



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 9 March 2018 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:31 P.M., 09 March 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

■ Energy: Meters

Stephen Kerr:

[\[130269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to inform consumers of (a) the limitations on the interoperability of first generation meters when changing energy supplier and (b) how those limitations will be tackled through the roll-out of second generation meters.

Claire Perry:

Under licence conditions, energy suppliers must inform their customers prior to the installation of a smart meter that they may lose meter functionality when switching. In addition, before any switch is concluded, the new supplier must tell the consumer about any change in how their meter will operate and the service they will receive.

These requirements aim to help consumers make informed decisions about switching, in the period before first generation smart meters are enrolled into the national data and communications platform and thus can be operated by any energy supplier. This upgrade will be done remotely.

Second generation meters use the smart metering infrastructure run by the Data and Communications Company and will enable all consumers to retain their smart functionality when they switch supplier.

■ Natural Gas

Anna McMorrin:

[\[130867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to decrease the level of energy dependence on gas.

Claire Perry:

[Holding answer 8 March 2018]: We are investing in new power generation technologies in order to support the economy and continue to be a world leader in tackling climate change. Renewables accounted for 25% of UK power in 2016, and half of our generation was low-carbon, a record high. We need a sustained programme to upgrade our energy infrastructure to replace old and inefficient generation plant that is coming to the end of its life. Whilst some retiring plant will be replaced by new low carbon capacity, gas has a role to play to maintain capacity adequacy and provide flexibility. This is not only the Government's view, but that of the Committee on Climate Change (CCC).

Nuclear is also key to ensuring continued energy security and availability in the UK. It is a central tenet of our energy policy that diversity of supply assures security of supply. Whether we are considering the numbers of different suppliers of our gas, or

in this case the number of different technologies we rely on for power, maintaining our diverse sources of supply is important.

We are also taking steps to help British homes and industry become more efficient. The Clean Growth Strategy includes numerous steps to help change the way we heat our homes and power our electricity grid. The Renewable Heat Incentive is a support scheme designed to help bridge the gap between the cost of fossil fuels and renewable and low carbon heat, and is open to homes and businesses across Great Britain.

■ **Skilled Workers: EU Nationals**

Stuart C. McDonald: [\[130706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure skilled EU professionals have their professional qualifications recognised after the UK leaves the EU.

Andrew Griffiths:

The UK Government has agreed to protect the rights of EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU under the Withdrawal Agreement. This includes the continued recognition of EU qualifications, where recognition decisions were received or where recognition procedures were ongoing before the withdrawal date and where an EU citizen is resident in the UK on the date of withdrawal (and vice versa). The government has stated that it will seek to agree a continued system for the recognition of professional qualifications as part of the future economic partnership, and we hope to begin this phase of negotiations shortly.

CABINET OFFICE

■ **Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster: EU Law**

Priti Patel: [\[120923\]](#)

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

Mr David Lidington:

I refer my Rt. Hon. Friend to PQ120894 answered on 8 th March 2018.

■ **Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster: Regulation**

Priti Patel: [\[120896\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, 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.

Mr David Lidington:

I refer my Rt. Hon. Friend to PQ120870 answered on 8 th January 2018.

Priti Patel:[\[120981\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, 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 David Lidington:

I refer my Rt. Hon. Friend to PQ120901 answered on 8th January 2018.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT■ **Broadband****Luke Hall:**[\[130283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that internet service providers supply customers with the internet speeds that they have advertised.

Margot James:

On 1 March 2018, Ofcom announced a strengthening of their codes of practice on better broadband speeds information. Under the new requirements, providers will have to give customers, at the point of sale, a minimum guaranteed speed and more realistic speed estimates at peak times. If a customer's broadband speed falls below the minimum guaranteed speed, the provider will have a month to improve speed, after which customers will have the right to exit their contract without paying a penalty. The right to exit will also apply, for the first time, to landline and TV packages purchased with the broadband services. The new requirements will apply from 1 March 2019.

Ofcom's announcement follows the Advertising Standard Authority (ASA) announcement in November last year that numerical speed claims should be based on the download speed available to at least 50% of customers at peak time and described as "average". The previous position was that advertised "up to" speeds should be available to at least 10% of customers. The ASA's guidance will take effect on 23 May 2018 after a six-month implementation period, and will apply to residential broadband services.

■ **Broadband: Rural Areas****Luke Hall:**[\[130282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps the Government is taking to increase access to full fibre-to-the-property broadband in rural areas.

Margot James:

We have taken a range of actions to support full fibre connectivity across the UK, including in rural areas.

In the Spring 2017 Budget, £200m of funding was allocated to the Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN) programme. This includes a £190m Challenge Fund designed to stimulate commercial investment in full fibre networks in both rural and urban locations across the UK and a market trial of the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme.

£400 million of public funding has also been made available for fibre connectivity through the Digital Infrastructure Investment Fund, that will unlock approximately £1 billion of private investment.

DEFRA has also allocated £30 million of grant funding from the Rural Development Programme for England, targeted at helping to connect businesses with broadband in hard to reach rural areas.

Beyond this, the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review will assess what further changes could be made to create the competitive conditions to encourage the long term investment needed to deliver the next generation of digital infrastructure in different areas of the UK, including hard-to-reach rural areas.

■ Broadband: South Gloucestershire**Luke Hall:**[\[130277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much the Government has invested in the roll-out of superfast broadband in South Gloucestershire.

Margot James:

The Department has provided funding of £1.87 million from the Superfast Broadband Programme and a further £1.5 million from the South West Ultrafast Fund to support broadband coverage in South Gloucestershire. 17,014 premises have been given superfast coverage so far as a result of this funding. 96% of premises in the South Gloucestershire now have access to superfast broadband - up from 74% in 2010.

Luke Hall:[\[130280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many homes have been connected to superfast broadband in South Gloucestershire.

Margot James:

According to Thinkbroadband, currently, 96.4% of premises in South Gloucestershire currently have access to Superfast Broadband speeds.

(<http://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/south-gloucestershire,E06000025>) 93% of premises in the South West region now have access to superfast Broadband - up from 42% in 2010. Gainshare funding for the region which is higher than originally expected, is likely to be at least £65 million. This will be available to support further investment.

■ Broadband: South West

Luke Hall: [\[130276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much the Government has invested in the roll-out of superfast broadband in the South West.

Margot James:

To date, the Department has committed £120,942,744 to support broadband roll-out in the South West. 586,900 premises have been given superfast coverage so far as a result of this funding. 93% of premises in the South West region now have access to superfast broadband - up from 42% in 2010. Gainshare funding for the region as a result of take-up which is higher than originally expected is likely to be at least £65 million. This will be available to support further investment.

Luke Hall: [\[130279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many homes have been connected to superfast broadband in the South West.

Margot James:

According to Thinkbroadband 93% of premises in the South West have access to superfast broadband speeds. This is up from 42% in 2010 (<http://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/south-west>). 17,014 premises have been given superfast coverage so far as a result of this funding. Gainshare funding for the region as a result of take-up which is higher than originally expected is likely to be at least £65 million. This will be available to support further investment.

■ Broadband: Thornbury and Yate

Luke Hall: [\[130278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much the Government has invested in the roll-out of superfast broadband in the Thornbury and Yate constituency.

Margot James:

According to Thinkbroadband 93% of premises in the South West have access to superfast broadband speeds. This is up from 42% in 2010 (<http://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/south-west>). 17,014 premises have been given superfast coverage so far as a result of this funding. Gainshare funding for the region as a result of take-up which is higher than originally expected is likely to be at least £65 million. This will be available to support further investment.

Luke Hall: [\[130281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many homes have been connected to superfast broadband in the Thornbury and Yate constituency.

Margot James:

According to Thinkbroadband, currently 92% of premises in the Thornbury and Yate constituency have access to superfast broadband speeds. This is up from 61% in

2012 (<http://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/thornbury-and-yate,E14000994>). Currently, 8,325 premises have been given superfast coverage so far as a result of this funding.

■ National Lottery: Cornwall

Scott Mann: [\[130503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much National Lottery funding (a) North Cornwall and (b) Cornwall has received in each year since 2010.

Tracey Crouch:

Information on projects in receipt of a Lottery award can be found on the National Lottery Grants Database at the following link: <http://www.lottery.culture.gov.uk> and from Lottery Distributors' own websites. The grants database can be sorted on a national, regional, local authority and constituency level.

The total value of the National Lottery grants awarded in North Cornwall and Cornwall between 2010 and 2016 are given in the table below. The figures for grants awarded in 2017 will be confirmed at the end of March 2018.

	NORTH CORNWALL (CONSTITUENCY)	CORNWALL (LOCAL AUTHORITY)
2010	£547,777	£9,804,812
2011	£367,762	£4,682,844
2012	£972,991	£10,737,091
2013	£1,082,806	£22,746,502
2014	£1,192,268	£14,205,830
2015	£721,870	£17,835,491
2016	£1,765,617	£25,896,402

EDUCATION

■ Adoption

Tim Loughton: [\[130542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many adoption placements were completed in each of the last 10 years.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The number of looked after children who were adopted from care in each of the last 10 years is given in the table below and can be found in Table H1 of the statistical

release 'Children looked after in England including adoption: 2016 to 2017' which is published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2016-to-2017>.

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER WHO WERE ADOPTED DURING THE YEARS ENDING 31 MARCH ^{1,2,3}

Years ending 31 March 2008 to 2017

England

Year	Number adopted
2008	3,180
2009	3,330
2010	3,200
2011	3,100
2012	3,470
2013	4,010
2014	5,050
2015	5,360
2016	4,710
2017	4,350

Source: SSDA 903

1. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements.
3. Historical data may differ from older publications. This is mainly due to the implementation of amendments and corrections sent by some local authorities after the publication date of previous materials.

The department does not collect information on the number of children who were adopted without being previously looked after.

Tim Loughton:

[130543]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many adoptions have been disrupted in each of the last 10 years.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The department does not hold information on all adoptions which breakdown after the adoption order is granted.

A research report 'Beyond the adoption order' was published in 2014 and gave a one-off insight into adoption breakdown. It can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beyond-the-adoption-order-challenges-intervention-disruption>.

Information is collected on children who return to care and who are reported as having previously been adopted. This is published in table C1 in the statistical release 'Children looked after in England including adoption: 2016 to 2017', available to view at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2016-to-2017>.

These figures were collected for the first time in 2014 and should be treated with caution as the information is based on self-declaration and for a large number of children the previous permanence arrangement is not known.

■ Apprentices: North Cornwall

Scott Mann:

[130505]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information his Department holds on the number of people undertaking paid apprenticeships in North Cornwall.

Anne Milton:

The department holds and publishes a range of data relating to apprenticeships using the information collected through the Individualised Learner Return. For example, information on the number of learners starting apprenticeships by geographical area, including by parliamentary constituency is published on GOV.UK. The table below provides apprenticeship starts for the North Cornwall Constituency in the 2016/17 academic year and in the first quarter of the 2017/18 academic year:

	2016/17	2017/18 QUARTER 1
Apprenticeship Starts	760	170

Notes:

- 1) Volumes are rounded to the nearest 10.
- 2) 2016/17 covers August 2016 to July 2017, and 2017/18 Quarter 1 covers August to October 2017.

These data are published in the FE data library on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships>.

Additionally, statistics showing the destinations outcomes of learners completing apprenticeships between 2014 and 2015 are available in the FE outcome-based success measures publication:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-outcome-based-success-measures-2014-to-2015>. For example, in Cornwall, 2,760 apprenticeships from 2014/15 completed apprenticeships with 82% having a sustained employment rate,

17% having a sustained learning rate, and 85% having a sustained positive destination rate.

It should also be noted, that all learners starting apprenticeships are paid at least the minimum wage. Additional information on the rules and regulations of employing apprentices is available on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/take-on-an-apprentice>.

■ Childline: Finance

Andrew Gwynne: [\[130466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what funding his Department provides to the NSPCC's Childline.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Department is supporting the NSPCC through an £8 million grant over four years to 2020, as a contribution to funding ChildLine (a phone and online advice service for children) and the NSPCC's National Helpline (for anyone with concerns or worries about a child).

Andrew Gwynne: [\[130467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent representations his Department has received on funding for the NSPCC's Childline.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The department regularly receives representations from parliamentarians and voluntary sector organisations, as well as media enquiries about the importance of ChildLine.

On 22 January 2018, NSPCC launched the "Are You There?" campaign asking the government to increase funding to ChildLine in response to the publication of 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision' in December 2017.

■ Children: Disability

Stephen Lloyd: [\[130478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to amend s1.3 of the Children Act 1989 to better define the classification of disability as incapacity to parent.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Whilst we constantly keep policy under review, we have not had discussions about bringing forward legislative proposals to amend section 1(3).

■ Children: Refuges**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[130484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support his Department provides for a child whose parent enters a women's refuge in (a) Greater Manchester and (b) England.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, every local authority has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need, by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs. If a child joins the parent in a refuge, the duty would lie with the local authority where the refuge is situated, by virtue of the child being in their area. This would apply to Manchester as to any other authority.

■ Department for Education: Business Interests**Jon Trickett:** [\[130303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which members of his Department's board are responsible for ensuring the proper application of the business appointment rules for former Ministers and senior civil servants.

Anne Milton:

The members of the department's board who are responsible for ensuring the proper application of the business appointment rules for senior civil servants are the Department's Permanent Secretary and Director Generals.

Business Appointment Rules applications submitted by former Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and Director Generals are managed by the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments with the final decision being made by the Prime Minister rather than the department.

■ Department for Education: Internet**James Gray:** [\[130703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of his Department's cloud-hosting contracts have been awarded to (a) hyperscale cloud providers and (b) UK SMEs; and what the value of those contracts was in each of the last three years.

James Gray: [\[130705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the volume of UK citizens' data held by companies (a) supplying cloud services to his Department and (b) contracted to deliver cloud services on behalf of his Department that is subject to information requests from US Government bodies.

Anne Milton:

[Holding answer 7 March 2018]: The department's cloud hosting contracts have been awarded to UK SMEs over the past three years. We did not award any contracts to hyperscale cloud providers. See table below:

		CONTRACT START
CDW Ltd (Reseller on behalf of Microsoft)	The provision of Cloud Compute Services. Azure Windows Virtual Machines / VMs	01/07/2017 – 30/06/2018
Bytes Software Services (Reseller on behalf of Microsoft Ltd)	Azure hosting	12/06/2017 – 11/06/2020
Eduserv (Eduserv do not hold any data following decommissioning)	IaaS Secure and Private Cloud Compute Services with ancillary requirements for managing infrastructure	31/07/2015 – 31/07/2017
Eduserv (Eduserv do not hold any data following decommissioning)	IaaS Private Cloud Hosting and Cloud migration support -	31/07/2017 – 31/12/2017

The department is not aware of any databases containing citizen data that are stored by its cloud providers in jurisdictions that are subject to information request by US administration bodies.

■ Department for Education: Telephone Services

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[\[130694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to Answer of 6 February 2018 to Question 126173 on Department for Education: Telephone Services, how many of those helplines will continue to be funded by his Department after March 2018.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Department for Education is considering future funding for a number of helplines, where existing grants are coming to an end. We will make announcements about individual helplines as soon as commercial negotiations and decisions are finalised.

■ Foster Care in England Independent Review

Tim Loughton:

[\[130540\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what evidence was produced by the Narey Review of Foster Care to support the recommendation to abolish the Independent Reviewing Office.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Sir Martin Narey and Mark Owers produced the report as independent reviewers. They drew on evidence from a range of sources, including an open call for evidence, an analysis of existing and new data, an evidence review produced by Kings College London and commissioned research into cost drivers in fostering services. They also held visits and meetings with children and young people, foster parents, local authority officials, independent fostering agencies, academics, charities, and other representative organisations and groups. The Office of the Children's Commissioner designed a survey for children and young people, which received 100 responses.

I am committed to ensuring that foster parents, and the children that they care for, receive the support they need and have access to independent, appropriate advice. We are carefully considering all the review's recommendations to ensure that both foster parents and children receive the support they need.

Tim Loughton:[\[130544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when his Department plans to publish its formal response to the Narey review of fostering.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The government response to both the independent review 'Foster Care in England' (also known as the "National Fostering Stocktake") and the Education Select Committee's inquiry into fostering will be published in spring this year.

■ **Free Schools: Southwark****Angela Rayner:**[\[130491\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the cost to the public purse was of the capital funding provided for the Southwark Free School.

Angela Rayner:[\[130492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the cost to the public purse was of the capital funding provided for the Royal Greenwich Trust School Academy.

Angela Rayner:[\[130493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the cost to the public purse was of the capital funding provided for the Stockport Technical School .

Angela Rayner:[\[130498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the cost to the public purse was of the capital funding provided for the Durham Free School .

Angela Rayner:[\[130524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what capital funding has been provided from the public purse for the Bolton Wanderers Free School.

Angela Rayner: [130527]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what capital funding was provided from the public purse for the Dawes Lane Academy, North Lincolnshire.

Nick Gibb:

Capital funding for individual free schools, university technical colleges (UTCs) and studio schools, where costs have been finalised and are no longer commercially sensitive, are published on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-funding-for-open-free-schools>.

Additional finalised capital costs for individual free schools, UTCs and studio schools are due to be published in the coming months.

■ Nurseries: Staff

Tulip Siddiq: [130685]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will respond to the Chief Executive of the National Day Nurseries Association comments to Nursery World that the workforce survey indicates a staffing crisis in nurseries.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The department has noted the findings of the survey of employers and employees conducted by the National Day Nurseries Association. The government has already responded to the findings that were reported in Nursery World. The response can be found reported here: <https://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/nursery-world/news/1163707/early-years-recruitment-crisis-putting-governments-30-hours-policy-at-risk>.

■ Pre-school Education: Employment

Tulip Siddiq: [130686]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to revise the Government's Early Years Workforce Strategy following the findings of the National Day Nurseries Association 2017-18 workforce survey.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Delivery of the commitments in the workforce strategy to support workforce recruitment and development is underway. The department has consulted on criteria for new, more robust, level 2 qualifications and is working with stakeholders to finalise these. Stakeholders are also working with the department to develop career pathways information to support careers advice, recruitment and staff development.

Early years providers are responsible for building and supporting their workforce, but the government is committed to continuing to work with the sector to review the challenges they face, and to collaborating to identify and implement solutions.

The department will consider the survey of childcare employers and employees conducted by the National Day Nurseries Association alongside other evidence, including nationally representative surveys of parents and providers.

■ Pupils: Birkenhead

Frank Field:

[\[130383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to close the attainment gap between boys who are eligible for free school meals and other pupils in Birkenhead.

Nick Gibb:

The Government has spent over £11 billion since 2011 through the pupil premium to tackle educational inequality. Over 91 per cent of pupils attracting the pupil premium are or were eligible for free school meals. Over 4,300 pupils in Birkenhead are eligible for the pupil premium and this year their schools are receiving more than £5.2 million through it.

The Department expects schools to use this extra funding effectively. Ofsted has published three reports on the effective use of the pupil premium, and the Department has provided the Education Endowment Foundation with £137 million to expand the evidence base on what works best to raise the attainment of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Department has published a study of schools with high success rates for disadvantaged pupils and maintains a list of independent experts qualified to review the effectiveness of a school's pupil premium strategy.

■ Secure Accommodation

Tim Loughton:

[\[130541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many places were available in secure children's homes in each of the last 10 years; and what the annual average occupancy rates have been in that same period.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The number of places that were available in secure children's homes in each of the last 10 years and the occupancy rates, at 31 March of each year, are shown in the table below.

Numbers of approved places and children accommodated in secure children's homes as at 31 March

Year: 2008 to 2017

Coverage: England and Wales

	ENGLAND & WALES									
At 31 March	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of secure children's homes	19	19	17	17	17	17	17	15	15	15
Places approved ¹	342	338	311	312	300	296	298	254	254	254

	ENGLAND & WALES										
Number of places available ²	331	333	291	291	288	286	283	245	245	227	
Children accommodated	278	290	258	221	239	206	229	205	210	203	
Occupancy rate (%) ³	81	86	83	71	80	70	77	81	83	80	

Source: DfE SA1 Survey

(1) Number of places in secure children's homes as approved by the Secretary of State at 31 March.

(2) Number of places that were in use or available for use at 31 March (excluding any approved places that are out of service, e.g. undergoing development work). This number does not indicate the number of vacant places.

(3) Occupancy rates are based on the number of children accommodated at 31 March in relation to the number of places approved by the Secretary of State, and are displayed to the nearest whole number.

This information was published in the statistical first releases available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-secure-children-s-homes>.

■ STEM Subjects

Layla Moran:

[130506]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to paragraph 42 of the Careers Strategy, whether his Department plans to widen the intention to improve the accessibility and transparency of data regarding gender disparities in STEM subject choices at age 16-19 to include other characteristics such as ethnicity, disability and socio-economic inequality.

Anne Milton:

The department already publishes a wide range of information on science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) by gender through statistical first releases (SFR). For instance, we publish data on STEM A level entries at institution level by gender in the maths and science tables (table 13a) of the A level and other 16-18 results SFR at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/a-level-and-other-16-to-18-results-2015-to-2016-revised>.

The 'Ethnicity facts and figures' website also contains ethnicity breakdowns for attainment 8, which includes STEM subjects is available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/11-to-16-years-old/gcse-results-attainment-8-for-children-aged-14-to-16-key-stage-4/latest>.

In addition, for the first time in 2017, we published disadvantage measures in the 16-18 school and college performance tables.

We are continuing to explore what more we can do to improve the transparency of STEM data by gender, and we continue to consider whether to expand this to other characteristics.

■ Teachers: Pensions

Thangam Debonnaire: [\[130271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what contingency plans his Department has made to manage the teachers' pensions scheme in the event of Capita being unable to fulfil its contractual obligations.

Nick Gibb:

The contractual arrangements covering the administration of the Teachers' Pension Scheme include a requirement to maintain an exit transition ready for use at any point during the contract term, regardless of the reasons for the contract ending. A plan is in place and its effectiveness is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. The plan includes a range of options, including transferring responsibility to a new service provider as nominated by the Department or transferring the service to the Department to operate.

The contract includes additional provisions under which, if Capita is unable to continue to fulfil its contractual obligations, the Department could use existing IT systems, premises and staff resources to maintain service delivery.

■ Universities: Migrant Workers

Nigel Dodds: [\[130627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of staff employed by UK Universities are citizens of (a) another EU member state (b) a non-EU state.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Higher Education Statistics Agency collects and publishes statistics on staff employed at UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Annual statistics on staff employed by HEIs are published under the following link:

<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/statistical-first-releases>.

In the academic year 2016/17, 12% of staff with known nationality were EU nationals and 8% were non-EU nationals at UK HEIs.

■ Universities: Staff

Nigel Dodds: [\[130629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of academic staff employed by UK universities spend more than 180 days working in academic institutions in other EU member states as part of their contract of employment.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ **Video Games: Graduates**

Justin Tomlinson:

[\[130453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of students who have graduated with a degree in video game art and animation in each of the last three years.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects and publishes statistics on enrolments and qualifications obtained at UK Higher Education Institutions. The Latest statistics refer to the academic year 2016/17.

The table attached shows the numbers of first degree qualifiers in computer game design and graphics subjects.

Attachments:

1. Qualifiers in computer game design and graphics [130453 Attachment.docx]

■ **Youth Social Action Review**

Mike Kane:

[\[130587\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Independent review of Full-Time Social Action, published in January 2018, what plans he has to discuss the recommendations made in that review with the Minister for Sport and Civil Society.

Anne Milton:

The department has read the Independent Review of Full-Time Social Action with interest. We look forward to discussing the recommendations with relevant ministers in due course.

HOME OFFICE

■ **Alcoholic Drinks: Prices**

Stuart C. McDonald:

[\[130712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will bring forward the date by which the assessment of the evidence from minimum unit alcohol pricing implementation in Scotland will be published.

Victoria Atkins:

The assessment of the evidence from minimum unit pricing implementation in Scotland is a matter for the Scottish Government. Minimum unit pricing in England and Wales remains under review.

■ Asylum: Children**Mr Geoffrey Cox:**[\[131030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to enable additional unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in France who have family members in this country to be admitted to the UK.

Caroline Nokes:

Under the Dublin Regulation, we will accept requests to transfer an unaccompanied child's asylum claim from another state which participates in the Dublin Regulation, where the child has eligible family in the UK, and where transfer is in their best interests.

As part of the UK-France Summit (or Sandhurst Treaty) of 18 January, we announced a number of specific measures to strengthen the operation of the Dublin Regulation. We have allocated a £3.6 million development fund, as part of the UK's overall £45.5 million funding commitment, which is intended to support projects which support eligible claims through the Dublin process and ensure that those with no prospect of transferring to the UK are informed of their options.

The Sandhurst Treaty also commits the UK and France to clear timescales for effecting transfers between the two countries under the Dublin Regulation. Furthermore, the UK will deploy a Liaison Officer to France by 1 April 2018 to support transfers between the UK and France under the Dublin Regulation and section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016.

■ Domestic Violence**Liz Saville Roberts:**[\[130955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to encourage victims of domestic abuse to report that abuse to the police.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government is committed to ensuring that survivors of domestic abuse receive the help and support they need.

The Home Secretary chairs a national oversight group to improve the police response to domestic abuse. Under her leadership: every police force has published a domestic abuse improvement plan; new guidance has been published by the College of Policing; new training has been successfully piloted; and, for the first time, police are now collecting data against a national standard on all domestic abuse recorded crimes.

Since the publication of "Everyone's Business" in 2014, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has found that there have been considerable improvements in the overall police response to victims of domestic abuse.

The level of domestic abuse recorded by the police has increased by over 60 percent in less than three years and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) suggest this is

due in part to police forces improving their recording as well as victims having greater confidence in the police to come forward.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[131141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps are being taken to improve the investigation by police forces of complaints of coercive control.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[131142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether there are plans to increase the number of police forces which provide classroom training to first responders and investigating officers on the offence of coercive control.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Home Secretary chairs a national oversight group that is driving a culture change in the police response by ensuring that the recommendations from the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) reviews into domestic abuse are acted upon. This includes improving police understanding of coercive control

Police training and guidance is the responsibility of the College of Policing and the College has launched a new training programme, developed by the voluntary sector, called 'Domestic Abuse Matters' which focuses on improved evidence gathering and understanding of controlling and coercive behaviour.

Most recent data from the College of Policing indicates that this training has been rolled out across nine forces and plans are in place to roll out across more police forces.

Additionally, the College's national curriculum relating to domestic abuse and coercive control is embedded in full into national recruit training, and the College has published Authorised Professional Practice on investigating domestic violence and abuse capturing controlling or coercive behaviour.

■ Domestic Violence: Databases

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[130951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to introduce a register of individuals convicted of domestic abuse against two or more people.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government is fully committed to tackling serial perpetrators of domestic abuse.

We will be seeking views on what more can be done to manage serial perpetrators through our forthcoming consultation on domestic abuse.

The current framework ensures that those convicted of domestic abuse related offences are already captured on the Police National Computer. Where appropriate, they will also be captured on other systems such as on the dangerous persons' database (ViSOR) and managed by police and probation under Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). In addition, the Domestic Violence Disclosure

Scheme has also been rolled out nationally to inform and alert new partners about a perpetrator's previous offending.

The Government's focus is on strengthening this framework and we have been working with the police and stakeholders to identify how we can improve information sharing, risk assessment and disclosure in relation to serial perpetrators.

■ Police Custody: Parkinson's Disease

Ian Lavery: [\[130980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of people with Parkinson's disease who were held in custody by police forces in 2017.

Ian Lavery: [\[130981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to help police to support people with Parkinson's disease who are held in custody.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The arrest and detention of all individuals suspected of committing an offence is an operational matter for the chief officer of each force area. However, all detainees must be treated appropriately and in accordance with Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Codes of Practice C&H (detention and detention in terrorism cases, respectively).

In particular, section 9 of PACE Code C sets out detailed requirements concerning health care of all detainees. Amongst other things, the Code requires the custody officer to ensure that detainees receive appropriate clinical attention as soon as reasonably practicable if, for example, the person appears to be suffering from physical illness, or appears to need clinical attention. This applies even if the detainee makes no request for clinical attention and whether or not they have already received clinical attention elsewhere. If the need for attention appears urgent, the nearest available healthcare professional or an ambulance must be called immediately.

The Government does not hold information on the number of individuals with a Parkinson's diagnosis that have been detained in police custody.

■ Terrorism

Steve McCabe: [\[130714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has bring forward legislative proposals under the Digital Charter, published on 25 January 2018, to exempt repeat viewing of terrorist propaganda for civil society organisations, including journalists and researchers, working on terrorism-related issues.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Government intends to change the law, so that people who repeatedly view terrorist content online could face up to 15 years behind bars. The proposed changes

will strengthen the existing offence of possessing information likely to be useful to a terrorist (Section 58 Terrorism Act 2000) so that it applies to material that is viewed repeatedly or streamed online.

A defence of 'reasonable excuse' will still be available to academics, journalists or others who may have a legitimate reason to view such material.

JUSTICE

■ Community Orders

Richard Burgon: [\[130497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many hours of unpaid work have been handed down by the courts as part of community orders in each year since 2010.

Rory Stewart:

Courts may impose up to 300 hours of unpaid work as part of a community order or suspended sentence order. The number of hours of unpaid work handed down by the courts as part of community orders in each year since 2010 can be viewed in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. Table [130497 UPW_Hours-Summaryv2.1 (003).xlsx]

■ Courts: Buildings

Richard Burgon: [\[130366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 20 February 2018 to Question 127599, on Courts: Buildings, how much was spent on the modernisation of each of those courts in the 12 months prior to being closed.

Rory Stewart:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Courts: Video Conferencing

Richard Burgon: [\[130445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 14 February 2018 to Question 127038, on courts: video conferencing, what estimate his Department made of the cost of providing the information sought.

Richard Burgon: [\[130446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 14 February 2018 to Question 127040, on courts: video conferencing, what estimate his Department made of the cost of providing the information sought.

Rory Stewart:

The information requested, which was the number of child defendants to appear in court via live video link in each year since 2010, broken down by the type of hearing

and the number of defendants with certain types of vulnerabilities, could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

MoJ does not collect data centrally that distinguishes appearance by video link by type of hearing or by age. Whilst this data is not held on our systems, some of this information would be included in individual case files retained at the courts.

In most cases, court files are destroyed after three years, in line with the normal MoJ Record Retention and Disposition Schedule. In order to retrieve the data for the period October 2014-September 2017 it would be necessary to examine 288,710 individual case records. MoJ estimates that the total disproportionate cost would be £842,070.

■ Disability Living Allowance: Appeals

Richard Burgon: [\[130495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people have won an appeal against the withdrawal of their disability living allowance at a tribunal in each year since 2010.

Rory Stewart:

This information is not held centrally.

Information about the volumes and outcomes of appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Social Security and Child Support) is published at:
www.gov.uk/government/collections/tribunals-statistics.

The latest statistics can be viewed at: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunals-and-gender-recognition-certificate-statistics-quarterly-july-to-september-2017.

■ Domestic Violence

Andrew Gwynne: [\[130482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what support his Department provides to women who engage with the criminal justice system as a result of domestic abuse in (a) Greater Manchester and (b) England.

Rory Stewart:

The government is committed to making sure that victims of crime have access to a broad range of support services, to help them cope with and, as far as possible, recover from the effects of crime. In 2016/17 we spent about £96m to fund support services for victims of crime.

Just over £3.2m of this was allocated to Greater Manchester and about £64.4m was allocated to all Police and Crime Commissioners in England to locally commission or provide support services for victims of crime, including for victims of offences related to domestic abuse.

In 2016/17 Greater Manchester reported spending just under £0.7m on services to support victims of domestic abuse and Police and Crime Commissioners in England reported spending about £11.1m on services to support victims of domestic abuse.

■ Legal Aid Scheme: Civil Proceedings

Gloria De Piero:

[R] [\[130689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many applications for civil legal aid were granted for (a) settling applications for permission to appeal to the Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber), (b) representation in the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court and (c) representation in proceedings for judicial review in each year since 2011-12.

Rory Stewart:

Note these figures only relate to Welfare Benefit cases, rather than all civil appeals/judicial reviews. The information pertaining to parts (b) and (c) of your enquiry are set out in the table below. Figures for part (a) of your enquiry are only available regarding closed cases; information on grant volumes is not held.

FINANCIAL YEAR	CERTIFICATES GRANTED FOR LEGAL REPRESENTATION IN THE COURT OF APPEAL AND THE SUPREME COURT ⁽¹⁾	CERTIFICATES GRANTED FOR LEGAL REPRESENTATION IN JUDICIAL REVIEW PROCEEDINGS ⁽²⁾
2011-2012	5	17
2012-2013	4	12
2013-2014	3	4
2014-2015	1	5
2015-2016	2	5
2016-2017	4	2

(1) To be represented on an appeal to the Court of Appeal on a point of law from a decision of the Social Security Commissioner, and appeals/enforcements to the Court of Appeal/Supreme Court

(2) Judicial Review- to be represented in an action for JR against opponent, and Upper Tribunal Judicial Review - to be represented before the Upper Tribunal exercising its Judicial Review jurisdiction/appeals Note that judicial review proceedings may instead be conducted under a 'Public Law' legal aid contract, and would not appear in the figures above on such a basis.

■ Legal Aid Scheme: Social Security Benefits

Gloria De Piero:

[R] [\[130688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many welfare cases were granted legal aid in each year since 2011-12; and how many of those cases involved a challenge to a decision to remove an entitlement to benefits.

Rory Stewart:

The number of welfare cases granted legal aid is published in the National Statistics on legal aid in England and Wales, at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/legal-aid-statistics-january-to-march-2017> (table 5.1 and table 6.2). Note that it is not possible to report on how many of these cases involved a challenge to remove an entitlement to benefits, as this level of detail is not recorded.

Gloria De Piero:**[R] [130690]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what information his Department holds on the number of welfare cases involving disability benefits which were granted legal aid in each year since 2011-12.

Rory Stewart:

FINANCIAL YEAR	LEGAL HELP DISABILITY RELATED WELFARE BENEFITS COMPLETED MATTERS
2011-2012	29,801
2012-2013	26,185
2013-2014	6,892
2014-2015	401
2015-2016	113
2016-2017	308

Volumes are based on the period in which providers submit claims for work completed; information is not held at this level of detail for matter starts.

It should be noted that the figures provided in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 relate to disability living allowance and also attendance allowance matters. We are unable to specify how many of these matters relate solely to disability living allowance cases. The volumes provided from 2013-2014 onwards relate to disability living allowance/attendance allowance and personal independence payments claims. It is not possible to report on civil representation certificates granted.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Amey**

Richard Burgon:**[130494]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of key performance indicators were met by Amey in contracts that company held with his Department in each year since the first contract was signed.

Rory Stewart:

The requested information is not stored centrally. The Ministry of Justice would be required to manually check the monthly scorecards of all contracts held with Amey to

determine what proportion of key performance indicators were met. The information requested could therefore only be obtained at disproportionate cost

The MoJ closely monitors Private providers performance and will not hesitate to act where standards fall short. It is important to recognise that providers achieve the majority of their contractual targets.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Business Interests**

Jon Trickett:

[\[130306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, which members of his Department's board are responsible for ensuring the proper application of the business appointment rules for former Ministers and senior civil servants.

Rory Stewart:

Applications by former Ministers are considered by the independent Advisory Committee on Business Appointments directly.

For applications from former Civil Servants our Departmental Audit and Risk Committee, which is chaired by a Departmental Non-Executive Director, will monitor compliance issues relating to the Business Appointment Rules at regular intervals.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Consultants**

Richard Burgon:

[\[130444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 14 February 2018 to Question 126793, on Ministry of Justice: consultants, what estimate his Department made of the cost of providing the information sought.

Rory Stewart:

Your original request was for data spanning a 10 year period. We do not hold all of the information centrally and some of the requested information is published in our annual accounts.

To provide the detail requested in PQ 126793 we would initially have to determine if the information requested is held, which would entail contacting all departments across MoJ and its ALB's to retrieve any electronic or manually archived documents. All information would have to be collated and, where possible, matched to details drawn from current and historic spend files.

Due to the time span of the request and the various data sources, spend files and systems that would need to be accessed, the time required to complete this exercise would exceed the Department's cost limit, £850, for answering parliamentary questions. In this specific instance we have estimated that it would cost a minimum of £2100 to collect, collate and review the information needed to respond.

■ Ministry of Justice: Contracts

Richard Burgon: [\[130449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of key performance indicators in contracts signed by his Department since 2010 have been met in each year since 2010.

Richard Burgon: [\[130450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many key performance indicators in each contract signed by his Department since 2010 have (a) been met and (b) not been met in each year since 2010.

Richard Burgon: [\[130451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what financial deductions have been made under each contract signed by his Department since 2010 which contain key performance indicators in each year since 2010; and for what reason those deductions were made in that same period.

Rory Stewart:

The requested information is not stored centrally. The MoJ would be required to manually check each contract record awarded since 2010 and the information requested could therefore only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Ministry of Justice: Pay

Richard Burgon: [\[130324\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many members of his Department's staff have been paid an incorrect wage in each month since January 2010.

Rory Stewart:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Offenders: Foreign Nationals

Priti Patel: [\[130417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many foreign national offenders are subject to multi-agency public protection arrangements.

Rory Stewart:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. This is because the information is held locally by individual lead agencies within the 42 MAPPA areas and is not collated centrally.

Priti Patel: [\[130567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many foreign national offenders were convicted of (a) murder, (b) manslaughter, (c) sexual offences, (d) rape and (e) serious assaults in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available.

Rory Stewart:

Any foreign national who comes to our country and abuses our hospitality by breaking the law should be in no doubt of our determination to deport them. More than 40,000 Foreign National Offenders have been removed from the UK since 2010, and in the last financial year a record number of over 6,300 were removed.

The specific information asked for in the question is not held centrally and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Prison and Probation Service: Occupational Health

Brendan O'Hara: [\[128461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether there is a standard service level agreement for contracted-out occupational health services provided on behalf of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

Dr Phillip Lee:

[Holding answer 27 February 2018]: There is a standard service level agreement for contracted-out occupational health services provided on behalf of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service. The service levels are strict and high to make sure value for money is achieved for the taxpayer. This includes tighter turnaround times for the delivery of occupational health services and financial penalties for poor performance.

Brendan O'Hara: [\[128467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what date will standard service level agreements for occupational health services for personnel of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service come into effect with its third party service provider.

Dr Phillip Lee:

[Holding answer 27 February 2018]: 4 October 2017 was the date when the new occupational health services contract standard service level agreement for Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service came in to effect with OH Assist.

Rape: Victim Support Schemes

Thangam Debbonaire: [\[130289\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to ensure that rape crisis centres are adequately funded.

Rory Stewart:

The Government is committed to making sure that victims of crime have access to a broad range of support services, to help them cope with and, as far as possible, recover from the effects of crime.

We have made a commitment in the 2016–2020 Violence and Women and Girls strategy, to maintain funding for rape support services at 2016/17 levels for the remainder of the spending review period. We continue to meet that commitment.

This year we are providing £12.5m funding for services for victims of sexual violence, which includes £7.2m funding for rape support services.

This is part of the £96m we are spending in 2017/18 to fund support services for victims of crime across England and Wales, including £68m allocated to Police and Crime Commissioners to locally commission or provide support services for victims of crime, including victims of sexual violence.

This year we provided a 4.1% uplift in core funding for rape support centres to help meet increased demand. In Bristol, uplifts were provided to The Green House, Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support (SARSAS) and Kinergy.

■ Victim Support Schemes

Richard Burgon: [\[130390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 27 February 2018 to Question 129249, on victim support schemes, what estimate his Department made of the cost of providing the information sought.

Richard Burgon: [\[130392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 27 February 2018 to Question 129247, on victim support schemes, what estimate his Department made of the cost of providing the information sought.

Richard Burgon: [\[130393\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 27 February 2018 to Question 129250, on victim support schemes, what estimate his Department made of the cost of providing the information sought.

Rory Stewart:

For the first three months of 2010, the Victim Liaison Scheme was the responsibility of local Probation Boards and a small number of Probation Trusts. From 1 April 2010 until 31 May 2014, it was provided by the 35 Probation Trusts. To establish whether the Ministry of Justice retains the requested information relating to this earlier period and, if so, to locate, retrieve, extract, collate and process it, would involve a detailed search of an extensive range of archived material, which would be extremely labour-intensive. Providing the information sought in these Questions would therefore involve costs of not less than £2,500.

SCOTLAND

■ Scotland Office: Business Interests

Jon Trickett: [\[130309\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, which members of his Department's board are responsible for ensuring the proper application of the business appointment rules for former Ministers and senior civil servants.

David Mundell:

Applications by former Ministers are considered by the independent Advisory Committee on Business Appointments directly.

For applications from former Civil Servants, Departmental Audit and Risk Committees, which are chaired by Departmental Non-Executive Directors, will monitor compliance issues relating to the Business Appointment Rules at regular intervals.

TRANSPORT■ **Department for Transport: Business Interests****Jon Trickett:**[\[130308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which members of his Department's board are responsible for ensuring the proper application of the business appointment rules for former Ministers and senior civil servants.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

All business appointments for former Ministers are handled by the independent Advisory Committee on Business Appointments, and not by the Departmental Board, as set out in the Ministerial Code (section 7.25).

The Department's Permanent Secretary is responsible for ensuring the proper application of the business appointment rules for former senior civil servants.

■ **Electric Vehicles****John Spellar:**[\[130577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many (a) all-electric and (b) hybrid vehicles are operated by his Department and its agencies.

Jesse Norman:

The Department for Transport and its agencies operates 10 all-electric vehicles (one of which is a Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle with hydrogen technology) and 33 plug-in and non plug-in hybrid vehicles. These are detailed in the table below.

ORGANISATION	ELECTRIC VEHICLES	HYBRID VEHICLES
DfT	7 (one of which is a Hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle)	21
MCA	0	0
DVLA	2	7
VCA	1	2
DVSA	0	3

■ Hospitals: Public Transport**Robert Halfon:**[\[130648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the accessibility by public transport of hospitals outside London.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Bus Services Act 2017 will enable local authorities to take steps to improve service and grow passenger numbers. This could include introducing multi operator tickets, improved vehicle standards and better connections between transport modes, employment and housing. In terms of access to hospitals via public transport, the most recent statistics show that around 94% of the population of England can reach a large hospital within an hour by public transport or walking in urban areas. In rural areas this falls to around 59% of the population.

More generally, the Government is committed to making the transport system accessible to all users irrespective of the reason for or destination of the journey. The draft Accessibility Action Plan, published for consultation last year, set out a number of steps we will be taking across transport modes.

Robert Halfon:[\[130649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the accessibility by public transport of hospitals in rural areas.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Bus Services Act 2017 will enable local authorities to take steps to improve service and grow passenger numbers. This could include introducing multi operator tickets, improved vehicle standards and better connections between transport modes, employment and housing. In terms of access to hospitals via public transport, the most recent statistics show that around 94% of the population of England can reach a large hospital within an hour by public transport or walking in urban areas. In rural areas this falls to around 59% of the population.

More generally the Government is committed to making the transport system, in urban and rural areas, accessible to all users irrespective of the reason for or destination of the journey. The draft Accessibility Action Plan, published for consultation last year, set out a number of steps we will be taking across transport modes.

TREASURY**■ Air Passenger Duty**

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[130357\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the level of Air Passenger Duty on the UK's global aviation connectivity (a) nationally and (b) by region compared to other European countries.

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[130358\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the rate of Air Passenger Duty on trade links after the UK leaves the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[130359\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of Air Passenger Duty rates on the development of new routes from UK airports compared with such development from other EU airports; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[130490\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of reducing Air Passenger Duty by 50 per cent on (a) the number of passenger journeys and (b) air routes.

Robert Jenrick:

International treaties ensure that there is no taxation of international aviation fuel, and the Government does not levy VAT on flights. APD ensures the aviation sector contributes its fair share to general taxation. Even at the current rates of APD, UK airports have enjoyed strong passenger growth: exceeding 15% in the previous five years.

The Government has not conducted an assessment of route opportunities under the specific scenarios mentioned. However, the Government is working with the sector to understand better how they believe any reduced APD rates might support new routes and increase connectivity.

The government will also look at the effects of APD and VAT on tourism in Northern Ireland. A call for evidence on this issue was announced at Autumn Budget 2017 and will be published in due course. Respondents in the aviation industry will be able to submit evidence on the wider impacts of APD upon UK tourism.

■ Treasury: Business Interests

Jon Trickett: [\[130310\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, which members of his Department's board are responsible for ensuring the proper application of the business appointment rules for former Ministers and senior civil servants.

Robert Jenrick:

Applications by former Ministers are considered by the independent Advisory Committee on Business Appointments directly.

For applications from former Civil Servants: Departmental Audit and Risk Committees, which are chaired by Departmental Non-Executive Directors, will monitor compliance issues relating to the Business Appointment Rules at regular intervals.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES■ **Government Equalities Office: Visits Abroad****Kate Osamor:**[\[127867\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what overseas visits officials in the Government Equalities Office have undertaken in 2017; how many officials took part in each such visit; and what the (a) cost, (b) purpose and (c) outcome of each such trip was.

Victoria Atkins:

The table below sets out the overseas visits that GEO officials undertook in 2017, together with the number travelling, the purpose and outcome and the cost:

VISIT	NUMBER OF OFFICIALS	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	TOTAL COST (£)
UNI-FORM Conference and ILGA-Europe Seminar on Hate Crime, Brussels, Belgium	1	Attendance at UNI-FORM project conference and ILGA-Europe seminar on hate crime	Launch new hate crime reporting website and app; identify and develop good practice on tackling anti-LGBT hate crime; showcase UK good practice	Paid for by hosts
EU High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming Tallinn, Estonia	1	Attendance at High Level Group on gender mainstreaming	Update provided on UK progress on ratification of Istanbul Convention. Networks built with others doing equivalent role across EU.	422

VISIT	NUMBER OF OFFICIALS	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	TOTAL COST (£)
			Knowledge sharing from EIGE on STEM challenges for girls across Europe	
EU seminar on sexual harassment, Copenhagen, Denmark	1	Attendance at the EU Mutual Learning Programme in Gender Equality: Tackling sexual harassment	Exchange information, knowledge and good practice on tackling sexual harassment	114
UN Commission on the Status of Women, New York, USA	4	Attendance at the UN Commission on the Status of Women	Negotiated strong outcome documents, shared UK good practice, collaborated with international partners	17,784
Annual high-level conference on LGBTI issues, Valletta, Malta	1	Attendance at conference on LGBTI issues	Exchange information, knowledge and good practice on LGBT policy with particular emphasis on intersex and gender recognition systems.	Paid for by hosts
LGBTI European Focal Points Network Meeting, Brussels, Belgium	1	Attendance at LGBTI European Focal Points Network Meeting	Exchange information, knowledge and good practice on LGBT policy, including UK presentation on	145

VISIT	NUMBER OF OFFICIALS	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	TOTAL COST (£)
			our HBT bullying programme.	
LGBTI European Focal Points Network Meeting, Slovenia	1	LGBTI European Focal Points Network Meeting	Exchange information, knowledge and good practice on LGBT policy	145
UN General Assembly, New York, USA	1	Support the Foreign Secretary at the Bloomberg global business forum while he chaired a meeting on gender equality	Successful meeting and networks built between GEO and senior business leaders.	996
Research and UK / Canada Partnership on Gender Equality, New York, Boston and Ottawa, US and Canada	4	Building relationship with US and Canadian authorities to promote gender equality	Launched a partnership with the US on STEM; a collaboration with Harvard to work together on a research programme and the UK/Canada working group on gender equality	10,655
Council of Europe drafting committee, Paris, France	2	Attendance at a Council of Europe drafting committee	Promote UK objectives in relation to draft text.	473
Council of Europe Gender Equality Commission, Strasbourg, France	1	Attendance at the Council of Europe Gender Equality Commission	Identify and agree gender priorities for the Council of Europe, monitor progress on delivering the CoE gender equality strategy and showcase UK	Paid for by hosts

VISIT	NUMBER OF OFFICIALS	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	TOTAL COST (£)
			good practice	
Council of Europe drafting committee, Paris, France	1	Attendance at a Council of Europe drafting committee	Promote UK objectives in relation to draft text	Paid for by hosts
Council of Europe - Exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue, Strasbourg, France	1	Attendance at the Council of Europe Exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue	Represent UK as Vice Chair of the CoE Gender Equality Commission	Paid for by hosts
Council of Europe Gender Equality Commission, Prague, Czech Republic	1	Attendance at the Council of Europe Gender Equality Commission	Identify and agree gender priorities for the Council of Europe, monitor progress on delivering the CoE gender equality strategy and showcase UK good practice	73
EU Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights, Brussels, Belgium	1	Attendance at the EU Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights	Contribute to analysis of theme "women's rights in turbulent times"	215
European Commission Seminar on LGBT bullying, Lisbon, Portugal	1	Presenting on the UK's anti-homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying programme	Sharing best practice from the UK on interventions to reduce homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying with other	Paid for by hosts

VISIT	NUMBER OF OFFICIALS	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	TOTAL COST (£)
			countries; learning from other countries about their own approaches	
G7 Ministerial Meeting on Gender Equality, Taormina, Italy	2	Represent the UK in discussions on G7 action on gender equality and supporting FCO Special Envoy for Gender Equality deputising for the HMG Ministers	Presented the UK position on a number of areas relevant to gender equality and promoted UK priorities; strengthened bilateral collaboration with other G7 members; and negotiated and agreed Ministerial statement on the meeting, setting out G7 priorities on gender equality	809
Expert meeting on the economic independence of women, The Hague, Netherlands	1	Sharing research on the best practice and helping women of childbearing age balance childcare and work responsibilities	Improved understanding on the latest research and a deeper understanding of interventions used in other countries including what works and what doesn't	Paid for by hosts
EU High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming, Valetta, Malta	2	Attendance at the bi-annual EU High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming with former	Showcase UK good practice on gender equality and agree priorities which support the	1,131

VISIT	NUMBER OF OFFICIALS	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	TOTAL COST (£)
		Deputy Director	Presidency's gender equality objectives	
EU High Level Group on non-discrimination, equality and diversity, Brussels, Belgium	1	Attendance at the bi-annual EU High Level Group on non-discrimination, equality and diversity	Strengthen cooperation and coordination between Member States' relevant authorities and the Commission on eliminating discrimination. Exchange good practice on achieving diversity and full equality	90
Women's Political Leadership Summit, Reykjavic, Iceland	2	Understand international perspectives on women's political representation, as well as global agreement on ways forward	Informed further discussions with parliamentarians in the UK, particularly on non-legislative approaches to increasing women's political representation. Further understanding of real women's experiences of gender equality in Iceland	1,203
Technical meeting on advancing gender equality in international fora Brussels, Belgium	1	Discuss ways of working better with other EU Member States and EU institutions to promote gender	Identified areas where EU action needs to be better coordinated and more coherent and discussed possible ways to	24

VISIT	NUMBER OF OFFICIALS	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	TOTAL COST (£)
		equality in international fora, primarily the United Nations	improve EU impact at the United Nations	

Attachments:

1. GEO overseas visits [Table 1.doc]

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Employment Support Allowance

Thangam Debonnaire:

[\[130297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to ensure that recipients of employment support allowance with the severe disability premium do not have payments reduced when they move to an area where universal credit has been implemented.

Alok Sharma:

We have always said that claimants who move over to Universal Credit as part of the managed migration process will not see a cash loss as a result of the change. This is provided that their circumstances remain the same.

Claimants who naturally move to Universal Credit will do so because they have had a change of circumstances. In such cases claimants will continue to have their new welfare support entitlement calculated on the rules of their new benefit.

DWP continue to evaluate this policy as it is delivered.

■ Mortgages: Government Assistance

Frank Field:

[\[130852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made as to the savings that will be accrued to the public purse as a result of the replacement of support for mortgage interest with a loans-based system from April 2018.

Kit Malthouse:

The introduction of Support for Mortgage Interest loans is about increasing fairness and sustainability. It will save £160 million per year in welfare spending whilst continuing to support homeowners to avoid the threat of repossession.

■ Universal Credit: Visual Impairment

Marsha De Cordova:

[\[130462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of job centres make available accessibility software to assist blind and partially sighted people to claim universal credit; what assessment her Department has made of geographical variations in that provision; and what other support is made available to assist people with sensory impairments who cannot access the internet with applying for universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

Universal Credit Full Service is fully compatible with accessibility software. Where our customers need assistance to access our services and information, we make adjustments to meet their individual needs. DWP customers who have a specific communication barrier are able to use a variety of different formats such as Braille, audio, and large print, through third party interpreters, and by arranging for a member of staff to visit the customer in their home. All jobcentres have also hearing loops.

Accessibility software specifically for blind and partially sighted claimants is not currently available in jobcentres. However, we are starting research later this month to understand how best we can improve the service to support these claimants. Possible geographical variation in support will also be explored in this research. The Department is already involved in the cross-government accessibility community, and we plan to work with other third parties to better understand the complexities and issues involved with assistive technology.

■ Universal Credit: Zero Hours Contracts

Frank Field:

[\[130473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that low-paid workers on zero-hours contracts are aware of their entitlement to universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

The Department uses multiple channels to publicise information about Universal Credit.

Our successful Opening Up Work promotion campaign is advertising Universal Credit to people who may need to claim. This includes digital advertising, posters at bus stops and in transport hubs, posters in shopping precincts, videos in GP surgeries and Post Offices, and local radio and press advertising.

To further raise awareness, we place promotional products, such as posters and leaflets, in jobcentres, including recent products to increase awareness about the availability of advances.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ **Broadband: Thornbury and Yate**

Luke Hall:

[\[130278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much the Government has invested in the roll-out of superfast broadband in the Thornbury and Yate constituency.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 9 March 2018. The correct answer should have been:

Margot James:

According to Thinkbroadband 93% of premises in the South West have access to superfast broadband speeds. This is up from 42% in 2010 (<http://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/south-west>). 17,014 premises have been given superfast coverage so far as a result of this funding. Gainshare funding for the region as a result of take-up which is higher than originally expected is likely to be at least £65 million. This will be available to support further investment.

The Department does not measure funding at constituency level. A total of £3.37 million has been invested by the Department to support broadband coverage in South Gloucestershire. Currently, 8,325 premises have been given superfast coverage so far as a result of this funding. 92% of premises in the Thornbury and Yate constituency now have access to superfast broadband - up from 61% in 2012.