implementing new trade deals is transparent, efficient and effective. We want to make provision for a legislative framework that will enable future trade agreements with partner countries to move quickly from signing to implementation and then to ratification, whilst respecting due process in Parliament.

■ Water Supply: Northern Ireland

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[120733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of a hard border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland on the interface between the operation of water regulations in the UK and the Water Framework Directive in the Republic of Ireland.

Mr Robin Walker:

As the Government has made clear we are committed to avoiding a hard border and preserving North-South cooperation. We welcome the inclusion of these vital objectives in the UK EU Joint Report.

Our commitment to protect North-South cooperation applies to the full range of activity, including water quality management, an agreed area of cooperation for the North South Ministerial Council.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE■ **Ahed Tamimi**

Grahame Morris: [\[120753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if his Department will make any representations to its Israeli counterpart on the arrest of Ahed Tamimi.

Alistair Burt:

On 2 January officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised Ahed Tamimi's case with the Israeli authorities, noting the negative attention that the case was generating and the UK's long-standing concerns about the treatment of Palestinian minors in Israeli military detention.

■ **Bahrain: Political Prisoners**

Tom Brake: [\[120821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the Government of Bahrain on (a) the denial of adequate medical access and (b) family visits for (i) Abdulwahhab Husain, (ii) Abduljalil Al-Singace and (iii) Hassan Mushaima.

Alistair Burt:

The UK has a continuing dialogue with the Government of Bahrain, in which we are able to raise individual cases at a senior level, including the referenced cases.

We encourage those with concerns about treatment in detention to report these to the relevant human rights oversight bodies. We urge these bodies to carry out swift and thorough investigations. The UK continues to encourage the Government of Bahrain to deliver on its international and domestic human rights commitments.

■ **Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps**

Patrick Grady: [\[121568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will respond to EDM 483, role of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Alistair Burt:

The Government is deeply concerned by Iran's destabilising involvement in regional conflicts, including in Syria and Yemen, through the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and IRGC Qods Force, and by reported financial and military support to militant and proscribed groups, such as Hizballah, Hamas and Palestinian rejectionist groups, and the Houthis in Yemen. We are also seriously concerned by Iran's ballistic missile programme. I raised these concerns directly during my visit to Iran in August 2017, as did the Foreign Secretary in December 2017. I also raised the UK's serious concerns about the human rights situation in Iran. The September 2017 report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Iran sets out the role of the IRGC in human rights violations in Iran – in particular in the harassment and

detention of minority groups. The UK has shown its leadership in co-sponsoring the UN General Assembly's Resolution on the Human Rights Situation in Iran in November 2017. The IRGC as a whole remains subject to EU and US sanctions; a large number of associated individuals and entities are also designated. We continue to review the list of proscribed groups, but do not routinely comment on consideration of specific organisations.

■ Israel: Palestinians

Jo Stevens:

[\[121577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps the UK Government has taken to reaffirm its commitment to a two state solution in light of the non-adoption of UN Security Council Resolution S/2017/1060 on the status of Jerusalem.

Alistair Burt:

As I reiterated to the House on 9th January, the UK believes there is a need to make urgent progress towards a two-state solution and as such we continue to encourage a return to direct negotiations between the parties. The Foreign Secretary and I both discussed the UK's unequivocal support for the two-state solution when we met Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki in London on 8 January. In line with our long-standing position on Jerusalem, the UK voted in favour of a resolution on Jerusalem at the UN Security Council on 18 December, and the resolution at the UN General Assembly on 21 December.

■ Mahmoud Abu Zeid

David Linden:

[\[120623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Egyptian counterpart on the release of the photojournalist Mahmoud Abu Zeid known otherwise as Shawkan.

Alistair Burt:

Her Majesty's Ambassador to Egypt, John Casson, and other UK officials have raised Shawkan's case with the Egyptian authorities on a number of occasions. It is no secret we want to see more political freedoms and better protection of human rights in Egypt, and the Foreign Secretary and I have consistently raised these concerns with our Egyptian counterparts. The UK also raised concerns about human rights in Egypt at the UN Human Rights Council, and our national statement in September 2017 specifically expressed concerns about media restrictions in Egypt.

■ Sri Lanka: Foreign Relations

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[121448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when last he met his counterpart in the Government of Sri Lanka and what issues were discussed at that meeting.

Mark Field:

I met with Foreign Minister Marapana on 5 October 2017 during a visit to Colombo and Jaffna. We discussed in detail the importance of the Sri Lankan government implementing in full its commitments under UN Human Rights Council Resolution 34/1, including meaningful devolution through constitutional reform and the need for more progress on transitional justice commitments. The visit also reaffirmed the close bilateral relationship with Sri Lanka; the forthcoming Commonwealth Summit; and the importance of prosperity and regional security.

HEALTH■ **Breastfeeding****Stephen Morgan:**[\[121159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to encourage new mothers to breastfeed.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Government is committed to supporting breastfeeding, as the health benefits are clear for mothers and their babies. We would still like to see more mothers breastfeeding and doing so for longer and are working with our partners including Public Health England (PHE), NHS England and UNICEF to achieve this goal.

The promotion of breast feeding is one of the six high-impact areas for health visiting, with health visitors supporting parents around infant feeding. PHE is working with local services to create breastfeeding friendly communities, with midwives and health visitors promoting best practice, and through the Start4Life campaigns, which provide parents with trusted National Health Service advice through the Start4Life 'Breastfeeding Friend' (an interactive Facebook Messenger 'ChatBot'), and the Start4Life website. The latter contains a range of leaflets and resources that professionals can order for free and provides a dedicated breastfeeding helpline.

PHE and UNICEF UK have developed a toolkit to support commissioning of evidence-based interventions to improve breastfeeding rates across England, including provision of effective professional support to mothers and their families through implementation of the Baby Friendly Initiative in every maternity unit. PHE is encouraging Local Maternity Systems across the country to include plans to increase the number of babies' breastfed at six months within their transformation plans.

Local areas are working to improve breastfeeding. In Blackpool, for example, the local health service, working through the Family Nurse Partnership ADAPT programme, is seeking to increase the frequency of the use of current materials and provide new materials to first time young mothers. These more partner-focused materials will seek to address the role of the family and partner by introducing partners to the subject early and provide a peer support service. They will also provide a new communication tool for family nurses to practice difficult conversations.

■ Department of Health: Brexit**Tom Brake:****[120832]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the (a) amount of time and (b) resources that his Department allocated to the production of impact assessments on the UK leaving the EU; and on what date work on those impact assessments started.

Stephen Barclay:

The Government is committed to ensuring leaving the European Union is a success for the health and social care sector as well as the United Kingdom as a whole.

Impact Assessments, typically related to specific new primary legislation before Parliament, are narrowly defined. For example, the Government laid an impact assessment alongside the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill, which can be found on our website through the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/628004/2017-07-12_repeal_bill_impact_assessment_1_.pdf

Civil servants conduct any Impact Assessments related to legislation as business as usual.

■ Department of Health: Contracts**Alex Sobel:****[121541]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many contractors are employed by his Department.

Stephen Barclay:

As at 31 December 2017 there were 114 contractors in the Department.

■ Department of Health: EU Law**Priti Patel:****[120911]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which EU (a) Directives, (b) Regulations and (c) other legislation affecting his Department he is planning to propose (i) revocation and (ii) amendment of after the UK leaves the EU.

Stephen Barclay:

The European Union (Withdrawal) Bill will retain EU law as it applies in the United Kingdom on exit day.

We expect between 800 and 1,000 statutory instruments will be required across Government to correct this retained EU law to ensure the statute book functions appropriately outside the EU. All Departments are engaged in this process.

Once we leave the EU, we will make our own laws. As we leave the EU, the Government's EU exit legislative programme is designed to cater for the full range of negotiated and non-negotiated outcomes.

■ Department of Health: Regulation**Priti Patel:** [\[120885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the title was of each set of regulations introduced by his Department in each month since May 2010; which of those regulations have been (a) subject to the (i) one in one out and (ii) one in two out procedure and (b) (i) revoked and (ii) amended; and what the net cost to (A) the public purse; and (B) business of those regulations is.

Priti Patel: [\[120973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what processes his Department has put in place to (a) monitor, (b) collate cost information on, (c) review and (d) respond to requests to amend or revoke regulations introduced by his Department.

Stephen Barclay:

The changes to regulations affecting business during the 2010-15 Parliament are recorded in Statements of New Regulation that were published every six months. These are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/one-in-two-out-statement-of-new-regulation>

For the 2015-17 Parliament, the Government will shortly publish its final report on the savings to business delivered during that Parliament.

For the current Parliament, the Government is committed to maintaining a proportionate approach to regulation to enable business growth while maintaining public protections. This will be monitored through the target that the Government is required to set under the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015.

■ Department of Health: Staff**Alex Sobel:** [\[121539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many staff are employed in his Department; and how many vacancies there are.

Stephen Barclay:

As at 31 December 2017 there were 1,501 civil servants working in the Department. Vacancies are measured retrospectively and as of 30 November 2017, there were 180 vacancies in the Department. These continue to be filled.

■ Health Services**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[120844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how the Government is monitoring whether NHS hospitals have adopted good practice to enable appropriate patient flow through (a) more timely hand-offs between their A&E clinicians and acute physicians, (d) discharge to assess, (c) trusted assessor arrangements, (d) streamlined continuing healthcare processes, (e) seven day discharge capabilities and (f) other methods.

Stephen Barclay:

The monitoring of performance against the 95% four hour accident and emergency standard, along with data regarding 12 hour waits for admission, bed occupancy and delayed transfers of care is collected and published monthly by NHS England. Data, published at both a national and a trust level, is available via the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/>

From 2015-16, NHS Continuing Healthcare has been included in the assurance processes for clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). This helps NHS England ensure CCG compliance with the 'National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS-funded Nursing Care (November 2012) (revised)'. The Government's 2017/18 mandate to the National Health Service outlines that every hospital and its local health and social care partners must have adopted seven day discharge capabilities to help enable appropriate patient flow.

Discharge to Assess and Trusted Assessor arrangements are both monitored by the Better Care Fund (BCF) partners. This is supported by BCF quarterly reports that are submitted by Health and Wellbeing Boards to NHS England as part of the policy framework and planning requirements for 2017-19.

The good practice guide; Focus on improving patient flow for national priorities for acute hospitals 2017 was published by NHS Improvement in July 2017. This can be accessed via the following link:

<https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/good-practice-guide-focus-on-improving-patient-flow/>

Health Services: Contracts**David Linden:****[120590]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 11 October 2017 to Question 105277, what the timetable is for the consultation on the new Accountable Care Organisation contract.

Steve Brine:

NHS England will consult on the draft Accountable Care Organisation contract before any decision is made to issue it as a contract for wider use in the National Health Service.

NHS England has already undertaken wide engagement on this contract, including specific engagement on an early version in December 2016. Responses to the engagement exercise informed further development of an updated version of the draft contract published in August 2017.

It will always be for local commissioners to determine how to best deliver services to meet local needs. It is right that decisions on local services and service models are made by local commissioners, who can best assess how to meet the needs of people in their area. For any significant system reconfiguration, we expect all local parts of

the system to be talking to the public and stakeholders regularly — it is vital that people can shape the future of their local services.

David Linden: [120591]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether it is his Department's policy that contracts associated with the formation of Accountable Care Organisations will not be outsourced to the private sector.

Justin Madders: [121069]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, who is responsible for determining the membership of an Accountable Care Organisation.

Steve Brine:

In the very small number of places where local commissioners are running procurements for the award of such contracts, local National Health Service foundation trusts, NHS trusts and general practitioners have been selected as partners for delivery of those contracts.

The selection of an appropriate provider to hold such a contract will continue to be a matter for local NHS commissioners, and those commissioners must make that selection by way of a process which is compliant with the requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015. These involve openness, transparency and equal treatment of potential providers.

■ Health Services: Refugees

Thangam Debbonaire: [121561]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish guidance for healthcare professionals on the entitlements refugees have to NHS treatment.

Stephen Barclay:

The Department has published extensive guidance on implementing the overseas visitor charging regulations. This guidance is for use by all frontline staff providing National Health Service funded services, as well as the providers and commissioners of those services. It is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-overseas-visitors-hospital-charging-regulations>

This guidance, most recently refreshed in December 2017, is clear that refugees (those granted asylum, humanitarian protection or temporary protection under the immigration rules), and their dependents, are exempt from charges for NHS-funded services. They are therefore eligible for free NHS care in the same way as someone who is ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom. This guidance also sets out that any individual who has made a formal application with the Home Office to be granted asylum, temporary protection or humanitarian protection which has not yet been determined is also exempt from charges, as are their dependants, as part of the application.

Advice and guidance for healthcare practitioners on the health needs of migrant patients, including refugees, was also published by Public Health England on 8 January 2018 and is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-entitlements-migrant-health-guide>

■ Malnutrition

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[120719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate has been made of the cost to the NHS of malnutrition.

Stephen Barclay:

This information is not held centrally.

■ Medical Treatments

Dr Lisa Cameron: [\[120841\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that it has adequate medical importation and exportation customs expertise after the UK leaves the EU.

Steve Brine:

Maintaining continuity of medicine supply is a key part of ensuring everyone has continued access to the medicines they need on day one of the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union and thereafter. The UK is fully committed to continuing the close working relationship with our European partners in the interests of public health and safety; and will seek to ensure that cross-border trade with the EU is as frictionless as possible for the benefit of patients in both the EU and the UK. This will be part of the broader negotiations of the UK's future relations with the EU and the Department will continue to work closely with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs during and after the negotiation period.

Dr Lisa Cameron: [\[120842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that patient access to medicines currently available in the UK is maintained after the UK leaves the EU.

Dr Lisa Cameron: [\[120845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of effect of the UK leaving the EU on patients involved in EU clinical trials.

Dr Lisa Cameron: [\[120846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department taking to ensure access to European clinical trials for the treatment of rare diseases by UK patients after the UK has left the EU.

Steve Brine:

The Prime Minister has made clear that a key priority through the negotiations will be to ensure that the United Kingdom remains one of the best places in the world for science and innovation. In the negotiations, the Government will discuss with the European Union and Member States how best to continue cooperation in the field of medicines regulation in the best interests of both the UK and the EU. Our aim is to ensure that patients in the UK and across the EU continue to be able to access the best and most innovative medicines and be assured that their safety is protected through the strongest regulatory framework and sharing of data.

In the UK, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, Health Research Authority, ethics services, National Institute for Health Research and the National Health Service 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.

■ Mental Health Services**Ian Lavery:****[120959]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average waiting time has been for a patient to receive mental health support after being referred by their GP in the most recent period for which figures are available; what targets are in place for such treatment post-referral; and whether such targets are being achieved.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

NHS Digital does not currently hold combined average waiting time data for all services that provide mental health support. This is because there are a wide range of services that offer mental health support and there are varying degrees of complexities about measuring waiting times, particularly where patients have a range of comorbidities.

There are a number of targets for waiting times that the Government has signed up to, these include targets for the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme, waiting times targets for eating disorders services and waiting times targets for Early Intervention in Psychosis services. Updates against these are published on the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health Dashboard at:

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

■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young people**Mr Steve Reed:****[120697]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many of the 122 local areas that published local transformation plans for children and young people published updated versions of those documents in (a) 2016-17 and (b) 2017-18.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

This information is not held centrally.

However, it has been agreed that Local Transformation Plans should be aligned to Sustainability and Transformation Plans and are subject to annual refresh; this has been reinforced through operational planning guidance.

In 2016/17 this was formally tracked through the clinical commissioning group (CCG) Improvement and Assessment Framework. The majority of CCGs reported at the end of 2017 that plans had been refreshed, and those outstanding were followed up by NHS England Clinical networks and regional teams to ensure outstanding CCGs had refreshed plans.

■ NHS 111**Sir Nicholas Soames:**[\[121463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what training is provided to the staff working on the NHS 111 service.

Stephen Barclay:

Initial training for call handlers within NHS 111 is an intensive training programme that spans 10 weeks in the case of call handlers, and 14 weeks in the case of clinicians. These programmes, and further information, incorporate several formal classroom-based training modules focusing on NHS Pathways use, distance learning materials, supervised practice supported by an Accredited Coach, consolidated practice and a 'common learning programme'.

Once call handlers and clinicians start practising independently they are then subject to on-going performance management and professional development. The terms of the NHS Pathways "Licence to Use" mandate that all staff should be audited on a monthly basis. This involves listening to 'live' or recorded calls which are audited using a competency based audit tool.

■ NHS: Logos**Justin Madders:**[\[121068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to his Answer of 12 December 2017 to Question 117371 on NHS: Logos, on how many occasions the fee has been paid in each of the last five years.

Stephen Barclay:

Four licenses for nominal fees were issued in the last five years, two in 2013 and two in 2014.

■ NHS: Reorganisation**Justin Madders:**[\[121071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what powers are available to Accountable Care Organisations to raise funds from financial institutions.

Justin Madders: [\[121072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether Accountable Care Organisations are permitted to make a profit.

Steve Brine:

No Accountable Care Organisation yet exists in the National Health Service in England, as no contract to commission a provider organisation to operate in this way has yet been awarded. In the very small number of pilot areas in which this process is well advanced, indications are that the lead provider will be a NHS foundation trust. The powers of an NHS foundation trust to borrow are prescribed by section 46 of the NHS Act 2006 and related statutory provisions.

NHS foundation trusts are not-for-profit, public benefit corporations. They are part of the NHS and can retain any surpluses they make in order to invest in services for patients and service users. They can also, subject to the conditions set by their regulator, NHS Improvement, borrow money for the same purpose. All of their activities are subject to meeting the requirements of the regulator.

Justin Madders: [\[121073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what requirements are in place for Accountable Care Organisations to follow the NHS Constitution.

Steve Brine:

The Secretary of State for Health, National Health Service bodies, private and voluntary sector providers supplying NHS services, local authorities exercising public health functions, and Health Education England must honour the NHS Constitution in their decisions and actions.

Additionally, clinical commissioning groups, NHS England and Health Education England have a duty to promote the NHS Constitution.

■ Phenytoin

Emma Hardy: [\[121456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average cost to the public purse has been of (a) an individual prescription and (b) treating a patient with the drug Phenytoin in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

Steve Brine:

The average Net Ingredient Cost (NIC) per prescription item for Phenytoin written in the United Kingdom and dispensed in England is set out below. Information is split by Phenytoin and Phenytoin Sodium with a figure provided for the total.

Prescription items and NIC per prescription item (£)

	PHENYTOIN		PHENYTOIN SODIUM		TOTAL	
	Items	NIC per Item (£)	Items	NIC per Item (£)	Items	NIC per Item (£)
2012	39,117	15.76	970,031	21.52	1,009,148	21.30
2013	38,667	12.78	934,428	54.48	973,095	52.82
2014	36,017	12.90	894,176	48.76	930,193	47.38
2015	33,473	12.14	847,781	46.49	881,254	45.19
2016	31,360	12.16	800,820	45.19	832,180	43.94

Source: Prescription Cost Analysis

Information is not held centrally on the costs of treating a patient with phenytoin.

■ Respiratory System: Diseases

Dan Jarvis:

[\[121584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of the 4 December 2017 to Question 116582, if his Department will carry out an assessment of the long-term cost to the NHS of health problems and preventable deaths caused by cold homes.

Steve Brine:

There are no current plans for the Department to carry out an assessment of the long-term cost to the National Health Service of health problems and preventable deaths caused by cold homes. Likewise, NHS England and Public Health England advise that there are currently no plans to make an assessment of the long-term cost to a person's health of living in a cold home.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has issued guidance which covers reducing the health risks, including preventable deaths, associated with living in a cold home.

■ Soft Drinks: Children

Luciana Berger:

[\[121610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of labelling on energy drinks sold in the UK stating that such drinks are not recommended for children in preventing the consumption of energy drinks by under-18s.

Luciana Berger:

[\[121614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to prevent the consumption of energy drinks by under-18s.

Steve Brine:

No assessment has been made centrally on the effectiveness of labelling on energy drinks.

Key measures in our world-leading childhood obesity plan, launched in August 2016, include the soft drinks industry levy and sugar reduction and wider reformulation programme, which will encourage the food and drink industry to reduce the amount of sugar in products popular with children, including energy drinks.

The Government will continue to monitor the situation and any new emerging scientific evidence on the consumption of energy drinks by under-18s.

■ Vitamin D: Pregnancy**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:****[120715]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 15 November 2017 to Question 111555, what steps the Government is taking to tackle the rise in cases of vitamin D deficiency among pregnant women.

Stephen Barclay:

Pregnant women at risk of vitamin D deficiency are advised to take daily supplements. The current advice on vitamin D is based on the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) following its review of the evidence on vitamin D and health in 2016. SACN recommended a vitamin D intake of 10 micrograms each day.

Advice on taking vitamin D supplements, including both when it might be needed and highlighting the risk of taking too much, is available on the NHS Choices website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/>

In addition, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recommends that local authorities, primary care, and clinical commissioning groups should ensure health professionals suggest and record vitamin D supplement use among pregnant and breastfeeding women. This could take place during the first contact with someone who is pregnant, antenatal and postnatal appointments, health visitor appointments and developmental checks for infants and children.

HOME OFFICE■ **Asylum**

Stuart C. McDonald: [121356]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incoming Dublin III regulation requests were received by the UK in 2017.

Stuart C. McDonald: [121357]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which three countries made the most Dublin III regulation requests to the UK in 2017; and how many such requests were made by each of those countries.

Stuart C. McDonald: [121358]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incoming Dublin III regulation requests based on Article 16 Regulation 604/2013 relating to the dependent persons clause were received by the UK in 2017.

Stuart C. McDonald: [121359]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incoming Dublin III regulation requests based on the discretionary clause pursuant to Article 17(2) Regulation 604/2013 ("humanitarian clause") were received by the UK in 2017.

Caroline Nokes:

The Dublin III Regulation is a long-standing mechanism between EU Member States to determine responsibility for examining asylum claims. It is not an application route for transfer to the UK. Eurostat, the EU's statistics agency, regularly publishes Member State figures, which can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report.

Stuart C. McDonald: [121419]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incoming Dublin III regulation requests were received by the UK in 2017 broken down by responsibility criterion under Chapter III Regulation 604/2013.

Caroline Nokes:

The Dublin III Regulation is a long-standing mechanism between EU Member States to determine responsibility for examining asylum claims. It is not an application route for transfer to the UK. At present we do not publish data on cases covered by the Dublin Regulation. Eurostat, the EU's statistics agency, regularly publishes Member State figures, which can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report.

The Commission has data up to, and including 2016. This shows the UK processed over 6,000 Dublin requests in 2016: over 4,200 outgoing requests to other Member States and almost 1,800 incoming requests. 2017 data is not yet available.

Under the Dublin III Regulation, Member States have two months from receiving a request from another participating Member State to accept or reject responsibility for processing the asylum claim.

Once a Dublin request has been accepted (or legal matters have been resolved), the Regulation provides that the sending Member State has six months to enact the transfer. The Home Office works closely with EU Member State partners to enact transfers as soon as possible and ahead of the six month timeframe.

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[121556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will increase the period in which refugees continue to receive asylum support after receiving a positive decision on their asylum application to 50 days.

Caroline Nokes:

There are no plans to increase the period to 50 days. We are working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions to ensure that newly recognised refugees are provided with assistance to apply for any benefit to which they are entitled before their Home Office support comes to an end.

■ Asylum: Detainees

Gareth Thomas: [\[121611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum applicants were detained by the UK in 2017, broken down by grounds for detention.

Caroline Nokes:

The number of asylum applicants who were detained in the first three quarters of 2017 is available in table dt_01_q of the detention tables in the latest release of the 'Immigration Statistics, July to September 2017', available from the Home Office website at; <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-july-to-september-2017-data-tables>

Detention is used as an appropriate measure of immigration control and the reasons for which asylum claimants are detained is not recorded or held in a reportable format.

Gareth Thomas: [\[121613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many unaccompanied minors seeking asylum were detained by the UK in 2017.

Caroline Nokes:

Information on the number of minors entering detention in the UK is available in tables dt_01_q and dt_02_q of the detention tables in the latest releases of 'Immigration Statistics, July to September 2017', available from the Home Office website at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/662536/detention-jul-sep-2017-tables.ods.

Table dt_01_q includes a breakdown of asylum and non-asylum detainees, but cannot identify those minors which were unaccompanied. Minors as part of a family unit are only detained in Tinsley House (Family Unit) IRC and Gatwick PDA.

Figures for Q4 2017 will be released on 22 February 2018.

■ **Border Force: Staff**

Deidre Brock: [\[4342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Border Force officers are currently employed; and how many such officers she estimates will be required after the UK leaves the EU.

Caroline Nokes:

The Home Office constantly reviews its capabilities in order to deliver the Government's agenda. The Department responded quickly to the challenges following the EU referendum last June. With negotiations now underway, we continue to assess how our priorities will impact on the workforce and capabilities required.

Operational units across the Home Office actively monitor workflows to ensure sufficient resources are in place to meet demand and will continue to do so throughout negotiations and as the UK leaves the EU. Any resultant changes to resource requirements will be factored into strategic planning.

■ **Home Office: Regulation**

Priti Patel: [\[120903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what processes her Department has put in place to (a) monitor, (b) collate cost information on, (c) review and (d) respond to requests to amend or revoke regulations introduced by her Department.

Victoria Atkins:

For the current Parliament, the Government is committed to maintaining a proportionate approach to regulation to enable business growth while maintaining public protections.

This will be monitored through the target that the Government is required to set under the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015. Decisions about whether to amend or revoke regulations are considered by Ministers as part of the normal policy making process.

■ **Immigrants: Detainees**

Dan Jarvis: [\[121566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the North and Midlands Independent Monitoring Board for Short-Term Holding Facilities can annual report, submitted to her Department in March 2017.

Caroline Nokes:

I will review the annual report of the North and Midlands Independent Monitoring Board for Short-Term Holding Facilities and respond in due course.

Immigration Controls: Heathrow Airport**Mr Virendra Sharma:**[\[105685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 September 2017 to Question 10312, how many UK Border Force officers were deployed in each month between August 2016 and August 2017.

Caroline Nokes:

Border Force do not centrally collate rostering data since this is recorded and maintained at port level. There would be a disproportionate cost involved in collating this information from each individual port throughout the UK.

Passports: Wales**Susan Elan Jones:**[\[121570\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to ensure that UK passports can be provided bi-lingually in English and Welsh for people living in Wales.

Caroline Nokes:

Her Majesty's Passport Office complies with the Welsh Language Scheme, providing Welsh language passport application services in Wales, upon request.

The current passport includes Welsh language translations on page one of the passport and of the captions present on the biographical details page. Her Majesty's Passport Office intends to continue providing a Welsh translation of these sections within the new design of the passport.

There are currently no plans to translate additional sections of the passport into Welsh.

Police: Electronic Surveillance**Thangam Debonnaire:**[\[121464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which police forces own an international mobile subscriber identity catcher.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006 makes it an offence for a person to interfere with wireless telegraphy or to use wireless telegraphy with the intent to obtain information as to the contents, sender or addressee of a message of which neither he nor a person on whose behalf he is acting is an intended recipient, without lawful authority.

Investigative activity by public authorities involving interference with property or wireless telegraphy is regulated by the Police Act 1997 and the Intelligence Services Act 1994, which set out the high level of authorisation required before law

enforcement or the security and intelligence agencies can undertake such activity. The covert surveillance and property interference code of practice provides guidance on the use of these powers.

In addition, the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 will regulate the interference with equipment for the purpose of obtaining communications, equipment data or any other information. These provisions will come into force later this year, and further guidance will be provided in a statutory code of practice.

The use of all covert investigatory powers is overseen by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner.

Ownership and operation of such devices by police forces and other public authorities is an operational matter for them.

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[121465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many police forces operate an International Mobile Subscriber Identifier Catcher.

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[121466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance the Government gives on the ownership and use of International Mobile Subscriber Identifier Catcher devices by (a) any agency or person and (b) police forces.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006 makes it an offence for a person to interfere with wireless telegraphy or to use wireless telegraphy with the intent to obtain information as to the contents, sender or addressee of a message of which neither he nor a person on whose behalf he is acting is an intended recipient, without lawful authority.

Investigative activity by public authorities involving interference with property or wireless telegraphy is regulated by the Police Act 1997 and the Intelligence Services Act 1994, which set out the high level of authorisation required before law enforcement or the security and intelligence agencies can undertake such activity. The covert surveillance and property interference code of practice provides guidance on the use of these powers.

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The use of all covert investigatory powers is overseen by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner.

Ownership and operation of such devices by police forces and other public authorities is an operational matter for them.

■ Refugees

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[121557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will reintroduce a programme of support to newly-recognised refugees similar to that provided by the Refugee Integration and Employment Service until 2010.

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[121583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will produce a National Refugee Integration Strategy.

Caroline Nokes:

The Government has been reviewing the available evidence on the main causes of poor integration and in the coming months will bring forward plans for tackling these issues through a new integration strategy.

This will set out how we will support people in more isolated communities, and assist women, into the workplace in particular, and teach more people to speak English. The strategy will be widely applicable and will include refugees. Refugees are currently given the same access to the labour market and benefits as UK residents, as well as access to English language training. There are no plans to reintroduce a programme of support similar to that previously provided by the Refugee Integration and Employment Service.

■ UK Border Force: Wales

Stephen Doughty: [\[121636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many FTE Border Force officials tasked with immigration or customs enforcement duties were deployed to the ports of (a) Newport, (b) Cardiff, (c) Barry, (d) Swansea, (e) Pembroke Dock, (f) Milford Haven and (g) Fishguard in each of the last five years.

Caroline Nokes:

Border Force does not release location specific statistics on the deployment of its resources for security purposes as doing so could compromise border security.

This Government has ensured that sufficient resources are available to ensure the security of the border. Security of the border cannot be measured by numbers of staff. Border Force uses a sophisticated combination of experienced officers, intelligence, data, technology and partnership working.

Border Force resources in Wales are reviewed on a regular basis as part of the wider Border Force business planning process which is led by the Director General of Border Force.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Department for Communities and Local Government: Equal Pay

Jon Trickett:

[\[121233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to the transparency document entitled DCLG's Gender Pay Gap Report 2017, if he will set out the pay gap data for median, mean and bonus pay by (a) grade and (b) profession.

Jake Berry:

[Holding answer 10 January 2018]: Core Ministry gender pay gap data for March 2017 is available broken down by grade and profession and follows below.

MHCLG core Ministry mean and median gender pay gap split by grade (a):

GRADE	MEAN GPG	MEDIAN GPG
SCS3	***	***
SCS2	11.9 per cent	13.8 per cent
SCS1	2.6 per cent	-1.3 per cent
Grade 6	1.8 per cent	1.4 per cent
Grade 7	2.1 per cent	4.3 per cent
SEO	1.7 per cent	3.6 per cent
HEO	1.4 per cent	0.0 per cent
EO	2.9 per cent	3.4 per cent
AO	5.5 per cent	5.0 per cent
Grand Total	3.1 per cent	5.1 per cent

MHCLG core Ministry mean and median gender pay gap split by staff professions (b):

STAFF PROFESSIONS	MEAN GPG	MEDIAN GPG
Commercial	***	***
Communications	3.0 per cent	10.4 per cent
Digital, Data and Technology	***	***
Economics	***	***
Finance	-0.6 per cent	-7.5 per cent
Human Resources (HR)	12.7 per cent	11.7 per cent

STAFF PROFESSIONS	MEAN GPG	MEDIAN GPG
Knowledge and Information Management (KIM)	11.9 per cent	3.6 per cent
Operational Delivery	9.3 per cent	9.5 per cent
Planning	0.5 per cent	0.7 per cent
Policy	-1.0 per cent	-3.6 per cent
Project Delivery	6.0 per cent	8.3 per cent
Social Research	-15.4 per cent	-58.3 per cent
Statistics	-5.4 per cent	-26.8 per cent
Grand Total	3.1 per cent	5.1 per cent

MHCLG core Ministry mean and median gender pay gap for bonus payments split by grade (a):

GRADE	MEAN BONUS GPG	MEDIAN BONUS GPG
SCS3	***	***
SCS2	***	***
SCS1	48.8 per cent	73.3 per cent
Grade 6	18.0 per cent	20.6 per cent
Grade 7	13.5 per cent	14.3 per cent
SEO	-34.1 per cent	-42.9 per cent
HEO	-13.4 per cent	-16.7 per cent
AO	32.5 per cent	83.3 per cent
EO	8.4 per cent	0.0 per cent
Grand Total	27.1 per cent	7.7 per cent

MHCLG core Ministry mean and median gender pay gap for bonus payments split by staff professions (b):

STAFF PROFESSIONS	MEAN BONUS GPG	MEDIAN GPG
Commercial	***	***

STAFF PROFESSIONS	MEAN BONUS GPG	MEDIAN GPG
Communications	-0.6 per cent	11.0 per cent
Digital, Data and Technology	***	***
Economics	***	***
Finance	30.3 per cent	-66.7 per cent
Human Resources (HR)	-37.7 per cent	65.4 per cent
Knowledge and Information Management (KIM)	***	***
Operational Delivery	-7.9 per cent	0.0 per cent
Planning	22.3 per cent	30.4 per cent
Policy	37.4 per cent	-9.1 per cent
Project Delivery	28.0 per cent	-5.6 per cent
Social Research	***	***
Statistics	23.4 per cent	0.0 per cent
Grand Total	27.1 per cent	7.7 per cent

Information relating to bonus payments made during 2016/17 includes in-year cash awards, instant reward vouchers and end of year performance bonuses for a small group of staff.

Gender pay data split by relevant staff professions has been produced using Office for National Statistics Civil Service Statistical Data for March 2017.

Please note that numbers relating to five individuals or fewer have been removed from these tables and replaced with '***' in the interest of not identifying those concerned.

■ Department for Communities and Local Government: Public Expenditure

Tommy Sheppard:

[\[121506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, which fruitless payments in excess of £30,000 his Department has made by (a) recipient of each such payment, (b) purpose of each such payment, (c) value of each such payment and (d) reason that payment was classified as fruitless in the 2017-18 financial year to date.

Jake Berry:

No fruitless payments in excess of £30,000 have been made this year.

■ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Reorganisation**Wera Hobhouse:** [\[121612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential cost to the public purse of the renaming of his Department; and which new policy responsibilities his Department will discharge after it is renamed.

John Healey: [\[121624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the cost of re-branding the Department of Communities and Local Government as the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Jake Berry:

Building the homes our country needs is an absolute priority for this government. The name change for the department reflects this government's renewed focus to deliver more homes and build stronger communities across England.

Any necessary will be done in a cost-efficient way with expenditure being kept to a minimum.

This would be a fraction of the cost of splitting up the Ministry as proposed by the opposition.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Abduction****Dr David Drew:** [\[121193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what measures her Department has put in place to assist children recovered from abduction in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Harriett Baldwin:

DFID provides assistance to children recovered from abduction in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by supporting child protection interventions through our £175million humanitarian programme. The United Nations Children's Funds and the International Committee for the Red Cross are our key partners implementing child protection services, particularly in Kasai Centrale and Kasai Orientale. Their support includes identification, documentation, family tracing and reunification, recreational support, child friendly spaces and individual psychosocial support. In 2017 DFID helped 474 children exit from militias or detention centres and reunited 88 children with their families.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]**

Emma Hardy: [\[903215\]](#)

What steps he is taking to ensure that UK trade and investment policies promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

Graham Stuart:

The UK is committed to its role as a global champion of open and fair trade and the benefits that brings to all genders. As demonstrated by our support for the women's economic empowerment declaration at the Eleventh Ministerial Conference (MC11) in December 2017, we recognise the importance of gender equality and the need to ensure women and girls are empowered economically, especially through involvement in trade, both in the UK and internationally.

■ **Prosperity Fund**

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [\[903223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what role his Department plays in the management of the Prosperity Fund.

Graham Stuart:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) plays a key role in the Fund. Minister Hands represents the department on the Ministerial Board, which sets the strategic direction of the Fund, endorses programme proposals, and ensures programmes are maximising impact and value for money.

■ **Trade Agreements: Arbitration**

Gareth Snell: [\[121500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, when officials in his Department received a draft report of the research conducted by Copenhagen Economics and Van Bael & Bellis into the design of the UK Trade Remedies Framework.

Graham Stuart:

The development of this economic research was an iterative process. The researchers provided regular progress updates in order for the Department to monitor delivery against the research specification.

JUSTICE■ **Prisoners' Release: Females**

Kate Green: [\[120662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many women were released on temporary licence from each establishment by nationality of offender in each of the last five whole reporting years.

Dr Phillip Lee:

Public protection is our priority. All offenders must meet strict criteria and pass a full-risk assessment before being considered for release on temporary licence.

The following table shows the number of female offenders released on temporary licence (ROTL) in each of the last five years for which data is available, by establishment and nationality.

FEMALE PRISONERS RELEASED ON TEMPORARY LICENCE BY ESTABLISHMENT AND NATIONALITY, ENGLAND AND WALES, 2012 TO 2016

Establishment	Nationality	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
All	All	875	819	731	613	621
Askham Grange	All	168	127	169	147	163
	British	165	125	166	146	162
	Cameroonian *		0	0	0	*
	Irish	*	*	3	*	0
	Polish	*	*	0	*	0
	Jamaican	0	*	0	0	*
	Vietnamese	*	0	0	0	0
Bronzefield	All	6	7	21	12	7
	British	*	7	21	12	7
	Malawian	*	0	0	0	0
	Nigerian	*	0	0	0	0
Downview	All	128	99	0	0	*
	Bahamian	*	*	0	0	*
	Belgian	0	*	0	0	0
	British	103	82	0	0	*
	Bulgarian	*	0	0	0	0
	Canadian	*	*	0	0	0
	Colombian	*	0	0	0	0
	Costa Rican	0	*	0	0	0

**FEMALE PRISONERS RELEASED ON TEMPORARY LICENCE BY ESTABLISHMENT AND NATIONALITY,
ENGLAND AND WALES, 2012 TO 2016**

	Dutch	*	0	0	0	0
	Ethiopian	*	*	0	0	0
	French	*	0	0	0	0
	Ghanaian	*	0	0	0	0
	Greek	*	0	0	0	0
	Grenadian	*	0	0	0	0
	Guyanese	*	*	0	0	0
	Irish	*	*	0	0	0
	Ivorian	*	0	0	0	0
	Jamaican	3	*	0	0	0
	Kenyan	*	0	0	0	0
	Nigerian	*	0	0	0	0
	Polish	*	*	0	0	0
	Portuguese	*	0	0	0	*
	Swede	*	0	0	0	0
	Trinidadian, Tobagonian	0	*	0	0	0
	Ugandan	0	*	0	0	0
	Unrecorded	*	*	0	0	0
	Venezuelan	0	*	0	0	0
	Vietnamese	0	*	0	0	0
	Zambian	*	*	0	0	0
Drake Hall	All	118	121	124	90	119
	American	0	*	0	0	0
	Belgian	0	0	*	0	*
	British	113	112	112	87	113

**FEMALE PRISONERS RELEASED ON TEMPORARY LICENCE BY ESTABLISHMENT AND NATIONALITY,
ENGLAND AND WALES, 2012 TO 2016**

	Bulgarian	0	*	*	0	0
	Dutch	0	0	0	*	0
	German	0	0	0	0	*
	Ghanaian	0	0	*	0	0
	Greek	0	*	*	0	0
	Irish	*	*	3	*	*
	Jamaican	*	0	3	*	*
	Latvian	*	*	0	0	0
	Lithuanian	0	0	*	0	0
	Moroccan	0	*	*	0	0
	Pakistani	*	*	0	*	0
	Polish	0	0	*	0	0
	Vietnamese	0	*	0	0	0
East Sutton Park	All	174	165	137	145	143
	Belgian	0	*	*	0	0
	British	171	160	129	141	141
	French	0	*	*	0	0
	Ghanaian	*	0	*	0	0
	Greek	0	*	*	0	0
	Indian	0	0	0	*	*
	Iranian	*	0	0	0	0
	Irish	*	0	*	*	*
	Jamaican	0	0	*	0	0
	Nigerian	*	0	0	0	*
	Romanian	0	0	*	*	0

**FEMALE PRISONERS RELEASED ON TEMPORARY LICENCE BY ESTABLISHMENT AND NATIONALITY,
ENGLAND AND WALES, 2012 TO 2016**

	Unrecorded	0	*	0	0	0
Eastwood Park	All	23	32	41	23	18
	British	23	*	41	23	18
	Irish	0	*	0	0	0
Foston Hall	All	19	8	3	*	*
	British	*	8	3	*	*
	Vietnamese	*	0	0	0	0
Holloway	All	7	12	36	33	8
	British	6	11	33	32	8
	Chilean	0	*	*	0	0
	Croatian	*	0	*	0	0
	Irish	0	*	*	*	0
	Nigerian	0	0	*	0	0
	Unrecorded	*	0	0	*	0
Low Newton	All	12	9	8	7	9
	British	12	9	8	7	9
New Hall	All	13	15	4	*	*
	British	13	15	4	*	*
Peterborough	All	24	22	31	27	20
	British	24	20	27	25	20
	German	0	*	*	*	0
	Jamaican	0	*	*	*	0
	Lithuanian	0	0	*	0	0
	Nigerian	0	0	*	0	0
	Romanian	0	*	0	*	0

**FEMALE PRISONERS RELEASED ON TEMPORARY LICENCE BY ESTABLISHMENT AND NATIONALITY,
ENGLAND AND WALES, 2012 TO 2016**

	Zambian	0	0	*	0	0
Send	All	120	92	78	43	46
	Barbadian	*	*	0	0	0
	Belgian	0	*	*	0	0
	British	107	81	70	43	46
	Canadian	0	*	0	0	0
	Chinese	*	0	0	0	0
	Colombian	*	*	0	0	0
	Congolese	*	0	0	0	0
	German	*	0	0	0	0
	Ghanaian	0	*	*	0	0
	Guyanese	0	0	*	0	0
	Hungarian	*	*	0	0	0
	Indonesian	0	*	0	0	0
	Jamaican	*	*	0	0	0
	Latvian	*	0	0	0	0
	Nigerian	*	0	0	0	0
	Portuguese	*	0	0	0	0
	Sierra Leonean	0	0	*	0	0
	Slovakian	*	*	0	0	0
	Somalian	*	0	0	0	0
	Trinidadian, Tobagonian	0	0	*	0	0
	Zambian	0	0	*	0	0
	Zimbabwean	0	*	*	0	0
Styal	All	63	110	79	84	85

FEMALE PRISONERS RELEASED ON TEMPORARY LICENCE BY ESTABLISHMENT AND NATIONALITY, ENGLAND AND WALES, 2012 TO 2016

British	62	106	79	83	84
Irish	*	3	0	0	0
Pakistani	*	*	0	*	*
Portuguese	0	*	0	*	*

Source: MoJ JSAS - PQ
120662

An asterisk (*) has been used to suppress values of two or fewer. This is to prevent the disclosure of individual information. Further disclosure control may be completed where this alone is not sufficient.

■ Prisoners: Mental Illness

Imran Hussain:

[\[121042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the suitability of the physical environment in prisons constructed in the 19th century for prisoners who are experiencing mental health problems.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The department remains committed to reforming our prisons to make them safe and secure establishments with access to health, including mental health, services to support the rehabilitation of offenders in custody.

Evidence shows that prisoners typically have more complex physical and mental health needs than the general population and we are committed to addressing these. Our prison estate reforms will see us close ageing prisons and deliver high-quality, modern establishments fit for today's demands. Our prison estate reforms will benefit prisoners with mental health concerns through reconfiguration plans for the estate. Although the department has not undertaken a prison-by-prison assessment of each establishment's suitability, we have taken expert advice from clinicians, commissioners and social care experts on the design of the new prisons to ensure that we create the right environment for treatment and care.

We continue to work closely with our health partners to ensure that offenders in all prisons are assessed at the appropriate time and can access the treatment and support required for their mental health needs.

NORTHERN IRELAND■ **Elections: Northern Ireland**

Paul Girvan: [\[121000\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent steps his Department has taken to deter and prevent electoral fraud in Northern Ireland.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

The administration of elections in Northern Ireland is an operational matter for the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland, and all cases of suspected electoral fraud are referred by her to the Police Service of Northern Ireland. I am aware that a very small number of cases of possible fraud were referred to the PSNI last year.

The Chief Electoral Officer has conducted a review of absent voting procedures at recent elections which the Secretary of State will consider carefully. A copy of the Chief Electoral Officer's letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

■ **Northern Ireland Government**

Stephen Morgan: [\[120863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether he has drawn up a shortlist of independent chairs for potential future talks about restoring the power-sharing Executive in Northern Ireland.

Karen Bradley:

The Government is committed to doing all it can to get devolution up and running in Northern Ireland and will outline plans for further talks shortly.

SCOTLAND■ **Scotland Office: Advertising**

Deidre Brock: [\[121531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to the Answer of 20 December 2017 to Question 119818, on Scotland Office: Advertising, what services were provided by (a) the Leith Agency and (b) Carat Ltd; and what the costs of those services were.

David Mundell:

During the period February 2017-October 2017, the Leith Agency worked with the Scotland Office to deliver creative services including the design of templates for use on social media, copy writing and video production. The cost relating to these services is commercially sensitive.

The UK Government and Scottish Government both use Carat Ltd. to procure all media advertising. The cost relating to these services is commercially sensitive.

TRANSPORT**■ Bicycles: Hire Services**

Steve McCabe: [\[120618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health on the health benefits created by a bike-share scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

The Government recognises that cycling has significant health benefits, and the Department for Transport will continue to work with the Department for Health and Social Care and other Government Departments to achieve the aims and ambitions of the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy. Most recently I met with the Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Chief Executive of Public Health England on 9 January to discuss opportunities for joint working.

■ Driving under Influence

Daniel Zeichner: [\[120857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to improve enforcement against drink-driving in light of recent report by the Institute of Alcohol Studies Running on empty, drink-driving law enforcement in England published on 8 December 2017.

Jesse Norman:

The Government welcomes the report from the Institute of Alcohol Studies. The Latest Department for Transport figures show that fewer people died on British roads in 2015 as a result of drink driving than in any year since records began. Chief Constables and locally elected Police and Crime Commissioners have the powers they need to deploy their resources in response to local priorities.

■ Electric Vehicles: Northern Ireland

Paul Girvan: [\[121006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what financial incentives his Department makes available to public transport providers to encourage the use electric vehicles in Northern Ireland.

Jesse Norman:

Northern Ireland receives a share of the UK Government's spending via the Barnett formula to fund devolved matters, including public transport.

Public transport providers in Northern Ireland are also able to take advantage of our Workplace Charging Scheme which assists with the cost of purchasing and installing electric vehicle chargepoints in workplaces. The Plug in Taxi Grant (PITG) announced in March 2017 provides support to taxi drivers purchasing new ultra low

emission taxis of up to £7,500 throughout the UK. The first eligible vehicles to be able to claim the PITG are expected to come to market shortly. For private hire vehicles the existing Plug in Car Grant of up to £4,500 is already available to support the take up of ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) used as taxis.

■ London Midland: Passengers

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[121414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many passengers travelled to London from Coventry during peak hours on London Midlands trains in the last 12 months.

Jesse Norman:

There are no published statistics on the number of passengers travelling on London Midland's train services from Coventry to London in the last 12 months.

Rail passenger journeys statistics by train operator are available on the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) data portal at the following link. The latest data are also attached: <http://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/displayreport/report/html/2b2e2c38-c822-4e1f-9fb4-b049b3c13899>.

ORR also publish Estimates of Station Usage, which gives annual totals for all passengers entering and exiting each station on Great Britain's rail network, on the following page. The latest data are also attached:

<http://orr.gov.uk/statistics/published-stats/station-usage-estimates>

Attachments:

1. Estimates of Station Usage 2016-17 [121414 - estimates-of-station-usage-2016-17.xlsx]
2. ORR Stats - Passenger Journeys by TOC [121414 - ORR Statistics - Passenger Journeys by TOC.xls]

■ Network Rail: Retail Trade

Caroline Lucas: [\[120586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will provide a regional breakdown of the £1 billion valuation of the Network Rail Commercial Estate business; how the £1 billion valuation was arrived at; whether everything included in the £1 billion estimate represents a capital cost; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

The Commercial Estate portfolio is clustered around key urban centres with a strong presence in the UK's major cities. Cities with the largest amount of rental space include London – 57%, Manchester – 4%, Birmingham – 2%, Leeds – 2%, Sheffield – 1%, Liverpool – 1%, Bristol – 1%.

Details of how the £1 billion valuation was arrived at are set out in Network Rail's Annual Report and Accounts 2017, available at: <https://cdn.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Network-Rail-Annual-report-and-accounts-2017.pdf> (p112, section 13).

■ Patients: Travel

Peter Kyle:

[\[121509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2017 to Question 119952, whether the Government revised Accessibility Action Plan will make specific reference to the issues that face disabled people while attending hospital appointments.

Jesse Norman:

The final Accessibility Action Plan will set out the Government's updated plans for making transport more inclusive so that disabled people can travel more confidently.

The Department is aware that transport to hospital appointments is an area of particular concern to many disabled people, and the Department plans to write to the Department of Health and Social Care on this matter shortly.

■ Railways: Franchises

Layla Moran:

[\[121015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of allowing public bodies to bid for rail franchises; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

Passenger journeys have more than doubled since privatisation, with private sector involvement bringing innovation, investment and competition to our railways.

There is an important role for the public sector in franchising, as part of new public and private partnerships. An example being the recently announced East Coast Partnership. This will ensure the railway gets the best of both the private and public sector, keeping the benefits of privatisation while maintaining vital infrastructure in public hands and preparing our railway to meet the challenges of the future.

■ Transforming Cities Fund

Diana Johnson:

[\[121470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much money from the Transforming Cities Fund his Department plans to allocate to each NUTS 1 region.

Jesse Norman:

Half of the Transforming Cities Fund will be allocated to the six mayoral combined authorities on a per capita basis. These are:

COMBINED AUTHORITY	AMOUNT
Greater Manchester	£243m
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	£74m
West Midlands	£250m

COMBINED AUTHORITY	AMOUNT
Tees Valley	£59m
West of England	£80m
Liverpool City Region	£134m
Total	£840m

The remainder of the fund will be allocated to other major cities in England via a competitive process. Further details of this process will be announced shortly.

■ Volkswagen

Jeff Smith:

[\[121585\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent representations he has made to Volkswagen on (a) compensation to UK vehicle owners affected by the Volkswagen emissions scandal and (b) the completion of the required emissions and technological repair work for those vehicles affected.

Jesse Norman:

The Government continues to take the unacceptable actions of Volkswagen extremely seriously and is working hard on behalf of UK consumers. I most recently met with Volkswagen executives in December 2017 to press the company again to provide compensation and treat their UK consumers fairly.

There are approximately 1.2 million affected Volkswagen, Audi, Skoda and Seat vehicles in the UK. As of 16th December 2017, Volkswagen had applied its technical update to approximately 830,000 of these. Officials continue to engage regularly with Volkswagen to monitor progress and press them to respond to consumer concerns.

WALES

■ Wales Office: EU Law

Priti Patel:

[\[120920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, which EU (a) Directives, (b) Regulations and (c) other legislation affecting his Department he is planning to propose (i) revocation and (ii) amendment of after the UK leaves the EU.

Alun Cairns:

The European Union (Withdrawal) Bill will retain EU law as it applies in the UK on exit day. We expect between 800 and 1000 statutory instruments will be required across Government to correct this EU retained law to ensure the statute book functions appropriately outside the EU. All Departments are engaged in this process.

Once we leave the EU, we will make our own laws. As we leave the EU, the Government's EU exit legislative programme is designed to cater for the full range of negotiated and non-negotiated outcomes.

■ Wales Office: Regulation

Priti Patel: [120892]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what the title was of each set of regulations introduced by his Department in each month since May 2010; which of those regulations have been (a) subject to the (i) one in one out and (ii) one in two out procedure and (b) (i) revoked and (ii) amended; and what the net cost to (A) the public purse; and (B) business of those regulations is.

Priti Patel: [120979]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what processes his Department has put in place to (a) monitor, (b) collate cost information on, (c) review and (d) respond to requests to amend or revoke regulations introduced by his Department.

Alun Cairns:

The changes to regulations affecting business during the 2010-15 Parliament are recorded in Statements of New Regulation that were published every six months. These are available on: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/one-in-two-out-statement-of-new-regulation>

For the 2015-17 Parliament, the Government will shortly publish its final report on the savings to business delivered during that Parliament.

For the current Parliament, the Government is committed to maintaining a proportionate approach to regulation to enable business growth while maintaining public protections. This will be monitored through the target that the Government is required to set under the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Children: Day Care

Eddie Hughes: [903244]

What steps the Government is taking to help (a) women and (b) men balance work with childcare responsibilities.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government is committed to helping men and women to balance work and childcare between them. It is good for parents and children, as well as being an important way to address the Gender Pay Gap. Shared Parental Leave and the right to request flexible working enables parents to arrange work and care in a way that works for them.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Department for Work and Pensions: Written Questions**

Chris Ruane: [\[121518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pension, how many and what proportion of his Department's Answers to Written Parliamentary Questions in the 2017-18 Session to date have referred to the information requested not being (a) collected or (b) collated centrally.

Kit Malthouse:

The Department for Work and Pensions has answered 19 written parliamentary questions explaining that the requested information was not available on the grounds of it not being collected or held centrally, out of a total of 1986 parliamentary questions that have been answered. This figure includes some that were partially answered.

■ Mortgages: Interest Payments

Alex Sobel: [\[121342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reasons his Department decided against the introduction of a transitional protection period for people claiming support for mortgage interest after April 2018.

Kit Malthouse:

Support for mortgage interest provides protection for home owners from the threat of repossession. The new loan scheme will provide exactly the same level of support and, thus, exactly the same level of protection against repossession. Claimants and mortgage lenders will not see any difference in the payments they receive and so there is no need to make any general transitional provisions.

Some specific transitional provisions have been put in place which will allow for existing benefit payments to remain in place for a temporary period. These will apply if there are administrative delays in migrating some claimants to the new scheme or where there are difficulties in appointing someone to act on the claimant's behalf.

■ Pension Credit: Greater London

Stephen Timms: [\[121547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people living in Greater London have claimed Pension Credit in each year since 2010.

Guy Opperman:

The number of claimants of Pension Credit in Greater London in each year since 2010 can be found in the table below:

YEAR	GREATER LONDON
May 2010	296,047
May 2011	291,450
May 2012	281,819
May 2013	271,908
May 2014	261,387
May 2015	248,039
May 2016	234,855
May 2017	223,286

This information is published and available at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

■ Social Security Benefits: Newham

Stephen Timms:

[121546]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people over the age of 60 have claimed (a) employment support allowance and (b) job seekers allowance in the London Borough of Newham in each year since 2010.

Sarah Newton:

The information available for the number of Employment and Support Allowance claimants by Local Authority and age is published and can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

The information available for the number of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants by Local Authority and age is also published and can be found at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/default.asp>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/home/newuser.asp>

■ State Retirement Pensions: Females**Stephen Morgan:**[\[121165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether all women born in the 1950s affected by the change in state pension age have now been informed by letter of such changes.

Guy Opperman:

The Government sent letters to women affected by the 1995 Act changes between April 2009 and March 2011 using the address details held by HMRC at that time.

The timetable for equalising State Pension age for women and men to 65 and the subsequent increase to 66 was accelerated by the Pensions Act 2011 following sharp increases in life expectancy projections. A concession was made prior to the passing of the 2011 Act which reduced the maximum delay that anyone would experience in claiming their State Pension, relative to the previous timetable, to 18 months compared to the original proposal. Following the Pensions Act 2011 the Government wrote to all those directly affected to inform them of the changes to their State Pension age between January 2012 and November 2013.

Background to direct mail outs:

- Apr 09 – Mar11: All those affected by the 1995 Act changes alone (those born between 6 April 1950 and 5 April 1953) were sent letters informing them of the change to their State Pension age. Letters went to approximately 1.2 million women between 2009 and 2011.
- Jan 12 – Nov 13: All those affected by the 2011 Act changes (those born between 6 April 1953 and 5 April 1960) were sent letters informing them of the change to their State Pension age. This involved mailing more than 5 million letters with an accompanying leaflet to those affected, between January 2012 and November 2013.

■ Statutory Sick Pay**Stephen Timms:**[\[121420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make it his policy to bring forward legislative proposals to introduce statutory sick pay at an hourly rate; and if he will make a statement.

Sarah Newton:

We want to see a reformed Statutory Sick Pay system which supports more flexible working – for example, to help support phased returns to work including spacing out working days during a return to work, managing a health condition, or recovering from illness. We are taking forward further policy development and will bring forward a consultation on these changes, before introducing this reform

■ Universal Credit**Stephen Timms:****[121360]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his policy is on closing universal credit claims when income in any monthly assessment period results in a zero payment; and if he will make a statement.

Alok Sharma:

[Holding answer 10 January 2018]: When a claimant's Universal Credit award ceases (because their income has reduced their Universal Credit entitlement to nil), they can reclaim Universal Credit if their circumstances have changed within 6 months of their claim ending, and they now wish to receive financial support.

The reclaiming process is designed to be very quick, light touch and claimants only need to update us with their change in circumstances.

■ Universal Credit: Cardiff and Penarth**Stephen Doughty:****[121637]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many universal credit live service claimants have been registered at (a) Cardiff and (b) Penarth JobCentre Plus in each of the last 12 months.

Alok Sharma:

Universal Credit (UC) full service is not yet available to claimants registered at Cardiff Alexandra House, Cardiff Charles Street and Penarth Jobcentre Plus offices.

Information on the number of UC claim starts and caseload by Jobcentre Plus office is published and can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/jsf/login.xhtml>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

Stephen Doughty:**[121638]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, by what date her Department plans for legacy claimants at (a) Cardiff and (b) Penarth JobCentre Plus to have been migrated to full service universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

The managed migration of legacy benefit claimants to Universal Credit is planned to start in July 2019, completing in March 2022. We are still developing the more detailed plans as to when this will occur in particular geographic areas during this period.

■ Winter Fuel Payments: British Nationals Abroad**Dr David Drew:****[121513]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will recalculate winter fuel payments for eligible claimants living in other EU member states using postcode enumerators to devise a more accurate system than measuring the national average of temperatures in each such country.

Guy Opperman:

There are no plans to use post code enumerators to determine the eligibility of Winter Fuel Payments for those living in other member states for the reasons set out in the explanatory memorandum to The Social Fund Winter Fuel Payment (Amendment) Regulations 2014/3270, details of which can be found in the link below.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3270/memorandum/contents>

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Energy Policy

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Greg Clark):
[\[HCWS399\]](#)

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ 25 Year Environment Plan

The Secretary of State (Michael Gove):

[\[HCWS398\]](#)

It is this Government's ambition to leave our environment in a better state than we found it. We have made significant progress but there is much more to be done. The 25 Year Environment Plan that we have published today outlines the steps we propose to take to achieve our ambition.

Environment is – at its roots – another word for nature, for the planet that sustains us, the life on earth that inspires wonder and reverence, the places dear to us we wish to protect and preserve. We value those landscapes and coastlines as goods in themselves, places of beauty which nurture and support all forms of wildlife.

Respecting nature's intrinsic value, and the value of all life, is critical to our mission. For this reason we safeguard cherished landscapes from economic exploitation, protect the welfare of sentient animals and strive to preserve endangered woodland and plant life, not to mention the greening of our urban environments.

But we also draw from the planet all the raw materials we need to live – food, water, air and energy for growth. So protecting and enhancing the environment, as this Plan lays out, is about more than respecting nature. It is critical if the next generation is to flourish, with abundant natural resources to draw on, that we look after our and their inheritance wisely. We need to replenish depleted soil, plant trees, support wetlands and peatlands, rid seas and rivers of rubbish, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, cleanse the air of pollutants, develop cleaner, sustainable energy and protect threatened species and habitats.

Previous Governments, here and in other nations, have made welcome strides and driven environmental improvement. Yet as this 25 Year Plan makes clear, there is much more still to do. We must tread more lightly on our planet, using resources more wisely and radically reducing the waste we generate. Waste is choking our oceans and despoiling our landscapes as well as contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and scarring habitats. The success of the 5p plastic bag charge in reducing the use of carrier bags by 85% shows the difference which government action can make, and demonstrates that protecting our environment is a job for each one of us. The Plan outlines ways to reduce the use of plastics that contribute to pollution, and broader steps

to encourage recycling and the more thoughtful use of resources. Over the lifetime of this Plan, we want to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste.

The Government's Clean Growth Strategy – the sister document to this Environment Plan – sets out how we will deliver the clean, green growth needed to combat global warming. We will do what is necessary to adapt to the effects of a changing climate, improving the resilience of our infrastructure, housing and natural environment.

Population growth and economic development will mean more demand for housing and this Government is committed to building many more homes. However, we will ensure that we support development and the environment by embedding the principle that new development should result in net environmental gain – with neglected or degraded land returned to health and habitats for wildlife restored or created.

Most of our land is used, however, for agriculture not housing. The new system of support that we will bring in for farmers – true friends of the earth, who recognise that a care for land is crucial to future rural prosperity – will have environmental enhancement at its heart.

We will support farmers to turn over fields to meadows rich in herbs and wildflowers, plant more trees, restore habitats for endangered species, recover soil fertility and attract wildlife back. We will ensure broader landscapes are transformed by connecting habitats into larger corridors for wildlife, as recommended by Sir John Lawton in his official review. Our plan for a new Northern Forest, to which we're contributing more than £5 million, will be accompanied by a new review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Planting more trees provides not just new habitats for wildlife – it also helps reduce carbon dioxide levels and can reduce flood risk. We will work with nature to protect communities from flooding, slowing rivers and creating and sustaining more wetlands to reduce flood risk and offer valuable habitats.

Beyond our coastlines, we must do more to protect the seas around us and marine wildlife. Leaving the EU means taking back control of the waters around these islands. We will develop a fishing policy that ensures seas return to health and fish stocks are replenished. We will also extend the marine protected areas around our coasts so that these stretches of environmentally precious maritime heritage have the best possible protection.

Internationally, we will lead the fight against climate change, invest to prevent wildlife crime, pursue a ban on sales of ivory, and strengthen partnerships to tackle illegal wildlife trade beyond borders, including investigating the feasibility of an anti-poaching taskforce.

We will underpin all this action with a comprehensive set of environmental principles. To ensure strong governance, we will consult on plans to set up a world-leading environmental watchdog, an independent, statutory body, to hold Government to account for upholding environmental standards. We will regularly update this Plan to reflect the changing nature of the environment.

While this 25 Year Environment Plan relates only to areas for which HMG is responsible, we will continue to work with the devolved administrations on our shared goal of protecting our natural heritage.

These actions will, we hope, ensure that this country is recognised as the leading global champion of a greener, healthier, more sustainable future for the next generation.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ **European Union (Withdrawal) Bill: analysis on the application of Standing Order No. 83L**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Department for Exiting the European Union) (Mr Steve Baker):

[\[HCWS400\]](#)

I am today placing in the Library of the House the department's analysis on the application of Standing Order No. 83L in respect of the amendments to the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill made at Commons Committee stage and of the amendments proposed by the Government for Report stage. These amendments do not change the conclusion of the original analysis in the Bill's explanatory notes.

STEVE BAKER MP

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ **Twelfth meeting of the UK-India Joint Economic and Trade Committee**

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Dr Liam Fox):

[\[HCWS397\]](#)

I am pleased to inform the House that I will be co-chairing the twelfth meeting of the UK-India Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) in London on Thursday 11 January with Shri. Suresh Prabhu, Minister for Commerce and Industry.

The UK-India JETCO was established on 13 January 2005 to further develop the India-UK strategic economic partnership further. India and the UK already enjoy a strong bilateral relationship, and both sides take a mutual interest in enhancing the competitiveness of the two economies. Bilateral trade between the UK and India has grown over the last ten years and was £15.4bn in 2016. We also have strong investment links; the UK has been the largest G20 investor in India over the last ten years and Indian companies operating in the UK account for around 110,000 jobs. At the last UK-India JETCO, in November 2016, I agreed with my co-chair to establish a Joint Trade Review, a collaborative analytical project, that will evaluate the range of ways we can strengthen the UK-India trade relationship and remove barriers, both at present and as we leave the EU.

The twelfth meeting of the JETCO will be a key opportunity to further strengthen our relationship with an important and close trade and investment partner. The meeting will be supported by business working groups on smart cities and technology, advanced

manufacturing and engineering, and will receive an update on the UK - India Joint Trade Review from my officials and the Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry. We will also welcome increased support from the UK's official export credit agency, UK Export Finance, for trade with India, of up to £4.5 billion. This will provide an additional £2.75 billion in support for UK companies exporting to India and for Indian buyers of UK goods and services, and be available in Indian Rupees . The meeting will also be an important milestone towards the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in April, from which we expect to give greater impetus to intra-Commonwealth trade. A Joint Statement will be released on Thursday 11 January to report on the outcomes of the JETCO.