

**Daily Report****Tuesday, 13 March 2018**

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 13 March 2018 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:32 P.M., 13 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

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Personal Injury: Fraud

Ellie Reeves:

[\[130047\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many proven fraudulent personal injury claims were made by (a) horse-riders, (b) pedestrians, (c) cyclists and (d) other vulnerable road users in the last 12 months.

Robert Buckland:

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not maintain a central record of the number of prosecutions for personal injury insurance frauds. Nor is any record held to show if defendants were purporting to have sustained an injury on a road when making a fraudulent claim. This information could only be obtained by examining CPS case files, which would incur disproportionate cost.

Ellie Reeves:

[\[130048\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many successful prosecutions there have been for personal injury insurance fraud in the UK court system in the last 12 months.

Robert Buckland:

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not maintain a central record of the number of prosecutions for personal injury insurance frauds. Nor is any record held to show if defendants were purporting to have sustained an injury on a road when making a fraudulent claim. This information could only be obtained by examining CPS case files, which would incur disproportionate cost.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Richard Graham:

[\[904338\]](#)

What steps he is taking to support the marine energy industry.

Claire Perry:

We're committed to supporting our marine energy industry.

Through the European Marine Energy Centre, based in the Orkney Islands and the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult, we are world leaders in developing marine technologies.

We have provided more support for offshore wind than any other country in the world.

And we are making up to £557 million of annual support available for offshore wind, wave and tidal stream in upcoming competitive CFD allocation rounds.

Jeff Smith:

[\[904339\]](#)

What steps he is taking to support the renewable energy sector.

Claire Perry:

The development of renewable energy is a tremendous UK success story.

Thanks to our significant investment and support, renewable capacity has quadrupled since 2010. Last year 30% of our electricity generation came from renewable sources.

The Clean Growth Strategy sets out further actions for supporting renewables.

£557 million of annual support is being made available to bring forward new renewable electricity projects, as well as £4.5bn between 2016 and 2021 to support low carbon heating under the Renewable Heat Incentive, and £177m (for renewables) between 2015 and 2021 for innovation projects.

■ **Accountancy: Qualifications**

Stephen Timms:

[\[131694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to secure recognition of UK accountancy qualifications across the EU 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.

■ **Agriculture: Technology**

Mrs Sheryll Murray:

[\[904347\]](#)

What steps the Government is taking to support the growth of the agri-tech sector.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The £160 million agri-tech strategy which was launched five years ago has proved a success.

We are building on this strong track record through our Industrial Strategy; including a further £90 million of funding announced last month to bring together the UK's world-class agri-food sector with expertise in robotics, AI and data science.

This will make it easier for farmers and agricultural-supply chain businesses to embrace new technology; enhancing their competitiveness, improving productivity and creating new opportunities for growth.

Audit: EU Law**Stephen Timms:**[\[131693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to secure the validity of UK statutory audits across the EU after the UK leaves the EU.

Andrew Griffiths:

The Government is currently preparing for the negotiation of an ambitious future economic partnership for the UK's future trading relationship with the European Union. We are considering options for the UK's future audit regulatory relationship with the EU including the equivalence and adequacy frameworks for mutual cooperation under the EU Audit Directive.

The European Union (Withdrawal) Bill will maintain the existing framework for the regulation of statutory audit immediately after the UK's departure from the EU. The Department is preparing regulations to make necessary changes to address any inoperabilities or deficiencies. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Financial Reporting Council and the Financial Conduct Authority are also meeting with the accountancy institutes, audit firms and investor representatives to discuss the changes that will be needed as part of this process.

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Scotland**Deidre Brock:**[\[131768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2018 to Question 131059 on Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Scotland, what the roles of those staff members are.

Andrew Griffiths:

The roles will cover a range of areas including research, policy, regulatory and operational delivery of which the core BEIS roles are primarily in the oil and gas environment and energy development.

Deidre Brock:[\[131769\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2018 to Question 131059 on Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Scotland, what location those members of staff work in.

Richard Harrington:

BEIS aligned with its Partner Organisations has locations in Aberdeen, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Langholm of which Aberdeen is the permanent location for core BEIS in Scotland.

■ Electricity: Exports

David T. C. Davies:

[130786]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the UK is projected to become a net exporter of electricity by 2025.

Claire Perry:

Projected figures show that we will not be a net exporter of electricity by 2025.

Projections for the power sector up to 2035 are published in the BEIS Energy and Emissions Projections 2017, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/updated-energy-and-emissions-projections-2017>. Beyond 2020, the reference scenario includes assumptions that go beyond current Government policy and should be treated as illustrative.

■ Employment

Mike Amesbury:

[904344]

What progress his Department has made on implementing the Good Work Plan.

Andrew Griffiths:

We are taking forward work on 52 of the 23 Review recommendations and are carrying out consultations on how best to implement these measures.

We are committed to ensuring we protect and enhance workers' rights in the modern economy and to legislation in the future.

We will ensure employment law and practices keep pace with modern ways of working whilst striking the right balance between flexibility and worker protection.

■ Energy: Meters

Grant Shapps:

[130892]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment his Department has made of whether the target of installing 53 million energy smart meters by 2020 will be met.

Claire Perry:

The Government is committed to ensuring that all homes and small businesses are offered smart meters by the end of 2020. The Programme is well underway, there are now over 8.6 million smart and advanced meters operating across homes and businesses across Great Britain with around 400,000 being installed every month. The rollout of smart meters is on track to deliver significant benefits, including putting an end to estimated bills, and is set to save consumers £300m in 2020 alone.

Energy suppliers are responsible for planning and delivering the roll-out of smart meters, working within the legal framework established by the Government. Energy suppliers' licence conditions require them to take 'all reasonable steps' to roll-out smart meters to all their domestic and small business customers by 31 December 2020. Ofgem is responsible for regulating energy suppliers against this obligation.

■ Energy: Older People**Mr Philip Hollobone:****[904341]**

What steps he plans to take to help elderly people manage their energy bills.

Claire Perry:

All pensioners receive £100 to £300 Winter Fuel Payments and around 1.3 million low income pensioners receive the Warm Home Discount - a £140 rebate off their bills each winter.

Additionally, the recent cold weather triggered payments of £25 for qualifying households.

I will be shortly consulting on how to best focus the £640mm of ECO funding onto low income households - which is intended to include elderly people living in fuel poverty.

The Price Cap Bill will protect 11m households with 5m households already protected by the Ofgem safeguard tariff.

■ Environment Protection: Taxation**Deidre Brock:****[131021]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much was collected in environmental levies from businesses in Scotland in each of the last five years.

Claire Perry:

Environmental levies are spread across all consumers in Great Britain and recovered by energy suppliers. What is paid by businesses in Scotland will vary year by year, depending on how much energy is consumed.

The figures for environmental levies across Great Britain are published by the Office for Budget Responsibility alongside the Budget and Statement fiscal events. The latest figures are available here <http://obr.uk/efo/economic-fiscal-outlook-november-2017/>; and outturn data for the last five years can be accessed on the same site. This data is not broken down by country or by the type of consumer.

■ GKN: Melrose**Richard Burden:****[904346]**

If he will use his powers under the Enterprise Act 2002 to intervene in the takeover bid for GKN by Melrose.

Greg Clark:

Under the Enterprise Act 2002, Ministers can only intervene in mergers that raise public interest concerns on the grounds of national security, financial stability and media plurality.

Public interest interventions are quasi-judicial in nature. It is important that Ministers act, and are seen to be acting impartially, on the basis of an open mind and on the evidence available.

It is therefore not appropriate for me to comment.

I continue to monitor this situation closely.

■ **Infrastructure: North East**

Mr Stephen Hepburn:

[\[130838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to provide funding for regional infrastructure development in the North East.

Andrew Griffiths:

Through our Industrial Strategy, we will make sure that we are using all the tools we have to stimulate growth in places such as the North East. That means using our record investments in infrastructure to unlock growth in every part of the country; using the major new investment in research to support innovative manufacturing businesses across the country; and encouraging inward investment into the parts of the country where we need to get growth going faster.

The North East LEP Growth Deal supported by £379.6 million of funding is estimated to provide 8,000 new jobs. The Growth Deal includes funding for the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) providing a world-class environment for high-tech industries and advanced manufacturing businesses. South Tyneside and Sunderland Councils estimate that it will bring £300 million of private sector investment into the region, helping support and grow the manufacturing sector in the North East.

■ **Job Creation: Jarrow**

Mr Stephen Hepburn:

[\[130840\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support job creation schemes in the Jarrow constituency.

Andrew Griffiths:

The Government has funded the provision of tailored advice and support through the North East Local Enterprise Partnership's Growth Hub, which aims to grow the number and quality of jobs across the North East, including Jarrow.

This growth hub has a particular focus on scale-up businesses. In 2014, the North East LEP estimates that the area had 420 scale-up businesses employing 15,500 people with a combined turnover of £1.8billion. A third of the increase in the value of goods and services produced in the North East during 2014 can be attributed to these 420 scaleups.

While the North East economy has seen significant business growth in the past two years, we are supporting the Local Enterprise Partnership in their ambition to do even better by increasing the number of scale-up businesses in the North East LEP area by 50% by 2024, creating 6,000 more jobs.

■ Productivity: North East

Mr Stephen Hepburn:

[\[130837\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to increase regional productivity in the North East.

Andrew Griffiths:

The Government's Industrial Strategy has set out a long term approach to boost the UK's productivity growth and ensure that we're building an economy fit for the future. The White Paper has set out a range of measures aimed at increasing investment from the private and public sector, which will both be vital in meeting the objective of increasing our productivity and earning power for people across the UK, including the North East of England.

We are working with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership to support the delivery of their Strategic Economic Plan, with its key themes of More and Better Jobs, which articulates how productivity can be enhanced in the area. In their latest analysis, the North East LEP highlights that, of the 55,200 additional jobs created in the North East since 2014, 73% – or 40,300 – meet their definition of 'better' jobs.

■ Renewable Energy

Chris Law:

[\[904340\]](#)

What steps he is taking to support the renewable energy sector.

Claire Perry:

The development of renewable energy is a tremendous UK success story.

Thanks to our significant investment and support, renewable capacity has quadrupled since 2010. Last year 30% of our electricity generation came from renewable sources.

The Clean Growth Strategy sets out further actions for supporting renewables.

£557 million of annual support is being made available to bring forward new renewable electricity projects, as well as £4.5bn between 2016 and 2021 to support low carbon heating under the Renewable Heat Incentive, and £177m (for renewables) between 2015 and 2021 for innovation projects.

■ Shipping: Procurement

Mr Stephen Hepburn:

[\[130844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 27 February 2018 to Question 128159, for what reasons the decision was made to procure ships other than warships by international rather than UK-only competition.

Richard Harrington:

As outlined in the National Shipbuilding Strategy (NSbS), the Government is committed to the procurement of non-warships through international competition. It

remains the cornerstone of defence procurement policy as the means by which we attract the best solutions and maximise value for money for UK taxpayers, and lies at the heart of the NSbS. The exemption under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Article 346), which allows any member nation to reserve a procurement for reasons of national security, does not apply to the design, construction and commissioning of non-warships. Where applicable, the sensitive elements of these ships will be limited to a UK only competition. A key element of our vision for a modern and efficient maritime sector, capable of meeting the country's future defence and security needs, is one that can compete in the overseas as well as in the domestic market. Sir John Parker identified a renaissance in the UK shipbuilding sector, which has a record of success in international competitions. As a result of the NSbS, we have set up and are supporting the Maritime Enterprise Working Group, an industry group aimed at actively assisting UK shipyards and supply chains improve their competitiveness and capability capacity to put in high-quality bids. BEIS expects UK shipbuilding companies to be in a position to be able to bid into all competitions announced by MoD. We strongly encourage UK companies to take part in all Defence competitions.

■ Small Businesses

Lucy Allan:

[130957]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps the Government has taken to improve local infrastructure for small and medium-sized businesses.

Andrew Griffiths:

Government has supported and invested in the creation of a network of Growth Hubs (one in each Local Enterprise Partnership area), providing businesses across England with tailored advice and support. Businesses in Telford are served by The Marches Growth Hub. Since its launch in 2015, this Growth Hub has engaged and supported over 14,081 businesses and delivered 144 intensive assists.

Through the Industrial Strategy, Government has announced its intention to ensure all businesses in every region continue to have access to a Growth Hub. We will therefore build on the Growth Hub programme, providing a further £24m of core funding over the next 2 years (£12m in 2018-19 and £12m in 2019-20). In addition, Government will continue to provide national support to all businesses through the Business Support Helpline and GOV.UK.

The Government is also supporting Local Enterprise Partnerships to develop local infrastructure, skills, broadband and innovation in their areas. We are investing £104.9 million in The Marches LEP as part of the Growth Deal Programme. This includes a £4 million project to provide Telford with 100% fibre broadband coverage by 2020 to support the town's growth, economic prosperity and digital inclusion; and significant works to improve connectivity and access to Telford Town Centre, which will benefit small and medium-sized businesses in your constituency.

■ Solar Power**John Mann:** [\[904345\]](#)

What change there has been in the amount of UK energy provided by solar power in the last two years.

Claire Perry:

Solar PV is a UK success story, with rapid deployment over the last 7 years.

Over 99% of the UK's solar PV capacity has been deployed since May 2010.

Latest figures indicate that we now have 12.8GW of solar capacity installed in the UK which is 4% of current UK electricity consumption.

This is an increase in solar capacity of 29% compared to January 2016 when it was 9.9GW.

■ Solid Fuels**Philip Davies:** [\[131038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will list the companies that manufacture and supply smokeless solid fuels into the UK (a) industrial and (b) domestic markets; and if he will make a statement.

Claire Perry:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy does not hold a list of companies that manufacture or supply smokeless fuels. A number of UK fuel producers and wholesalers are listed on the Solid Fuel Association's website, available at this link: <https://solidfuel.co.uk/solid-fuel-association-links/>. These include companies surveyed by the Department for statistical purposes.

■ Toys R Us: Insolvency**Robert Halfon:** [\[131120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to support employees of ToysRUs as a result of its entering administration.

Andrew Griffiths:

I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 6th March 2018 to Question [130654](#).

CABINET OFFICE**■ Arms Length Bodies****Jon Trickett:** [\[128331\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to page 32 of his Department's document Public Bodies 2017, published in November 2018, what progress he has made

on the review of arrangements for arms length bodies with advisory functions; and what the timetable is for that review to be completed.

Chloe Smith:

The Functional Review of Bodies Providing Expert Advice to Government was published on the 21st of August 2017 on Gov.uk.

■ **Death: Weather**

Anna McMorris:

[\[130866\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the rate of excess winter deaths in 2017-18.

Chloe Smith:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ130866 (1).pdf]

■ **Employment: North East**

Mr Stephen Hepburn:

[\[130841\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent estimate he has made of the proportion of (a) private sector and (b) public sector employees in (i) Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside and (iii) the North East.

Chloe Smith:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ 130841 (1).pdf]

■ **Firearms: Greater London**

Catherine West:

[\[131765\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many instances of gun crime have been reported in (a) Hornsey and Wood Green and (b) London in each of the last five years.

Catherine West:

[\[131767\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many deaths there have been involving the use of a firearm in each of the last seven years.

Chloe Smith:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ131765_ 131767 HR.pdf]

■ Life Expectancy**Chris Ruane:** [\[131671\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the projected life expectancy rates for (a) males and (b) females in each 10 year cohort from birth.

Chloe Smith:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ131671 HR.pdf]

■ Young People: Employment**James Cartlidge:** [\[131354\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent estimate he has made of the number of people aged 16 and 17 who are in (a) part-time and (b) full-time employment.

Chloe Smith:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ 131354 (1).pdf]

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS**■ Churches: Blackburn****Sir Mark Hendrick:** [\[131116\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what assessment the Diocese of Blackburn has made of the potential merits of using its church spires for relaying Wi-Fi, broadband or other signals; and which churches in that Diocese could provide potential sites for such relays.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

The Church of England recently signed an Accord with Her Majesty's Government to enable churches to improve broadband and mobile connectivity, particularly in rural areas. The Accord sets out how the Government and the Church can collaborate to help achieve this. Companies are currently being invited to tender to provide connectivity under a framework agreement with rural parish churches. The intention of the Accord is to indicate to Church Chancellors and Local Planning Departments that there is no institutional barrier to this technology being used to promote connectivity in a manner appropriate for the community.

The Church of England is in the process setting up a working group with interested dioceses to identify areas where further work or guidance may be required to support the Accord. The Diocese of Blackburn is not currently part of the working group

however, the Church would welcome any additional information from the Hon. Member for Preston about parishes in his constituency who may be interested in offering this facility to their community. Discussions are also ongoing with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to establish how to progress this project further.

■ Churches: Broadband and WiFi

Daniel Kawczynski:

[\[131600\]](#)

To ask the Honourable Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what plans the Church of England has to make its buildings available for broadcasting (a) Wi-Fi and (b) broadband signal to improve connectivity in rural areas; and if she will make a statement.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

The Church of England recently signed an Accord with Her Majesty's Government to enable churches to improve broadband and mobile connectivity, particularly in rural areas. The Accord sets out how the Government and the Church can collaborate to help achieve this. Specifically, companies are being invited to tender to provide connectivity under a framework agreement with rural parish churches. The intention of the Accord is to indicate to Church Chancellors, Diocesan Advisory Committees and Local Planning Departments that there is no institutional barrier to this technology being used to promote connectivity in a manner appropriate for the community.

Currently, 86.4% of households in the Shrewsbury and Atcham constituency can access superfast speeds - up from 5% in 2011, Church buildings and property may be a good way to reach the last 13.6% of the constituency.

The Church of England is in the process setting up a working group with interested dioceses to identify areas where further work or guidance may be required to support the Accord. Discussions are also ongoing with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to establish the where the barriers are to progress this project further.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces: Mental Health Services

Mr Stephen Hepburn:

[\[130845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to improve mental health support for (a) veterans and (b) serving Military personnel in (i) Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside and (iii) the North East.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is committed to ensuring that both Serving personnel and veterans are given the mental healthcare and treatment they need. We do this by

working in close partnership with a variety of different organisations, including the NHS (which is responsible for the provision of healthcare, including mental healthcare, for veterans) and Service charities such as Combat Stress.

Recent initiatives include the new partnership, announced in October 2017, with the Royal Foundation, aimed at helping maintain and develop good mental fitness. On 25 February this year, the Secretary of State for Defence announced that we have built on our existing partnership with Combat Stress to provide a new MOD-funded 24/7 Military Mental Health Helpline for Serving personnel and their families, running in conjunction with the charity's existing helpline for the veterans' community. We will also be providing an additional £2 million of annual funding for military mental health services, on top of the £20 million a year we already spend, in order to deliver the Defence Mental Health Services Delivery Plan.

Mental health services are already provided for Serving personnel through a network of 20 permanent locations, comprising 11 Departments of Community Mental Health (DCMHs); six Mental Health Teams (MHTs); and three locations with a permanent Community Mental Health Nurse. The North-East region (including Jarrow and South Tyneside) is served primarily by DCMH Leeming in North Yorkshire, which also provides a weekly visiting clinic to RAF Boulmer and Albemarle Barracks in Northumberland, to improve access for patients living in and around those areas.

Personnel leaving the Armed Forces who have had mental health issues during their Service are able to access services at DCMH Leeming for up to six months after discharge, to help them during the transition period. A Veterans' Transition Protocol ensures any Service person discharged with a diagnosed mental health disorder is handed over appropriately to the NHS in England. Where a Service person is leaving the Armed Forces but has enduring need for mental healthcare, we work in partnership with NHS England through the Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (VMH-TILS), to ensure continuity of care.

In the north of England, the VMH-TILS is a partnership between Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys (TEWV) and Northumberland Tyne and Wear, Hull and East Riding and Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trusts. The service provides a range of treatment and support for veterans, as well as Armed Forces personnel approaching discharge. The VMH-TILS will arrange for veterans to be referred if necessary to the NHS England Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (VMH-CTS) which launches on 1 April 2018; the North of England Service Provider is the Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. Other services available to veterans in North East England include the Veterans and Reserves Mental Health Programme (VRMHP), for veterans that have served since 1982 and Reservists with operations service overseas since 2003 (also provided through DCMH Leeming), and the Veterans UK and Veterans Welfare Service.

■ Defence

Fabian Hamilton: [131246]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to implement a defence review before 2020; and if he will make a statement.

Fabian Hamilton: [131247]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with the (a) the Prime Minister and (b) Chancellor of the Exchequer on the potential merits of holding a defence review before 2020.

Gavin Williamson:

The Ministry of Defence continues to implement the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015. The work conducted through the National Security Capability Council and now, the Modernising Defence Programme will build on this. There are currently no plans to conduct a Defence Review before the next Strategic Defence and Security Review.

■ Defence: Modernisation

Nia Griffith: [131356]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his oral contribution of 5th March 2018, Official Report, column 5, when he plans to launch a consultation on the Modernising Defence Programme.

Gavin Williamson:

The public consultation for the Modernising Defence Programme has been launched, and will close on 30 April 2018. It can be found by searching for 'Modernising Defence Programme consultation' on www.gov.uk, or by following the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/modernising-defence-programme-public-consultation>

Nia Griffith: [131358]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his oral contribution of 5 March 2018, Official Report, column 10, whether the Modernising Defence Programme is planned to include new risk assessments separate to the National Security Risk Assessment.

Gavin Williamson:

The Modernising Defence Programme will be informed by the current global security situation and threat context, building on the National Security Risk Assessment 2015 and the work conducted across Government for the National Security Capability Review.

■ Defence: Procurement**Gerald Jones:**[\[131607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that equipment purchased via the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation or single source procurement provides value for money.

Guto Bebb:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) approach to acquisition is to carefully assess the choices available to achieve best value for money while meeting the needs of the UK Armed Forces. This is sometimes achieved through competition, sometimes through single source arrangements, and sometimes through collaboration, which itself may involve elements of competition.

International organisations such as the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR) will establish value for money in a similar way to the UK MOD. This can include establishing prices via competitions. They will also have similar provisions in place to those under the UK's Single Source Contract Regulations (SSCR), which includes detailed visibility of the breakdown of costs.

The MOD seeks to ensure value for money in single source procurement through the provisions of the Defence Reform Act 2014 and the associated SSCR. Parliament enacted this legislation specifically to address some of the difficulties the MOD had previously faced in assuring value for money when undertaking single source procurement. This approach has already significantly strengthened the MOD's ability to secure value for money through single source procurement.

■ Members: Correspondence**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**[\[131417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to answer the letter of 12 February 2018, on military exercises and the MOD's duty of care, from the hon. Member for Bridgend.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

[Holding answer 12 March 2018]: I answered the hon. Member's letter on 12 March.

■ Ministry of Defence: Empty Property**Jamie Stone:**[\[131719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many accommodation properties owned by his Department were empty between January 2016 and January 2017.

Jamie Stone:[\[131720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many properties rented by his Department for accommodation were empty between January 2016 and January 2017.

Jamie Stone:

[\[131722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many non-accommodation properties owned by his Department were empty between January 2016 and January 2017.

Jamie Stone:

[\[131723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many non-accommodation properties rented by his Department were empty between January 2016 and January 2017.

Jamie Stone:

[\[131724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many non-accommodation properties owned by his Department were rented to non-military personnel between January 2016 and January 2017.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The information requested will take time to collate and I will write to the hon. Member as soon as it is available.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Public Appointments**

Catherine West:

[\[131699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the Answer of 23 February 2018 to Question 128636, who the new Director of Economic Security and Prosperity is.

Guto Bebb:

Huw Walters is the Director of Economic Security and Prosperity.

■ **MOD West Freugh**

Mr Alister Jack:

[\[130815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans his Department has for the West Freugh facility in Dumfries and Galloway.

Guto Bebb:

The Ministry of Defence West Freugh establishment is expected to continue delivering test, evaluation and training support services under the Long Term Partnering Agreement with QinetiQ which runs until 2028.

Mr Alister Jack:

[\[130816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many training exercises have been carried out at the West Freugh facility in Dumfries and Galloway in the last five years.

Mark Lancaster:

Thirty-two training exercises were undertaken at the Ministry of Defence West Freugh establishment during the last five financial years (2013-14 to 2017-18).

Mr Alister Jack:

[\[130817\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many staff are employed at the West Freugh facility in Dumfries and Galloway.

Guto Bebb:

There are 30 staff employed at the Ministry of Defence (MOD) West Freugh establishment (26 QinetiQ and four sub-contracted staff). No MOD personnel are employed there.

■ **Norway: Military Exercises****Nia Griffith:**[\[131359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his oral contribution of 5 March 2018, Official Report, column 11, whether training exercises in Norway are planned to return to normal levels in 2019.

Mark Lancaster:

Training for our Armed Forces, including exercises in Norway, is scaled to meet Defence requirements. Royal Marines from across 3 Commando Brigade, and personnel from the Royal Navy and British Army, did deploy to Norway this year to conduct training to maintain capability and to deliver training to the US Marine Corps and the Army.

■ **Strike Experimentation Group****Gerald Jones:**[\[131620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent progress has been made on establishing the Strike Experimentation Group.

Mark Lancaster:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 6 December 2017 to Question 117878 to the hon. Member for Llanelli (Nia Griffith).

Attachments:

1. 117878 - Ministry of Defence [WMS Extracts.docx]

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT■ **Broadband: Telford****Lucy Allan:**[\[130958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many homes are connected to superfast broadband in Telford constituency.

Margot James:

According to Thinkbroadband, in Telford constituency over 96.8% of premises now have access to superfast broadband (<http://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/telford,E14000989>), up from 81% in 2010.

Approximately 41,028 premises in Telford constituency can now access superfast broadband. As confirmed in our announcement in December 2017 we are pushing ahead with our plans for a Universal Service Obligation (USO) so that, by 2020,

everyone across the UK will have a clear, enforceable right to request 10 Megabit per second broadband.

■ **Channel Four Television**

Stephen Kerr:

[\[131044\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he has any powers to intervene over the removal of Channel 4 HD services from the Freesat satellite television network.

Margot James:

The Secretary of State does not have any statutory powers to intervene in the removal of Channel 4 HD from the Freesat satellite television network. The High Definition version of Channel 4 is not a public service channel. Therefore, Channel 4 Corporation may provide Channel 4 HD to platforms on a commercial basis.

■ **Northamptonshire County Council: Public Libraries**

Kevin Brennan:

[\[131194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment he has made of whether Northamptonshire County Council is meeting its statutory requirements under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service.

Matt Hancock:

The Department has received a number of representations following Northamptonshire County Council's decision to revise its library service provision. We are carefully considering the representations to determine whether they will be treated as a formal complaint under the 1964 Act. If so, the Department will begin the process of investigating the complaint.

Kevin Brennan:

[\[131195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent representations he has received from representatives of Northamptonshire County Council library staff.

Matt Hancock:

The Department has received a number of representations concerning Northamptonshire County Council's recently agreed changes to the library service provision in Northamptonshire. However there is no indication that any have been submitted by a member of the library staff.

EDUCATION■ **Academies**

Lucy Powell: [131083]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what number and proportion of academy schools have received a financial notice to improve in each of the last five years.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Academy trust accountability is founded on a clear framework communicated and regulated by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), with effective oversight and compliance based on proportionate risk assessment, and robust intervention when concerns arise.

The ESFA works with trusts to prevent financial instability and enable them to recover their financial position and return to stable governance. When we intervene, we publish financial notices to improve (FNTI) and investigation reports to be transparent and so that lessons can be learned. The sector remains in a strong position, with just over 1 per cent of academy trusts subject to an active FNTI.

Published FNTIs are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/academies-financial-notices-to-improve>.

■ **Academies: Property**

Peter Dowd: [131678]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much his Department has spent from the public purse on the purchase and development of land and buildings for academies and free schools to date.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Government has committed to invest more than £23 billion in the school estate between 2016-17 and 2020-21. This includes a combination of formula and bid-based allocations to schools, local authorities and academy trusts and centrally delivered programmes.

The Government's free school programme was introduced in 2010 and is currently the only programme responsible for both purchasing and developing land and buildings for schools. As of 1 March 2018, there are 391 open free schools, 35 studio schools and 49 university technical colleges (UTCs), which will provide over 256,000 places when at capacity.

The Department's total capital costs for free schools, UTCs and studio schools in each financial year since the inception of the programme, are provided in the table below.

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL FREE SCHOOLS CAPITAL COSTS ¹
2010-11	£1m
2011-12	£50m
2012-13	£275m
2013-14	£704m
2014-15	£761m
2015-16	£931m
2016-17	£965m
2017-18	TBC ²

¹ Rounded to the nearest £1 million.

² This figure will be available in July of this year once the department lays the Education and Skills Funding Agency's annual accounts before Parliament.

A detailed assessment of the capital budget required for each free school project is carried out both before site purchases and again before construction contracts are signed. All variations to the capital budget are reviewed and approved through an established and audited capital approval process and significant variations are escalated to Ministers, the Education and Skills Funding Agency Accounting Officer and, if required, HM Treasury.

Capital funding for individual free schools, 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>.

Data publications for our other main capital funding programmes can be found at the following links:

Schools Condition Allocations and Devolved Formula Capital:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-allocations>.

The Priority Schools Building Programme:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/priority-school-building-programme-psbp>.

Basic Need: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/basic-need-allocations>.

■ Adult Education

Lucy Powell:

[131070]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many adult learners were funded in 2016-17 to participate on (a) maths and English courses, (b) English courses only, (c)

maths courses only and (d) English for Speakers of Other Languages courses only in each region.

Lucy Powell: [131071]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many adult learners were funded in 2011-12 to participate on (a) maths and English courses, (b) English courses only, (c) maths courses only and (d) English for Speakers of Other Languages courses only in each region.

Lucy Powell: [131072]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of funded adult learners in 2016-17 on (a) maths and English courses, (b) English courses only, (c) maths courses only and (d) English for Speakers of Other Languages courses only, have achieved their qualification in each region.

Lucy Powell: [131073]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of funded adult learners in 2011-12 on (a) maths and English courses, (b) English courses only, (c) maths courses only and (d) English for Speakers of Other Languages courses only achieved their qualification in each region.

Anne Milton:

The tables attached provide funded adult learner participation and achievement figures for English and mathematics courses by region for 2011/12 and 2016/17. We cannot provide the proportion of learners achieving their qualification by the breakdowns requested, but can provide the volumes achieving their qualification.

For additional information on English and mathematics breakdowns by region, please see the Further Education (FE) geography data tool in the FE data library:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-further-education-and-skills>.

Attachments:

1. Funded adult learner participation and achievement [131070, 131071, 131072, 131073 attachment.docx]

■ Adult Education: Inspections

Lucy Powell: [131087]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many Ofsted inspections of adult education providers have involved inspectors undertaking on-site visits to sub-contracted provision (a) in the UK and (b) in each region of the UK in the last 12 months.

Anne Milton:

This is a matter for Ofsted, I have asked Her Majesty's Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman to write to the hon. Member and a copy of her reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

■ Apprentices

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[131486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average length of time was for an apprenticeship programme undertaken by (a) women and (b) men in each sector subject area in 2016-17.

Anne Milton:

[Holding answer 12 March 2018]: The average length of stay on apprenticeship programmes in England in the 2016/17 academic year is as follows:

Sector Subject Area	AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY (DAYS)		
	Male	Female	All learners
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	570	558	565
Arts, Media and Publishing	492	470	482
Business, Administration and Law	432	425	428
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	617	640	617
Education and Training	452	454	454
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	643	490	631
Health, Public Services and Care	462	465	464
Information and Communication Technology	455	450	454
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	450	416	437
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	409	442	427
Science and	779	702	744

AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY (DAYS)

Mathematics

Not Applicable/Not Known	491	608	502
Overall average	520	448	483

Notes:

1. Data source: Single Individualised Learner Record.
2. Within the Individualised Learner Record, providers can record the start date, planned end date, and actual end date for each apprenticeship record.
3. Actual end date is only recorded for learners who have reached the end of their programme, or those who have withdrawn early.
4. This calculation only includes those learners who have completed their programme in 2016/17.
5. Some learners can complete their programme in a shorter time due to prior learning.
6. Some learners take longer than expected due to planned breaks in learning.
7. A small number of learners from the Employer Outcome Pilot are not included in this calculation

■ Higher Education: Admissions

David Evennett:**[130854]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of applications to Russell Group universities were from pupils in each socio-economic group in each of the last five years.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) publish data on applications to full time undergraduate courses at each university, which is available here: <https://www.ucas.com/corporate/data-and-analysis/ucas-undergraduate-releases/ucas-undergraduate-reports-sex-area-background-and-ethnic-group/2017-entry-ucas-undergraduate-reports-sex-area-background-and-ethnic-group>. This includes a measure of educational disadvantage, Participation of Local Areas (POLAR), which classifies small areas into five groups according to their level of young participation in higher education.

Information on the number of applications from each POLAR3 quintile to each Russell Group institution, and the proportion of applications that these account for, is shown in the attached table. The POLAR3 quintiles range from the group with the

most disadvantaged applicants (quintile 1) through to the group with the most advantaged applicants (quintile 5).

Data is for UK domiciled 18 year olds who applied before the June application deadline through UCAS, with a known POLAR3 classification. Application numbers are rounded to the nearest five. When applying through UCAS, applicants can make up to five applications.

Attachments:

1. Applications from each POLAR3 quintile [130854 Attachment.xlsx]

■ **Higher Education: Greater London**

David Evennett:

[130853]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals in (a) Bexleyheath and Crayford constituency, (b) Bexley Borough, and (c) London attended university in each of the last five years.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The department publishes information on the percentage of 15 year old pupils from state-funded and special schools by free school meal status who entered higher education by age 19 by local authority and region.

Figures for Bexley and London can be found in Table 2a of the following file:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/635104/SFR39-2017-MainTables.xlsx.

Data is not available at parliamentary constituency level.

■ **Office for Students**

Gordon Marsden:

[131583]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of higher education providers which will be outside of the registration frameworks of the Office for Students.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

[Holding answer 12 March 2018]: The department published the enactment impact assessment for the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 last year. In that, we estimated that there would be 540 providers outside of the Office for Students (OfS) Register in 2019/20. These were broad estimates, made before the OfS took the decision not to proceed with a Registered (Basic) category. In response to the consultation conducted in the autumn, only five providers indicated that they would seek to register in that category.

Any English higher education provider wanting to be officially recognised as providing higher education in England, access public grant funding from the OfS or UK Research and Innovation, access the student support system, recruit international students with a Tier 4 sponsorship licence or apply for its own Degree Awarding Powers and/or University Title must be registered with OfS.

Of those providers outside the OfS register, the majority are likely to be small and specialist institutions offering sub-degree provision and will include a number who are in sub contractual arrangements with providers that will be registered with the OfS, where the registered provider retains responsibility for the students, and for the quality and standards of provision.

Gordon Marsden:

[\[131673\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether it remains his policy for the Office for Students to be the validator of last resort for Higher Education Institutions.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The department has asked the Office for Students (OfS), in guidance, to undertake an assessment of the operation of the current validation system to identify any unnecessary barriers for providers seeking a validation partner, or any areas of current practice that are not in the interests of students. If OfS, having done that, concludes that further action is required to secure necessary improvements in the operation of the validation system, it will make use of its powers under section 50 of the Higher Education and Research Act (HERA) 2017 to enter into commissioning arrangements. It may also ask the Secretary of State to make regulations under section 51 of HERA to authorise OfS to enter into validation agreements with registered higher education providers itself.

■ Out-of-School Education

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[130919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that unregistered schools do not continue to operate.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[130920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of providing Ofsted with more powers to tackle unregistered schools.

Anne Milton:

The department operate and fund a joint team with Ofsted on unregistered schools. Ofsted can and does carry out inspections without notice where it has reasonable cause to believe that an unregistered independent school continues to operate, either at the same premises or if it has re-established elsewhere. Ofsted draws significantly on local knowledge, from the local authority and other sources, on where such settings may be operating, and has achieved great success in securing that settings close or cease operating illegally.

We work together closely with Ofsted on all of these issues, including on the extent of their powers, which we keep continually under review.

■ Out-of-School Education: Inspections

Jim Fitzpatrick:

[\[130848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of increasing the scope of evidence that Ofsted is able to collect during its inspections of unregistered educational establishments.

Anne Milton:

Where Ofsted has reasonable cause to believe that the offence of operating an unregistered school is being committed on any premises, they have the power to enter and inspect the premises, and inspect and take copies of any records or other documents, which they believe may be required for the purposes of proceedings in relation to such an offence. Obstructing Ofsted in the exercise of these functions is a criminal offence. The department operates and funds a joint team with Ofsted on unregistered schools. We work together closely with Ofsted on all of these issues, including on the extent of their powers, which we keep continually under review.

■ Out-of-School Education: Public Consultation

Jim Fitzpatrick:

[\[130850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when his Department plans to publish its response to the consultation on out-of-school education settings.

Anne Milton:

We will be publishing our response to the call for evidence shortly. As well as carefully considering the wide range of responses received, we have been working with a range of partners across the sector to strengthen our understanding of these settings. Our continued work with communities will ensure any future system is effective and carefully takes into account the differences of this broad and diverse sector, which varies considerably in their characteristics and the types of education and activities that they offer.

■ Pre-school Education: Finance

Lucy Powell:

[\[130829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and which local authorities did not pass-through 93 percent of early years funding to early years providers in 2017-18; and which local authorities his Department expects will not pass-through 95 per cent of funding to early years providers in 2018-19.

Lucy Powell:

[\[130830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and which local authorities applied for disapplication from the new early years funding formula pass-through rates in (a) 2017-18 and (b) 2018-19.

Nadhim Zahawi:

For 2017/18, five local authorities applied to disapply the 93% pass-through requirement: Brent, Camden, Islington, Tower Hamlets and Wandsworth.

For 2018/19, three local authorities applied to disapply the 95% pass-through requirement: Camden, Islington and Tower Hamlets.

In 2017/18, all local authorities met the high pass-through rate apart from those who were given authority to disapply. Full detail can be found in the Early Years funding benchmarking tool, available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-benchmarking-tool>.

Information on compliance with the pass-through rate in 2018/19 will not be available until local authorities' planned budget information is published in Autumn 2018.

Lucy Powell: [130831]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and which local authorities allocated a quality supplement through the early years funding formula in 2017-18; and which local authorities plan to allocate such a supplement in 2018-19.

Nadhim Zahawi:

42 local authorities plan to allocate funding for a quality supplement through their local formula in 2017/18 for three and four year olds. For two year olds, two local authorities plan to fund a quality supplement in 2017/18. Full details on local authority planned budget information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/section-251-2017-to-2018>.

The department will not have local authority planned budget available information for 2018/19 until September 2018.

Lucy Powell: [130833]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which local authorities will have their early years hourly funding rates reduced in 2018-19; and what percentage that reduction in funding rate will be for each local authority so affected.

Nadhim Zahawi:

No local authority (LA) has seen a reduction in their early years hourly funding by more than 5% for three and four year olds. There has been no change to funding for two year olds.

Each of the 21 LAs with reduced rates' percentage change can be found in the attached table.

Full details on Early Years funding rates to local authorities can be found in: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-national-funding-formula-allocations-and-guidance>.

Attachments:

1. 130833 Table [130833 Attachment.pdf]

■ Pre-school Education: Teachers

Stephen Timms:

[131756]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Early Years Workforce Strategy published in March 2017, whether he has made an assessment of the feasibility of a programme to grow the graduate early years workforce in disadvantaged areas; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The government is considering the feasibility of a range of approaches to supporting graduates in the early years workforce. This work is still underway.

■ Pupils: Disadvantaged

Gloria De Piero:

[131608]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of primary school pupils eligible for free school meals in (a) Nottinghamshire and b) England attend a school rated as (i) good or (ii) outstanding by Ofsted.

Nick Gibb:

As set out in the Ofsted statistical first release (SFR) data^[1] as at 31 August 2017 and also Pupils data^[2], there were 5,682 eligible pupils for free school meals, who attended a primary school in Nottinghamshire of which, 79 per cent were in schools rated by Ofsted as Good; and eight per cent were in schools rated by Ofsted as Outstanding.

There were 500,386 eligible pupils for free school meals, who attended a primary school in England of which, 73 per cent were in schools rated by Ofsted as Good; and 15 per cent were in schools rated by Ofsted as Outstanding.

[1] Ofsted - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/maintained-schools-and-academies-inspections-and-outcomes-as-at-31-august-2017>.

[2] Pupils Data - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2017>.

■ Residential Care Leadership Board

Ann Coffey:

[130996]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the membership is of the Residential Care Leadership Board.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Sir Alan Wood was appointed as chair of the Residential Care Leadership Board on the 7 November 2017. Sir Alan Wood is a public appointee and his selection followed a competitive recruitment process. Further appointments of unsalaried board members will be made in due course by the department, in consultation with the chair.

In order to make sure that the board's efforts are focused on the areas that will have the most impact, Sir Alan Wood is undertaking a programme of engagement with the sector to understand the key issues. This will enable us to determine the right membership to take forward the work programme.

■ Schools: Data Protection

Layla Moran:

[130983]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department provides (a) guidance and (b) financial support to help schools fulfil their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation.

Nick Gibb:

The Department provides support to schools and others in the sector via publicly accessible guidance. Blog posts are available on the Teaching Blog[1], and videos are posted on the Information Commissioner's Office website[2] and on the Department's YouTube channel[3]. Departmental officials have accepted invitations to speak at relevant events, and continue to respond directly to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) related queries. The Department is working closely with the sector to ensure that guidance is appropriately tailored to address schools' biggest concerns and will provide further guidance in response to questions that are frequently asked by schools.

[1] <https://teaching.blog.gov.uk/>

[2] <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/education/>

[3] <https://www.youtube.com/user/educationgovuk>

■ Schools: Vocational Guidance

David Evennett:

[130857]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of careers advice in schools on vocational training.

Anne Milton:

The Technical and Further Education Act that came into effect in January 2018 requires schools to give providers of technical education, including apprenticeships, the opportunity to talk to pupils about the courses and jobs they offer. The new law, originally proposed by Lord Baker of Dorking, will make sure that all young people learn about opportunities for education and training outside school so that they are able to make informed choices about their future. This includes making them more aware of the routes to higher skills and into the workplace, including vocational education and apprenticeships.

The government's recently published careers strategy also sets out how we will improve the information on the National Careers Service website. This will make sure young people have the right information on the full range of options available to them, including vocational training and apprenticeships.

■ Students: Protection

Gordon Marsden:

[\[131584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what protections he plans to introduce for students studying at unregistered higher education providers.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

[Holding answer 12 March 2018]: The regulatory framework and the register of higher education providers are a matter for the Office for Students (OfS). In the recent Secretary of State guidance, issued to the OfS, we have asked them as a priority to:

“develop an understanding of providers and students in the currently unregulated parts of the higher education sector and consider ways of encouraging such providers to register and engage with good regulatory practice”.

More specifically, we have included the following as part of what we have asked OfS to deliver in 2018/19:

“In addition, I would like the OfS to start work to develop a thorough understanding of providers and students in the currently unregulated parts of the higher education sector, and to consider and determine how the OfS will most effectively have a role in protecting the interests of students at these providers. I would like the OfS to consider what barriers to entry to the regulated sector remain for such providers, and how more providers could be encouraged to seek registration and offer greater protection for their students”.

Any English higher education provider wanting to be officially recognised as providing higher education in England, access public grant funding from the OfS or UK Research and Innovation, access the student support system, recruit international students with a Tier 4 sponsorship licence or apply for its own Degree Awarding Powers and/or University Title must be registered with OfS.

Of those providers outside the OfS register, the majority are likely to be small and specialist institutions offering sub-degree provision and will include a number who are in sub contractual arrangements with providers that will be registered with the OfS, where the registered provider retains responsibility for the students, and for the quality and standards of provision.

■ Young People: Carers

David Evennett:

[\[130855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has made an assessment of the adequacy of support for young carers in education.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Young carers make an enormous contribution and the government is determined to ensure that individuals get the support they need and are able to live a full life beyond their caring responsibilities. We have invested over £3 million in funding Carers Trust

and The Children's Society since 2011 to support local authorities in planning, commissioning and delivering services that provide better outcomes for young carers.

The law was changed in 2014 to improve how young carers and their families are identified and supported. Schools play a very important part in identifying pupils who are young carers and in offering them appropriate support. Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework, which covers inspections of schools and colleges, identifies young carers as one of a number of groups of pupils that inspectors should be particularly alert to their outcomes. The Department of Health and Social Care has also trained school nurses to be champions for young carers, speaking up on their behalf and helping head teachers and governors decide how best to support them at school.

Ahead of the forthcoming social care Green Paper on care and support for older people publication, the Department of Health and Social Care will shortly be publishing plan, setting out a cross-government programme of targeted work to support carers.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture

Julie Cooper:

[\[131049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect on UK agriculture of the UK leaving the EU single market and Customs Union.

George Eustice:

Outside the EU we will create new opportunities for our farmers to grow more, sell more and export more great British food. Alongside our plans for a new domestic agricultural policy, the UK has been clear that it is leaving the Single Market and the Customs Union. We have set out two potential options for our customs arrangement; a customs partnership where at the border the UK would mirror the EU's requirements for imports from the rest of the world, or a highly streamlined arrangement where we would jointly implement a range of measures to minimise frictions together with provisions for Northern Ireland. Both options would leave the UK free to determine its own tariffs.

■ Bovine Tuberculosis: South West

Dr David Drew:

[\[131055\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many herds were located in each of the badger cull areas of the first (a) Gloucestershire, (b) Somerset and (c) Dorset cull zones for each of the (i) three pre-cull years and (ii) first four years of the culls.

Dr David Drew:

[131057]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many new herd incidents were there in (a) the first Gloucestershire, (b) the first Somerset and (c) the first Dorset cull zone for (i) each of the three years before the cull and (ii) each of the first four years of the cull.

Dr David Drew:

[131058]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many officially TB free status withdrawn cases there were in (a) the first Gloucestershire, (b) the first Somerset and c) the first Dorset cull zone in (i) each of the last three years before the culls and (ii) for each of the first four years of the culls.

George Eustice:

A report providing analysis of TB incidence in cattle for the licensed badger control areas of Gloucestershire & Somerset, which began in 2013, and Dorset, which began in 2015, has been published. The report provides information on Officially TB Free Withdrawn incidents in the three years prior to badger control operations in the three areas, and the number of herds in each area at the start of badger control operations. The data for the fourth year of Gloucestershire & Somerset, and the second year of Dorset will be published in due course. The report can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643492/tb-badger-control-third-year-analysis.pdf.

ACTIVE HERDS	YEAR					
Area	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Dorset	143	146	149	157		
Gloucestershire	200	203	208	215	203	178
Somerset	136	145	149	154	147	133

TOTAL INCIDENTS	YEAR					
Area	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Dorset	25	29	26	35		
Gloucestershire	41	31	18	29	24	23
Somerset	34	42	30	29	23	27

OTF-WITHDRAWN	YEAR					
Area	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Dorset	17	23	17	21		
Gloucestershire	30	23	16	20	19	17
Somerset	28	30	27	26	20	21

■ Caviar

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[131444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the civil sanctions in the Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Regulations 1997 as a deterrent to people selling caviar illegally.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Regulations 1997 contain criminal penalties to address offences. These regulations are being revised to consolidate a number of amendments and to bring in new offences including some related to the caviar trade.

In the case of new offences related to mixing, marking, labelling and record keeping for caviar, the Government considers a civil sanction is a proportionate response. Existing offences relating to the trade in caviar will continue to be enforced through criminal sanctions.

■ Glass: Recycling

Anna McMorris:

[\[130868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the merits of a deposit return scheme for glass bottles.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Defra continues to work closely with the devolved administrations in delivering our shared ambitions to improve waste and recycling outcomes and promote resource efficiency in the UK.

Last autumn an independent working group set up under the Litter Strategy for England held a call for evidence on measures to reduce littering of drinks containers and promote recycling. The focus was rigid and flexible plastic, glass or metal drinks containers that are sold sealed and used for the sale of alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages, often for consumption 'on the go'. This included seeking evidence on the costs, benefits and impacts of deposit return schemes. The working group has submitted its report to Ministers, who will make a decision on next steps shortly.

■ Water Supply

Neil Coyle:

[\[131285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that water companies prepare for cold weather; whether his Department plans to improve the provision of information to consumers on disruption to water supplies; and whether his Department is taking steps to compensate people who experienced disruption to their water supply.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Companies have a statutory duty to provide clean and reliable water to customers under the Water Industry Act 1991 and water company licences, plus any special requirements to service vulnerable customers. They also have a statutory duty to plan to balance supply and demand over the long-term (25 years minimum). Companies should be planning to be resilient to all foreseeable risks, including severe weather and in response to climate change projections and population growth.

Water customers are entitled to guaranteed minimum standards of service. If a company fails to meet any of the guaranteed standards, customers are entitled to a payment under the Guaranteed Standards Scheme (GSS). Ofwat may also take enforcement action against the companies it regulates where these companies fail to comply with their statutory duties and licence obligations. Ofwat will work with the water companies to establish whether licence conditions have been breached and to what extent the GSS regulations require them to make compensation payments.

Ofwat is reviewing formally the performance of the companies during this period once the situation is restored to normal. This will be a thorough review and as well as identifying problems, Ofwat will identify excellent examples of practice and preparation shared across the sector. The review will include consideration of planning for such cold weather events and customer communications. The government will consider any recommendations from the review and act decisively to address any shortcomings exposed.

Ofwat will also consider as part of the review whether the companies have proactively provided fair and speedy compensation to customers. The government has made clear to water companies that it expects them to use their discretion to offer compensation to customers, recognising the impacts that they have experienced.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ EU Institutions

Heidi Alexander:

[\[131383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, with reference to the Prime Minister's speech of 2 March 2018 on the UK's future economic partnership with the EU, whether the list of pan-European regulatory agencies to which the UK will be seeking

long-term associate membership is limited to the European Medicines Agency, the European Chemicals Agency and the European Aviation Safety Agency.

Mr Robin Walker:

As the Prime Minister said in her speech in Mansion House on 2 March 2018, we will want to explore with the EU the terms on which we could remain part of EU agencies such as those that are critical for the chemicals, medicines and aerospace industries: the European Medicines Agency (EMA), the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), and the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

There are other agencies, such as those related to our future security partnership, that the UK may seek to remain a part of. Where there is a demonstrable national interest in pursuing a continued relationship with an agency or other EU body the Government will carefully examine whether we should pursue this. Our future relationship with the EU's agencies will ultimately be a matter for the negotiations.

■ **Health Services: Reciprocal Arrangements**

Stephen Kerr:

[\[131463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what plans he has to negotiate for reciprocal access for health care services across the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

We have reached an agreement with the EU on reciprocal healthcare arrangements for UK nationals covered by the scope of the Withdrawal Agreement.

Reciprocal healthcare rights for individuals not in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement will be a matter for further negotiation with the EU.

At every step of the negotiations we will work to ensure the best possible outcome for the British people.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

Thelma Walker:

[\[130988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, when his Department plans to respond to the correspondence dated 19 December 2017 from the hon. Member for Colne Valley on a constituent's concerns over EU nationals.

Mr Steve Baker:

The response to the hon. Member's correspondence dated 19 December 2017 regarding a constituent's concerns about EU nationals was dispatched by the Department for Exiting the European Union on 22 February 2018.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE■ **Benjamin Ryalls****Mr Geoffrey Cox:**[\[131031\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to assist Mr and Mrs Dennis Ryalls to ascertain the cause of the death of their son, Benjamin Ryalls, in Mombasa, Kenya on 24 July 2012.

Harriett Baldwin:

We regularly submit formal requests to the Kenyan Government, asking for the toxicology report to be released, and did so most recently on 24 January 2018. We raised Mr Ryalls' case with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 4 March 2018 and we will continue to do so on behalf of his family and the UK coroner.

■ **China: Human Rights****Jim Shannon:**[\[131019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on the recent deaths of (a) Liu Xiaobo, Nobel Peace Prize laureate, (b) Peng Ming, political prisoner, and (c) other human rights defenders and political dissidents.

Mark Field:

We are concerned by reliable reports that a number of human rights defenders have died whilst in custody and of allegations that some have been denied access to medical treatment of their choice. We look to the Chinese authorities to provide details of the circumstances surrounding their deaths. My officials in the UK and across the China network regularly seek and receive information from a wide variety of sources on this issue.

As my Rt Hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary stated on 13 July 2017, we were deeply saddened to hear of the death of Liu Xiaobo. Our thoughts continue to be with his widow, Liu Xia, his wider family, friends and supporters.

We raised our concerns directly with the Chinese authorities at the last round of the UK/China Human Rights Dialogue which took place in Beijing on 27 June 2017.

■ **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty****Alan Brown:**[\[131670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps the Government has taken to encourage non-signatories to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The UK remains committed to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. During the last 12 months we have continued to press those states who have not yet signed and ratified the Treaty to do so. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Asia

made a statement promoting the universalisation and entry into force of the Treaty at the Conference on Facilitating the Entry Into Force on 20 September 2017. During the current 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly, the UK made a statement and co-sponsored a resolution pursuing these goals for the Treaty. We also work through the EU to promote the Treaty, and the EU Council recently adopted the seventh Decision in its support on 26 February.

■ **Eritrea: Human Rights**

Patrick Grady: [\[130928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he has taken to ensure that the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Eritrea is renewed.

Harriett Baldwin:

We expect that in June 2018 the Human Rights Council will adopt a new resolution which would renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur. My officials in London, Geneva and in Asmara are engaged on this issue, and will be having discussions on Eritrea during the March session of the Human Rights Council.

Patrick Grady: [\[130929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the outgoing Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Eritrea on the work conducted by her office during her time in post.

Harriett Baldwin:

My officials will participate in the planned Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Eritrea on 12 March during the next session of the UN Human Rights Council.

Patrick Grady: [\[130930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to help ensure that the Office of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Eritrea continues to operate in a credible, neutral and effective manner.

Harriett Baldwin:

The United Kingdom continues to encourage the Eritrean Government to cooperate fully with the next Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Eritrea, and to invite the Rapporteur to conduct a visit. This is the best way to ensure that the Special Rapporteur has a full picture of the human rights situation in Eritrea and the mandate holder is able to support improvements in human rights in Eritrea.

Dr David Drew: [\[131375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the (a) human rights situation and (b) level of religious freedom in Eritrea.

Harriett Baldwin:

Eritrea remains a priority country in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's annual human rights report. The overwhelming majority of people can practise their religion peacefully and are allowed to do so, but legal restrictions and harassment on the practice of some religions undermines the harmony and freedom of religion or belief in Eritrea. We are concerned by the detention of individuals and groups from proscribed religious groups, and senior individuals from religious organisations. The UK will emphasise this concern during the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Eritrea on 12 March during the current session of the UN Human Rights Council.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Motor Vehicles**Mary Creagh:**[\[131718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many vehicles her Department (a) owns and (b) leases.

Mark Field:

Both directly and through its Trading Fund, FCO Services, the FCO owns 1890 vehicles. Data is not available for the total number of leases.

Haji Musa Mohammed Nur**Dr David Drew:**[\[131369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations on the recent death in detention of Haji Musa Mohammed Nur to the Government of Eritrea.

Harriett Baldwin:

Our Ambassador and EU counterparts have called for the release of all prisoners detained for religious or political beliefs or, as a minimum, that they are brought before a court for public hearing and fair trial, allowing them to defend themselves against any charge. We will continue to raise our concerns on this and other human rights issues with the Government of Eritrea in close coordination with partners.

Israel: Travel Restrictions**Steve McCabe:**[\[130821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the travel ban imposed by the Israeli Government on the British charities War on Want and Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

Alistair Burt:

Israeli Immigration Policy is a matter for the Government of Israel. We are not aware of a full travel ban on the British charities War on Want and Palestine Solidarity Campaign. The Israeli Parliament passed a law on 6 March 2017 to authorise the denial of entry to foreign nationals who have publicly called for a boycott of Israel

and/or settlements, or who belong to an organisation which has called for a boycott. On 7 January, the Israeli Ministry of Public Security published guidance identifying 20 non-government organisations which are particularly associated with calling for a boycott of Israel. This list included War on Want and Palestine Solidarity Campaign. Individuals strongly associated with these organisations may be denied entry to Israel, but we are not aware of a blanket travel ban. We have updated our travel advice to recommend that concerned British nationals contact the Israeli Embassy for further information.

■ Li Baiguang

Jim Shannon:

[\[131018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what reports he has received on the death of Chinese human rights lawyer, Li Baiguang, on 25 February 2018; and what representations he has made to the Chinese Government on that death.

Mark Field:

We were deeply saddened to hear of the death of Li Baiguang on 25 February 2018. We look to the Chinese authorities to provide comprehensive details of the circumstances surrounding his death. We have not made representations to the Chinese authorities on this specific case.

We are concerned by reports that a number of human rights defenders have died whilst in prison and allegations that they have been denied access to medical treatment. We raised our concerns directly with the Chinese authorities at the last round of the UK/China Human Rights Dialogue which took place in Beijing on 27 June 2017.

■ Money Laundering and Sanctions

Helen Goodman:

[\[131609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the timetable is for implementing the Government's new anti-money laundering and sanctions regime.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Bill will come into force on a day appointed by the Secretary of State, who may choose to commence different clauses on different days. This will ensure that there is no gap when the anti-money laundering and sanctions regimes in force now, under the EU, are transferred to the new UK framework. The exact timetable required will be dependent on the ongoing withdrawal negotiations with the EU.

■ Nigeria: Politics and Government

Nigel Dodds:

[\[130802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has made an assessment of the implications for his policies of the recent report of the International Society for Civil Liberties and the Rule of Law.

Mark Field:

We have not had a discussion with International Society for Civil Liberties and the Rule of Law and have not made an assessment of their report.

■ North Korea: Nuclear Weapons**Alan Brown:**[\[131669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has held discussions with his US and South Korean counterparts on the Chinese-Russian proposal for the suspension of joint military exercises by those countries in exchange for North Korea halting its nuclear and missile test programmes.

Mark Field:

The Foreign Secretary regularly discusses the DPRK with his US and South Korean counterparts. Russia and China have promoted a 'freeze for freeze roadmap' as a route into negotiations on the nuclear issue. Both the US and South Korea have said the Chinese and Russian proposal is unacceptable as it falsely equates North Korea's continued pursuit of *illegal* nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes in violation of multiple UN Resolutions and *lawful* defensive military co-operation between allies and partners. The Foreign Secretary has also made this clear to his Chinese and Russian counterparts.

We welcome the news that President Moon Jae-In and Kim Jong Un plan to hold a leaders summit and that Kim Jong Un is willing to hold direct talks on denuclearisation with President Trump by May. We welcome too North Korea's commitment to suspend nuclear and missile tests while dialogue continues. We note that North Korea accepts that scheduled military exercises will still go ahead as planned.

■ Nuclear Weapons**Alan Brown:**[\[131668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has held discussions with his Russian counterpart on that country's development of new nuclear weapons; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Ministers and senior officials have raised nuclear and missile issues with members of the Russian government on a number of occasions. We regret President Putin's decision to develop these new systems rather than working towards strategic stability. We remain completely confident in NATO's ability to deter nuclear and missile threats from Russia.

■ Pakistan: Religious Freedom

Mr Steve Reed:

[\[131738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of blasphemy laws on religious minorities in Pakistan.

Mark Field:

We remain deeply concerned by the misuse of the blasphemy laws and the treatment of minority religious communities in Pakistan. The blasphemy laws are used against people of all faiths although minority communities are disproportionately affected. This is particularly concerning given the harsh penalties for blasphemy, including the death penalty.

We regularly raise our concerns about the protection of minority communities and misuse of the blasphemy laws with the Government of Pakistan at a senior level, most recently during my visit to Pakistan in November 2017

■ South Sudan: Conflict Resolution

Dr David Drew:

[\[131588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission for South Sudan.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Government of South Sudan was mandated by the 2015 peace agreement to establish both the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation, and Healing (CTRH) and the Hybrid Court as transitional justice mechanisms. The British Government strongly supports the establishment of both in order to promote healing and reconciliation for the victims of human rights violations and to ensure that the perpetrators are held to account.

In order for the reconciliation and healing process to be successful, it must be built on a strong foundation of stable peace. The UK continues to call on all parties to the conflict to reconvene the High Level Revitalisation Forum as soon as possible, without preconditions, to address the governance and security issues that are essential for long term, sustainable peace.

■ UK Permanent Representation to the EU

David T. C. Davies:

[\[130939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether staff based in UKRep Brussels were offered group therapy sessions by counsellors following the EU referendum result.

Sir Alan Duncan:

No

■ UN Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty Review Conference

Caroline Lucas:

[\[131241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recommendations the UK will make to the second Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The second of three Preparatory Committees for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in 2020 will take place in Geneva in April. At that meeting, we will continue to engage with a wide range of states on how we can tackle the challenges that we face on non-proliferation and disarmament, and on how to enable access to the peaceful use of nuclear technology. We will continue to press for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the start of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty in the Conference on Disarmament and increased transparency and trust between Nuclear Weapons States in order to develop the global conditions in which nuclear armed states feel confident enough to relinquish their weapons. We continue to urge all states that have not yet done so, to join the NPT as non-Nuclear Weapons States.

■ World War II: Genocide

Mr Pat McFadden:

[\[130818\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations (a) he, (b) his Ministers and (c) diplomats have made to the Polish Government on its Holocaust law.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Foreign Secretary discussed this issue with the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs on 15 February. Our British Embassy in Warsaw and officials in London have also discussed it with Polish Government officials.

Mr Pat McFadden:

[\[130820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what plans his Department has to raise with the Polish Government concerns about Poland's Holocaust law; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Foreign Secretary discussed this issue with the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs on 15 February. Our Embassy in Warsaw and officials in London have also discussed it with Polish Government officials.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**Ambulance Services**

Rosie Cooper: [\[130812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance his Department has issued to the Ambulance Service on the timescales for responding to correspondence from Members of Parliament.

Rosie Cooper: [\[130814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance he has issued to NHS Trusts on the timescales for responding to correspondence from Members of Parliament.

Stephen Barclay:

The Department has not issued any guidance to National Health Service trusts or the ambulance service for responding to correspondence from hon. Members. The Code of Conduct for NHS Managers sets out the core standards of conduct expected of NHS managers and includes their responsibility to answer to Parliament, Ministers and the Department.

Breast Cancer

Layla Moran: [\[131735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the report by the APPG on Breast Cancer, A Mixed Picture: An Inquiry into Geographical Inequalities and Breast Cancer, what steps he is taking to reduce inequalities in breast cancer outcomes across the UK; and if he will make a statement.

Steve Brine:

NHS England is committed to transforming cancer care for all cancers, including breast cancer, across the country, and to reducing inequality and promoting equity of access to services. The report recommends improving the use of data: NHS England and Public Health England (PHE) have set up the Cancer Alliance Data, Evidence and Analysis Service, to help drive evidence-based local decisions in the delivery of improved cancer outcomes, using a whole pathway and cross-organisational approach.

On workforce, NHS England is working closely with Health Education England (HEE) following publication in December of the cancer workforce plan, and Cancer Alliances will work with their local HEE offices and regional teams to produce local plans.

On early diagnosis, PHE has launched the 'Be Clear on Cancer' Campaign to raise awareness of specific symptoms and encourage those with symptoms to visit their doctor. The latest campaign, launched on 22 February, focuses on breast cancer in people aged over 70.

To improve the uptake of screening, we are continuing to invest in initiatives to help ensure equality of access, including through locally targeted interventions. PHE has

produced a new 'Breast screening: easy guide', and this, along with other initiatives such as text and general practitioner reminders, are examples of some of the ways which we are getting the information through to women so they can decide whether screening is right for them.

■ Carers: Vaccination

Emma Hardy:

[131001]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to introduce free vaccinations for carers; and if he will make a statement.

Steve Brine:

All United Kingdom residents (including carers) are eligible for all vaccines in the routine immunisation schedule free of charge on the National Health Service, according to their age.

Carers may also be entitled to influenza, hepatitis B and varicella (chickenpox) vaccines depending on the health condition and/or vulnerability of those they care for. These are free on the NHS for carers. If they are an employed carer then the employer is legally responsible for funding these vaccines, following an occupational health assessment.

■ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Theresa Villiers:

[131736]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to expand access to PACE treatment for people who have Myalgic Encephalomyelitis.

Steve Brine:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guideline Chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (or encephalopathy): Diagnosis and management of CFS/ME in adults and children, published in 2007, sets out best practice for clinicians on the diagnosis, treatment, care and support of people with the condition and assists commissioners in planning services for local populations. The guideline recommended cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and graded exercise therapy (GET) as appropriate treatments for mild to moderate CFS/ME, in line with the best available evidence. In 2011, NICE considered the results of the PACE trial, which also looked at CBT and GET, and concluded that they supported its existing recommendations on these treatments.

The NICE guideline acknowledges that there is no one form of treatment to suit every patient and that treatment and care should take into account the personal needs and preferences of the patient. Decisions concerning the appropriateness of treatments should be made on a case by case basis, and in discussion with patients and their families or carer, if appropriate.

On 20 September 2017, NICE announced its decision to undertake a full update of this guideline, following a review of the latest available evidence on the diagnosis and

management of CFS/ME and a public consultation. More information on this decision can be found at the following link:

www.nice.org.uk/news/article/nice-to-begin-review-of-its-guidance-on-the-diagnosis-and-treatment-of-cfs-me

■ Colorectal Cancer: West Midlands

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[131644]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the level of bowel cancer screening in (a) the West Midlands and (b) Coventry.

Steve Brine:

NHS England is responsible for commissioning bowel screening services to meet programme standards including coverage. They are committed to improving coverage and reducing mortality from bowel cancer.

The steps taken to increase the uptake of bowel screening include reminders, ensuring that men and women are invited every two years, tailoring information for men and women with learning difficulties and using general practice endorsement of invitation letters in accordance with evidence of effectiveness.

Further information is available here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/service-spec-26.pdf>

■ Drugs: Research

Thelma Walker:

[130886]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much funding his Department has allocated to medical research for the development of new medicines in each of the last three years.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Department funds research via the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

The types of biomedical and health related research that are funded by NIHR and other funders can be classified using the Health Research Classification System (HRCS). Whilst HRCS does not have a category that is specifically 'new medicines', HRCS codes 5.1 and 6.1 relate to the development and evaluation of pharmaceutical treatments and therapeutic interventions and can be used to classify NIHR Programme Spend. It is possible that these codes may include some evaluation of existing medicines.

In addition, the NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) undertakes research which supports clinical trials into pharmaceutical treatments and therapeutic interventions. CRN funding data can be calculated based on the number of recruiting 'Clinical Trial of an Investigational Medicinal Product (CTIMP)' studies within the CRN Portfolio.

NIHR programme research spend classified under HRCS codes 5.1 and 6.1 and CRN CTIMP spend over the last three years where complete data is available is shown in the following table:

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
NIHR Programme Spend	£34,204,157.67	£36,655,975.32	£39,011,490.62
CRN spend	£76,600,272.00	£77,676,259.00	£77,036,034.00
	£110,804,429.67	£114,332,234.32	£116,047,524.62

Research which may also contribute to the development and evaluation of pharmaceutical treatments and therapeutic interventions carried out across NIHR Infrastructure is not coded by the HRCS scheme so cannot be wholly attributed to individual research topics.

Thelma Walker:

[130887]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the level of funding from the public purse to be allocated to research for medicines in each of the next three years.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Department funds research via the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into a wide range of areas but does not usually ring-fence funds for particular topics. Awards are made in open competition on the basis of importance of topics to patients and health and care services, value for money, and scientific quality judged through peer review. The amount of future NIHR funding in specific topic areas will depend on the quality and quantity of research proposals submitted to NIHR for review. As such, NIHR does not hold projected funding allocations specifically for research into medicines.

Information on individual projects funded by the NIHR can be found at:

<https://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/programmes/>

However, NIHR does hold information on previous spend on the types of biomedical and health related research that are funded by NIHR and other funders, classified using the Health Research Classification System (HRCS). Whilst HRCS does not have a category that is specifically 'new medicines', HRCS codes 5.1 and 6.1 relate to the development and evaluation of pharmaceutical treatments and therapeutic interventions and can be used to classify NIHR Programme Spend. It is possible that these codes may include some evaluation of existing medicines.

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Research which may also contribute to the development and evaluation of pharmaceutical treatments and therapeutic interventions carried out across NIHR Infrastructure is not coded by the HRCS scheme so cannot be wholly attributed to individual research topics.

Thelma Walker:

[130888]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that (a) funding from the public purse for medical research is transparent; and (b) that medicines produced a result of funding from the public purse are affordable.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is funded through the Department to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research. Full and open access to the knowledge generated by research is of the utmost importance to the NIHR. The NIHR commitment to transparency, the NIHR Journals Library, open access policy, and endorsement of the World Health Organization joint statement on the disclosure of results ensures that ideas and knowledge derived from publicly funded research are made available and accessible for public use.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence technology appraisal guidance and the associated funding requirement plays an important role in ensuring that patients have access to cost-effective new medicines, including medicines developed from public research.

The recent Government and partner bodies response to the Accelerated Access Review sets out how we will work with industry and the health system to create a streamlined and sophisticated approvals system so that cost-effective breakthrough products – be they drugs, devices, digital or diagnostics – can get into the National Health Service as fast as possible.

■ General Practitioners

Mr Nigel Evans:

[130921]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve the (a) availability and (b) adequacy of GP services as a result of the publication of the British Social Attitudes Survey.

Steve Brine:

The Government has committed to ensuring everyone across the country has easier and more convenient access to general practice services, including appointments in the evenings and weekends.

The latest National Health Service planning guidance, issued by NHS England in February 2018, requires clinical commissioning groups to provide extended access to general practice to their whole population by 1 October 2018, to ensure additional capacity is in place ahead of winter 2018. This includes ensuring that access is available during peak times of demand, including bank holidays and across the Easter, Christmas and New Year periods. Currently, 52% of the population is benefitting from extended access, including evening and weekend appointments.

The general practitioner (GP) Patient Survey for 2017 found that 85% of patients had a good overall experience of their GP surgery and 95% of respondents said that they have confidence and trust in their GP.

■ Health Services: Reciprocal Arrangements

Paul Blomfield:

[131663]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether UK citizens resident in an EU country after the UK leaves the EU will be required to apply for a European Health Insurance Card to the UK or to their country of residence.

Stephen Barclay:

We have reached an agreement with the European Union on reciprocal healthcare arrangements for United Kingdom nationals covered by the scope of the Withdrawal Agreement.

This means that anyone in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement, and who is entitled to a UK European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), will continue to benefit from that scheme for as long as their cross-border situation continues. This includes tourists for the duration of their stay, students for the duration of their course, and UK nationals resident in another Member State, such as pensioners.

Reciprocal healthcare rights for individuals not in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement will be a matter for further negotiation with the EU. As set out in the UK's policy paper on Citizens' Rights, published in June last year, the UK wants to secure continuation of EHIC rights for current and future UK EHIC holders, subject to a reciprocal deal.

At every step of the negotiations we will work to ensure the best possible outcome for the British people.

■ Hepatitis

Jim Shannon:

[\[131037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance the NHS provides to operational delivery networks on tackling hepatitis C to minimise variation in the effectiveness of local care services throughout England.

Steve Brine:

NHS England commissions hepatobiliary care services, infectious diseases services and hepatitis C Operational Delivery Networks (ODNs) in accordance with published service specifications. Specifications set out requirements of services including any relevant National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance. The aim is to reduce variation across local services and allow for the development of care and treatment services relevant to local population need. NHS England also incentivises the 22 ODNs to develop local services relevant to local need through a Commissioning for Quality and Innovation Scheme. National, regional and local support is provided to ODNs as required. NHS England is planning a review of ODNs during 2018 which will further improve support available and reduce any unwarranted variation.

■ Hyperactivity: Prescription Drugs

Cat Smith:

[\[130889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many unique patients have been prescribed (a) antipsychotic drugs, (b) stimulants and drugs to treat ADHD, (c) mood stabilisers and (d) GABAergic drugs in each of last full two years for which information is available.

Cat Smith:

[\[130890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people aged under (a) 18 and (b) 13 who were prescribed (i) stimulants and (ii) other drugs to treat ADHD in each of the last three years.

Cat Smith:

[\[130894\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 27 February 2018 to Question 128035, on Prescription Drugs, how many unique (a) male and (b) female patients were prescribed antidepressants in each of the last full two years for which data is available.

Cat Smith:

[\[130895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what information his Department holds on the number of unique patients who have been prescribed (a) stimulants and (b) other drugs to treat ADHD in the each of the last three years.

Steve Brine:

The information is not held in the requested format. Data relating to the clinical indication a prescription is intended for is not captured; some items dispensed can be used for a variety of clinical indications.

■ Inflammatory Bowel Disease**Jim Shannon:****[131035]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, What assessment (a) his Department and (b) NHS England has made of the potential resource efficiencies of redesigning NHS Inflammatory Bowel Disease services outside of the hospital setting.

Steve Brine:

No assessment has been made. The majority of services for people with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, which are collectively known as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), are planned and delivered locally by clinical commissioning groups. NHS England commissions services for a small proportion of patients requiring complex surgery either because of their previous surgical history or because of the nature of their disease.

To support local National Health Service deliver services for people with IBD, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published best practice in the diagnosis, treatment care and support of patients with Crohn's diseases and ulcerative colitis in its guidance Crohn's Disease Management in Adults, Children and Young People, published in October 2012 (updated in May 2016), and Ulcerative Colitis Management in Adults, Children and Young People, published in June 2013.

IBD can cause serious complications and damage requiring surgery. The condition can also impact on the wider health and wellbeing of patients and is also linked to the development other serious conditions. NICE recommends patients are managed by a multidisciplinary team (MDT) with the necessary expertise to enable appropriate monitoring, support and advice necessary to manage the side effects of treatment, flare-ups and to review and maintain remission. MDT support, and the associated diagnostic and investigative resource necessary for IBD patient care will usually be found in secondary care settings. Both sets of NICE guidance can be found at the following links:

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg152/resources/crohns-disease-management-pdf-35109627942085

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg166/resources/ulcerative-colitis-management-pdf-35109695126725

Jim Shannon:**[131036]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the number of unplanned admissions to A&E departments due to inflammatory bowel disease by hospital trust was in each of the last three years.

Steve Brine:

The data requested is not held centrally.

■ **Local Government**

Chris Ruane:

[\[131675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will meet with Ministers in the devolved administrations to discuss (a) geographical and (b) gender disparity in life expectancy in local authority areas of the UK.

Steve Brine:

Ministers are always willing to discuss matters of common concern with their colleagues in the devolved administrations.

We recognise that the causes of health inequalities are multi-faceted and highly complex. We take a comprehensive and strategic approach to reducing health inequalities that addresses the root social causes, promotes healthier lifestyles for all and improves the consistency of NHS services.

■ **Medical Treatments: Safety**

Jim Shannon:

[\[130828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason the yellow card system for reporting medical harms does not include (a) Graded Exercise Therapy and (b) Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Yellow Card Scheme is the United Kingdom system for collecting and monitoring information on suspected Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs). The Yellow Card scheme collects suspected ADR reports from the whole of the United Kingdom in relation to all medicines and vaccines, and also collects adverse incidents on medical devices.

As cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and graded exercise therapy (GET) are both non-pharmaceutical or medical device treatments, any harms associated with them would not be reported to the Yellow Card Scheme.

It is the responsibility of health professionals, in collaboration with their patients and with reference to guidance published by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence in England or equivalent local guidelines to make decisions about appropriate care and treatment. Treatment programmes that include GET and CBT should be reviewed regularly and healthcare professionals should advise patients to contact them if they experience a prolonged increase in symptoms after starting a specialist programme, or if symptoms are severe or distressing.

■ Mental Health

Lucy Allan:

[\[130956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of steps taken by local authorities to tackle loneliness; and what support the Government has provided to local authorities for such work.

Caroline Dinanage:

Loneliness can have a significant impact on physical and mental health.

The Department will be working closely to support the Minister for Sport and Civil Society in developing the cross-Government strategy on loneliness, announced by the Prime Minister in January.

A number of existing Departmental supported programmes can help to address loneliness, including dementia friendly communities, Improving Access to Psychological Therapies, the Carers Action Plan and social prescribing, and we will be looking to work with local authorities and the National Health Service to tackle loneliness as the strategy develops.

■ Mental Health Services: Young People

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[131634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of young people who have not received access to child and adolescent mental health services after a referral in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England in the most recent 12 months for which figures are available.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The information requested is not available in the format requested and could only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

■ NHS: South Tyneside

Mr Stephen Hepburn:

[\[130835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with the South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group on funding for NHS services in South Tyneside.

Mr Stephen Hepburn:

[\[130836\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that NHS services in (a) Jarrow constituency and (b) South Tyneside are adequately funded.

Stephen Barclay:

NHS England meets regularly with each clinical commissioning group (CCG) to review its financial position as the year progresses. This will periodically include a review of expenditure by service type. NHS England is also currently working through

the annual planning process for the National Health Service through which all CCGs are required to set their spending plans for the coming year.

The allocation of funding to CCGs is informed by the estimation of the relative health needs of local areas, based on a formula. The formula is based on independent academic research and includes the factors statistically associated with higher or lower need per head for NHS services.

The funding formula is based on the expected size of the population of each CCG and adjustments, or weights, per head for relative need for health care services and unavoidable costs between CCGs.

The CCG then decides how this funding is deployed across the geography and population for which it is responsible to ensure that the needs of the local population are met.

■ Nurses: Training

Richard Graham:

[\[130785\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many students have applied to courses starting in Autumn (a) 2017 and (b) 2018 to be a Nursing Associate in (i) Gloucester and (ii) England.

Stephen Barclay:

Recruitment data provided by Health Education England from the Bristol Online Survey completed in May 2017 shows 264 nursing associate applications in Gloucester. Nationally there were 8,003 Nursing Associate applications in 2017.

Of these applicants, 2,023 nursing associate trainees in total were recruited in England in 2017, of these 33 were within Gloucester.

Figures for 2018 applications and start numbers are not yet available.

Broadening routes into nursing is a priority for the Department. Following the success of the first year of nursing associate pilot programmes, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced in October 2017 plans to train 5,000 nursing associates through the apprentice route in 2018 and a further 7,500 in 2019.

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[\[131617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the capacity of mental health training for Registered General Nurses working on (a) medical and (b) surgical wards with patients with mental health needs.

Stephen Barclay:

The standards, proficiencies, and outcomes of nursing training are the responsibility of the United Kingdom regulator, the Nursing and Midwifery Council, which is an independent statutory body.

All nurses undertake mental health placements as part of pre-registration training and nurses in emergency departments receive additional mental health training. Staff also have access to Mental Capacity Act training as part of safeguarding arrangements.

Trusts, as individual employers, are responsible for ensuring staff have the skills required to deliver safe and effective care. This includes reviewing specific roles in practice to determine if any further post-registration training is required.

■ Palliative Care: Children and Young People

Catherine McKinnell: [\[131701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether Health Education England plans to produce an end of life care core skills education and training framework to support health professionals in their care for babies, children and young people with life-limiting conditions.

Catherine McKinnell: [\[131702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether Health Education England is undertaking an assessment of the (a) availability of health care professionals for children's hospices and (b) the effect of that availability on the effectiveness of those hospices.

Catherine McKinnell: [\[131704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the number of health and care professionals employed by the NHS and other agencies on the ability of the Government meeting its end of life care choice commitment to babies, children and young people by 2020.

Catherine McKinnell: [\[131706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to support health and care professionals employed by the NHS and other agencies to meet the government's end of life care choice commitment to babies, children and young people by 2020.

Catherine McKinnell: [\[131710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has assessed the potential merits of mandating the implementation of the Government's end of life care choice commitment for babies, children and young people on (a) NHS England and (b) Public Health England.

Caroline Dinenage:

On 5 July 2016 we published Our Commitment to you for end of life care, which set out what everyone should expect from their care at the end of life and the actions we are taking to make high quality, personalised care a reality for everyone, including infants, children and young people. We remain committed to improving services and ending variation in end of life care by 2020. A copy of Our Commitment to you for end of life care can be found at the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/choice-in-end-of-life-care-government-response

Through the Mandate, we have asked NHS England to deliver the Choice Commitment, and through NHS England's National Programme Board for End of life Care, a range of activity is being undertaken with all key system partners, including Public Health England (PHE) and Health Education England (HEE) to achieve this. The HEE Mandate sets out an objective to deliver the parts of the Choice Commitment relevant to training and education in end of life care. The remit letter from the Government to PHE sets out the high level objectives for PHE, but it is not exhaustive and does not include every disease or area of care relevant to PHE activity. However, the letter sets out a range of requirements around, information, data, tools and guidance to support the system to meet legal duties to improve the public's health and reduce health inequalities. In response, PHE's end of life care intelligence network provides an extensive range of data on services and outcomes to improve end of life care and reduce inequalities.

To support health and care professionals employed by the National Health Service and other agencies to meet the Government's end of life care choice commitment to infants children and young people by 2020 a range of activity has been undertaken. In 2017 HEE, in partnership with Skills for Care and Skills for Health, published refreshed End of Life Care Core Skills Education and Training Framework. This aims to standardise end of life care training and education, and as the guidance sets out, much of it is applicable to infants and young children. A copy of the framework is available at the following link:

www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/services/item/536-end-of-life-care-cstf-download

NHS England has published an End of Life Care Commissioning Toolkit which provides a wide range of links to tools and sources of support for both commissioners and providers of services. It sets out best practice and seeks to demonstrate what a well-commissioned end of life care service looks like, and the guidance is relevant to infants, children and young people.

NHS England is also working with key stakeholders, including end of life care charities, to support the implementation of The Ambitions for Palliative and End of Life Care: A national framework for local action 2015-2020. The framework exemplifies the Government's commitment to ensuring everyone, including infants, children and young people, can receive high quality, compassionate and personalised care and sets out the actions that will be taken in local areas to improve care. Through the Ambitions Partnership knowledge Hub, a range of guidance on training and service planning, including case studies, has been made available.

The Department also asked the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to develop guidance on end of life care for children. As a result, in December 2016, NICE published End of Life Care for Infants, Children and Young People: Planning and Management, to support local services in the delivery of high quality end of life care particular to the needs of this group of patients, and their families. The

guidance covers the planning and management of end of life and palliative care for infants, children and young people with life-limiting conditions. The guidance (which covers those aged 0–17 years) was developed with the help of children at the end of their lives, as well as their brothers and sisters, in order to reflect what they felt was important from their care.

The Government's end of life care commitment progress report, published on 21 September 2017, highlighted specific work on the NICE guidance NHS England has commissioned from Together for Short Lives, who are the leading children's end of life care charity. Together for Short Lives are examining services across the country to identify best practice in implementation of the guidance, as well as the current barriers, through interviews with local NHS services. Copies of One year on: the government response to the review of choice in end of life care, and the NICE guidance, can be found at the following links:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/choice-in-end-of-life-care-government-progress

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng61

Finally, as the national body for education and training, HEE provides national leadership and co-ordinates workforce planning, education and commissioning activity to ensure that sufficient numbers of skilled workers are available for the NHS in England. At a local level, each NHS provider produces an assessment of their future needs that form the basis of local area plans, which are then used by HEE to create meaningful forecast at a national level and the basis for discussion with stakeholders as to whether this supply will match the system's view of future demand. This analysis and discussion is then used to identify whether any changes are required to the volumes of training commissioned by HEE.

The NHS employs more staff now, in 2018, than at any other time in its 69 year history with significant growth in newly qualified staff. Although data does not specifically identify nursing specialities, such as palliative care, in palliative medicine, there are 626 (full time equivalent) doctors working in palliative medicine, which is 179 more (40.1%) since May 2010.

HEE has made no assessment of the availability of health care professionals for children's hospices or the effectiveness of this availability. The vast majority of hospices are independently run and recruitment and retention of staff would be a matter for individual hospices or hospice organisations.

■ Parkinson's Disease: Prisoners

Ian Lavery: [\[130970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of prisoners with Parkinson's disease in 2017.

Ian Lavery: [\[130977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether people with Parkinson's in prison have access to (a) a specialist Parkinson's nurse or (b) a consultant.

Ian Lavery:

[130979]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help prison staff support prisoners with Parkinson's disease.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

No estimate of the number of prisoners with Parkinson's disease has been made in 2017.

Commissioning of health services (based on a Health Needs Assessment) is carried out by local Health and Justice commissioning teams. All NHS England Health and Justice commissioners work closely with individual establishments within the secure and detained estate, to commission and procure health care providers to provide a range of high quality services which meet the needs of prisoners, this would include services for prisoners with Parkinson's disease.

HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) works closely with NHS England and local government partners to provide services for all those with care and support needs. HMPPS is committed to ensuring that all prisoners are supported and prisons will make adjustments to ensure the needs of prisoners are met. Both health and social care services in prisons are arranged to be equivalent to services available in the community.

■ Patients: Safety

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[131618]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many independent serious incident reviews were (a) commissioned and (b) completed (c) not completed by NHS England in each month between May 2015 and June 2017; and what the reasons were for the reviews not being completed by 28 February 2018.

Caroline Dineneage:

We do not hold all of the information requested centrally.

NHS England has provided the attached information for the period between September 2016 and June 2017, which includes a monthly status of reported serious incidents with the following investigative status: planned, underway, completed, awaiting clearance or not yet allocated for investigation 'blank'.

The following points should be noted:

- This information has been collected since August 2016, when NHS England put in place a national system for sub-regional and regional teams to escalate serious incidents via a Serious Incident Desk;
- NHS England does not hold information at a national level as to why investigations have not yet been completed. Most investigations should be completed within six months of being commissioned, however some may take longer due to the complexity of the incident; and

- NHS England does not hold information on serious investigations only led by clinical commissioning groups or trusts. The latter has not been included within this response.

Attachments:

1. PQ131618 attached table [PQ131618 attached table.docx]

■ **Pregnancy: Sodium Valproate**

Kate Osamor:

[\[131076\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to (a) investigate the lack of information given to pregnant women prescribed with sodium valproate in the 1970s and (b) introduce a national compensation fund for people affected by the effects of sodium valproate being prescribed to pregnant women.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Sodium valproate was marketed for general use in epilepsy in 1974. The first datasheet (information which was provided to healthcare professionals about how to use the medicine) included a warning about the possible risk of birth defects (teratogenicity) which was based on animal studies. The warning stated that “In women of childbearing age, the product should only be used in severe cases or in those resistant to other treatment.” and “Precautions – women of childbearing age: this compound has been shown to be teratogenic in animals. Any benefit which may be expected from its use should be weighed against the hazard suggested by these findings.” Over the years, as new data have become available on the risks associated with valproate in pregnancy the warnings in the information provided with the medicine have been updated.

Since 1999, legislation has ensured that medicines are accompanied by a Patient Information leaflet which includes information on all the known risks associated with the medicine. Prior to that it was left to the judgement of the doctor to decide how much information should be shared with a patient about their medical care.

The Government has great sympathy for those families who have been affected by the use of valproate in pregnancy. However, there is currently no proposal to offer compensation for those affected by the use of valproate during pregnancy in the United Kingdom. For any child born with a disability, clinical commissioning groups and local authorities, as commissioners of health and social care must secure services to meet the child’s needs. Where a child has a very complex health need, they may need additional health support to that which is routinely available from general practitioner practices, hospitals or in the community, called continuing care. Health, social care and education should work together to meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs.

Baroness Julia Cumberlege has been asked to conduct a review into vaginal mesh, Primodos and Sodium Valproate, including whether the processes pursued to date have been sufficient and satisfactory, and to make recommendations on what should happen in future.

■ Prostate Cancer: Halton**Derek Twigg:** [\[131611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department collects information on the number of men who (a) were diagnosed late for and (b) died from prostate cancer by GP surgery in Halton constituency.

Steve Brine:

Data on the number of men who were diagnosed late and died from prostate cancer are not available in the format requested.

■ Prostate Cancer: West Midlands**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[131643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the level of prostate cancer screening in (a) the West Midlands and (b) Coventry.

Steve Brine:

Prostate screening is not offered as a population screening programme in the United Kingdom.

The UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) last reviewed the evidence about screening for prostate cancer in 2016 and recommended against a population screening programme. The reasons for this included that the test which is available for use in screening, Prostate-Specific Antigen, is neither very specific nor very sensitive, and is unable to distinguish between slow-growing and fast-growing cancers; there is therefore a risk that a national screening programme would lead to a high number of false positives. There are major harms of treating men who incorrectly test positive (i.e. have false positive tests), these include impotence, incontinence and rectal problems.

The UK NSC will be reviewing the evidence to screen for prostate cancer later in 2019/20. More information is available at:

<https://legacyscreening.phe.org.uk/prostatecancer>

■ Prosthetics**Jim Shannon:** [\[130789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people were prescribed with a prosthetic limb, in each of the last five years.

Caroline Dineneage:

This information is not held centrally.

■ Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension

Jim Shannon:

[\[130806\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people have had been treated for pulmonary arterial hypertension in England, in each of the last three years.

Jim Shannon:

[\[130807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reduce the timescale for the diagnosis of pulmonary arterial hypertension.

Jim Shannon:

[\[130808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many Care Commissioning Groups in England provide pulmonary rehabilitation services for patients with pulmonary arterial hypertension.

Steve Brine:

It is recognised it may be difficult to diagnose pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) because symptoms may be non-specific in the early stages.

NHS England has published service specifications for PAH centres and shared care centres which provide services closer to patient's homes. These specifications clearly define the standards of care expected from organisations funded by NHS England to provide specialised care to PAH patients. Last year all PAH centres met the National Standard on timely diagnosis by having over 95% of patients receive a recorded diagnosis within six months of referral.

The information requested on the number of clinical commissioning groups that provide PAH services is not centrally held.

The information requested on the number of people treated for PAH is not centrally held, as the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) database contains records of hospital episodes and attendances rather than people.

The number of finished admission episodes (FAEs) ¹ with a primary diagnosis ² or a primary or secondary diagnosis ³ of pulmonary arterial hypertension ⁴, 2014-15 to 2016-17 ⁵ is as follows:

ACTIVITY IN ENGLISH NHS HOSPITALS AND ENGLISH NHS COMMISSIONED ACTIVITY IN THE INDEPENDENT SECTOR

Year	Primary diagnosis	Primary or secondary diagnosis
2014-15	7,149	42,160
2015-16	7,447	46,293
2016-17	7,418	49,558

Source: HES, NHS Digital

Notes:

¹ FAEs

A FAE is the first period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. FAEs are counted against the year or month in which the admission episode finishes. Admissions do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the period.

² Primary diagnosis

The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 20 (14 from 2002-03 to 2006-07 and seven prior to 2002-03) diagnosis fields in the HES data set and provides the main reason why the patient was admitted to hospital.

³ Primary or secondary diagnosis

The number of episodes where this diagnosis was recorded in any of the 20 (14 from 2002-03 to 2006-07 and seven prior to 2002-03) primary and secondary diagnosis fields in a HES record. Each episode is only counted once, even if the diagnosis is recorded in more than one diagnosis field of the record.

⁴ ICD-10 Codes used

The following ICD-10 diagnosis codes were used to define pulmonary arterial hypertension: I27.0 Primary pulmonary hypertension

I27.2 Other secondary pulmonary hypertension

⁵ Assessing growth through time (Admitted patient care)

HES figures are available from 1989-90 onwards. Changes to the figures over time need to be interpreted in the context of improvements in data quality and coverage (particularly in earlier years), improvements in coverage of independent sector activity (particularly from 2006-07) and changes in National Health Service practice. For example, apparent reductions in activity may be due to a number of procedures which may now be undertaken in outpatient settings and so no longer include in admitted patient HES data. Conversely, apparent increases in activity may be due to improved recording of diagnosis or procedure information.

It should be noted that HES include activity ending in the year in question and run from April to March, e.g. 2012-13 includes activity ending between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013.

HOME OFFICE

■ College of Policing

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:

[\[128270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, to what countries the College of Policing and its predecessor body has provided (a) training, (b) advice and (c) consultancy services in each year since 2010.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The question is a matter for the College of Policing to answer, but I can confirm that while the College does not provide standalone advice or consultancy services, it does provide bespoke training packages to international partners.

■ Counter-terrorism

Louise Haigh:

[\[131672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions she has had with the National Counter-Terror Policing network on tackling extreme right-wing threats.

Mr Ben Wallace:

I meet regularly both with the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and National Policing Lead for Counter-Terrorism to discuss our response to a range of threats, including from the extreme right wing.

Louise Haigh:

[\[131674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether any of the member of the National Counter Terror Network has requested additional resources to tackle threats from extreme right-wing groups.

Mr Ben Wallace:

As my Right Honourable friend the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service announced on 31 January, the Government has increased funding to CT Police by £71m from the previous budgeted levels.

■ Crime: Rural Areas

Laura Pidcock:

[\[129185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effect of rural crime on farmers in (a) the North East and (b) North West Durham.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government has not undertaken an assessment of the effect of rural crime on farmers in the North East or North West Durham. However, the 2015 Commercial Victimisation Survey found that 24 per cent of agriculture, forestry and fishing premises in England and Wales had experienced at least one incident of crime (excluding online crime) which represented a statistically significant fall of six percentage points compared with the 2013 Survey. Vandalism, theft and burglary were the most common crime types experienced by this sector.

On average there were 330 incidents of online crime per 1,000 premises in this sector, which is around a third of the incidence rate for 'traditional' crimes against this sector. The majority of online crime incidents involved computer viruses.

Findings from the 2017 Commercial Victimisation Survey will be published later this year and this will include more up-to-date findings.

■ Drugs: West Midlands**Jeff Smith:**[\[129133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Office, with reference to the report, Reducing Crime and Preventing Harm: West Midlands Drug Policy Recommendations, published in February 2018, whether she plans to bring forward proposals for the introduction of city centre drug testing facilities at night time economy venues.

Victoria Atkins:

Drugs are illegal and there is scientific and medical evidence that they are harmful to health and society. The possession of any amount of a controlled drug is a criminal offence and the supply of a controlled drug (with intent to supply to others) is an even more serious offence. No illegal drug-taking can be assumed to be safe and there is no safe way to take them.

The Government's approach remains clear: we must prevent illicit drug use in our communities and help those dependent to recover, while ensuring that our drugs laws are enforced. While operational decisions are a matter for Chief Constables, the Government and the public expect the police to enforce the law.

■ Firearms: Greater London**Catherine West:**[\[131764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether (a) she or (b) Ministers or Officials of her Department have discussed the shooting of 8 March 2018 in Wood Green with (i) the local authority, (ii) the Metropolitan Police or (c) Mayor of London.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The investigation into this incident is an ongoing operational matter. It is therefore not appropriate for me to comment on this specifically. However, we are in regular discussion with law enforcement about gun crime and are working closely with them to ensure that we have the right legislation, intelligence, detection and enforcement capabilities internationally, at the UK border and within the UK, to tackle it.

■ Home Office: Welsh Language

Hywel Williams:

[128565]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what translation arrangements her Department has put in place to enable efficient and accurate handling of Welsh language correspondence from (a) MPs and (b) the general public.

Victoria Atkins:

The Home Office is committed to ensuring that the needs of Welsh language speakers are recognised and met, in accordance with the requirements of our Welsh Language Scheme.

The Home Office is committed to providing an equally high standard of service in Welsh and English. The Department's Welsh Language Scheme states:

'Members of the public who deal with the Home Office will be able and welcome to do so in Welsh as well as English. If a member of the public in Wales writes to the Department in Welsh, the Department will:

- reply in Welsh; and
- do so within the same target date for replies as for those who write in English.'

This principle is applied to all correspondence that is received by the department, including e-mail as well as paper correspondence.

Should an MP correspond with the department in Welsh, the department will respond in Welsh and will do so within the same target date for those who write in English.

All of our Welsh translations are provided by a specialist external service.

■ Immigrants: Detainees

Mr David Lammy:

[131260]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people who were detained in immigration detention centres have been released into the community in each of the last five years.

Caroline Nokes:

Information on people leaving detention, by reason, is available in table dt_06 of the detention tables in the latest release of 'Immigration Statistics, October to December 2017', available from the Home Office website at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/681703/detention-oct-dec-2017-tables.ods

Mr David Lammy:

[131261]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many individuals have been wrongfully detained in immigration detention centres for (a) 1 week, (b) 1 month, (c) 3 months, (d) 6 months and (e) 1 year or more in each of the last five years.

Caroline Nokes:

Providing the information requested would require a manual check of individual records which could only be done at disproportionate cost.

Detention and removal are essential aspects of effective immigration control. The cases of all individuals being considered for immigration detention are routed through the detention gatekeeper. The gatekeeper considers the suitability of the detention of each individual, in line with general detention policy and, when the individuals concerned are regarded as vulnerable, with the adults at risk in immigration detention policy.

Regular reviews of an individual's detention are undertaken to ensure that it their detention remains lawful and appropriate. Individuals can apply to Immigration Judges at any time for release on bail, and individuals (other than foreign national offenders) are referred automatically for consideration of bail after four months in detention and thereafter at four monthly intervals. Home Office officials will work with any detainee at any time to end their detention if they decide to leave the UK voluntarily.

Individuals who believe they have been unlawfully detained can, in addition to the complaints procedure, launch legal proceedings (JR and private law claims). The fact that a court may subsequently rule that an individual has been unlawfully detained does not necessarily mean the original decision was taken in bad faith. In addition, a court's findings may only relate to only certain aspects of the detention.

Mr David Lammy:**[131262]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many claims of compensation for wrongful detention were (a) received by the Home Office and (b) successful in each of the last five years; and what the cost to the public purse was of the compensation paid by her Department in that same period.

Caroline Nokes:

The Home Office does not record 'wrongful detention' as a payment type. It is only unlawful detention compensation which is recorded on the HO finance system. The cost of unlawful detention for FYs 2012/13 onwards are included in the table below:

UNLAWFUL DETENTION CLAIMS PAID

Year	£m
2016/17	3.3
2015/16	4.1
2014/15	4.0
2013/14	4.8
2012/13	5.0

Figures for FYs 2013/14 to 2015/16 were provided under previous PQ47658. Figure for FY 2017/18 has not been published as the Home Office Reports and Accounts for the current financial year has not yet been finalised and closed.

■ Immigration

Kate Green:

[\[131277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister for Immigration of 5 February 2018, Official Report, column 1211, when she expects the Migration Advisory Committee to respond to her invitation to provide interim reports on the economic aspects of the UK's exit from the EU.

Caroline Nokes:

On 27 July 2017, the Government commissioned the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to gather evidence on patterns of EU migration and the role of migration in the wider economy. It has been asked to report by September 2018 and I understand that the MAC hope to publish an interim report in the near future.

■ Independent Anti-slavery Commissioner

Stephen Timms:

[\[129847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 20 February to Question 127593, on Independent Anti-slavery Commissioner, how many meetings were held between Ministers and the Anti-Slavery Commissioner in (a) 2017 and (b) 2018; and what the dates of those meetings were.

Victoria Atkins:

Home Office Ministers have regular meetings as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

■ Inquiries: Rules of Procedure

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[129787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the number of restriction (a) notices and (b) orders her Department has issued to restrict inquiries under (i) section 19(1)(a) and (ii) section 19(1)(b) of the Inquiries Act 2005 since 2016 (A) in total and (B) for the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

Victoria Atkins:

Since 2016, the Secretary of State for the Home Department has not used the power to impose a restriction notice under section 19(2)(a) of the Inquiries Act 2005.

Under Section 19(2)(b) of the Inquiries Act 2005, a restriction order may be imposed by the Chairman during the course of an Inquiry. The publication of a restriction order is a matter for the issuing Inquiry; independent from Government.

■ Knives: Crime**Tulip Siddiq:****[130439]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to publish a knife crime strategy in response to recent fatalities in London.

Victoria Atkins:

The Home Secretary will be publishing a new Serious Violence Strategy this Spring. The Strategy will emphasise the need to support early intervention as part of a multiple strand approach involving law enforcement and communities. The strategy will set out a range of initiatives to respond to serious violence including key actions on knife crime.

■ National Security**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:****[128155]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what national delegations the College of Policing and its predecessor body supported with training, advice or consultancy at the annual Security and Policing Event in each year since 2010.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The question is a matter for the College of Policing to answer, however the College has not identified any training, advice or consultancy that it has delivered to national delegations at the Security and Policing Event

■ Police Community Support Officers: Greater London**Tulip Siddiq:****[130440]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many community support police officers there were in each London borough in each of the last five years.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of police community support officers employed by each police force in England and Wales on a bi-annual basis. These data are published in the 'Police workforce, England and Wales' statistical bulletins, which can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales>

The Home Office does not collect this information at the borough level. The latest data available on the number of police community support officers in the Metropolitan Police Service and City of London Police, as at 30 September, can be found in Table 1 of the accompanying Data Tables:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-30-september-2017>

Previous years data, as at 31 March each year, can be found in the accompanying Open Data Table:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/629362/open-data-table-police-workforce.ods

■ Refugees: Children

Thangam Debbonaire:

[131208]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her policy is on the resettlement of disabled refugees under the Dubs scheme.

Caroline Nokes:

Under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 ('Dubs Amendment'), the Government has invited referrals of eligible children from France, Greece and Italy. In line with our published policy statement, each child will have an individual Best Interests Determination. It is the responsibility of participating States to refer eligible children.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/policy-statement-section-67-of-the-immigration-act-2016>.

Yvette Cooper:

[131300]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Dublin Regulation take charge requests were received by the her Department in 2017; from which EU member states those requests were received in that same period; and how many of those requests were accepted by her Department in that same period.

Caroline Nokes:

The Dublin III Regulation is a long-standing mechanism between EU Member States to determine responsibility for examining asylum claims.

The Home Office published comprehensive data on both the number of requests to transfer asylum applicants and number of actual transfers into the UK from other Dublin states as part of the most recent quarterly Immigration Statistics release on 22/02/2018. The relevant statistics can be found at as_22_q, asylum volume 5 at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2017-data-tables>

■ Sexual Harassment

Wera Hobhouse:

[129474]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of record-keeping by the police in relation to up-skirting.

Mr Nick Hurd:

We expect the police to record and investigate all crimes that are reported to them. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services inspect all forces to assess the integrity of their recorded crime data.

■ UK Visas and Immigration

David Linden:

[131712]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on how many occasions the Scotland and Northern Ireland Account Management Team at UK Visas and Immigration have dealt with enquiries from the offices of hon. Members who represent constituencies in England or Wales.

Caroline Nokes:

Data on overall number of written MP enquiries are published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data>

During the last quarter for which data has been published (October –December 2017), Scotland & NI MP AM Team responded to 111 letters and 797 emails from MPs. Of these, none were from MPs in England or Wales.

■ Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre

Yvette Cooper:

[131298]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many reviews of a person's detention in Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre have been triggered by Rule 35 reports since 2015.

Caroline Nokes:

Rule 35 of the Detention Centre Rules 2001 sets out the process by which doctors in immigration removal centres must report to the Home Office cases in which they have concerns that:

- a detainee's health is likely to be injuriously affected by detention (35(1));
- a detainee is suspected of having suicidal intentions (35(2)); or
- a detainee may have been the victim of torture (35(3)).

On receipt of a Rule 35 report, the Home Office caseworker must review the appropriateness of the detainee's continued detention in conjunction with consideration of the adults at risk in immigration detention policy.

As a consequence the number of Rule 35 reports received in any IRC is equivalent to the number of case reviews that have taken place.

The data is published as part of the Transparency publication under the category 'Reports made by a medical practitioner under Rule 35 by place of detention'. The data is published every quarter and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data>

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Hate Crime: Travellers****Tulip Siddiq:**[\[131450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent steps he has taken to improve the recording of hate crimes against Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

We have one of the strongest legislative frameworks in the world to protect communities from hostility, violence and bigotry. Our Hate Crime Action Plan focuses on reducing hate crime, increasing reporting and improving support for victims.

We are aware that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities under-report hate crime, which is why we worked with the police and created a separate reporting page for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers on their hate crime reporting portal True Vision.

My Department also funds projects that encourage Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to report hate crime, including The Traveller Movement's #OperationReportHate, and a dedicated third party reporting website run by Herts GATE.

■ Private Rented Housing**Thangam Debbonaire:**[\[130788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent representations his Department has received on the advertising of private property lettings explicitly to exclude people in receipt of housing benefit.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The Department has received correspondence on this issue. The Government appreciates the problems that some housing benefit claimants can face in finding accommodation in the private rented sector.

We strongly encourage landlords and agents to look at all potential and existing tenants in receipt of housing benefit on an individual basis. We will shortly be publishing a new How to Let guide to help landlords better understand their responsibilities.

Legislation exists to prohibit acts of discrimination against individuals in terms of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

■ Private Rented Housing: Housing Benefit**Faisal Rashid:**[\[131352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has plans to prevent landlords from discriminating against people on the basis that they are in receipt of benefits.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

We strongly encourage landlords and agents to look at all potential and existing tenants in receipt of housing benefit on an individual basis and we will shortly be publishing a new How to Let guide to help landlords better understand their responsibilities.

Legislation exists to prohibit acts of discrimination against individuals in terms of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

■ Refuges: Finance**Andrew Gwynne:****[130460]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that refuge services that are in receipt of Government funding in (a) England and (b) Greater Manchester do not close at the end of the (i) 2017-18 and (ii) 2018-19 financial years.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

Local authorities are responsible for making local spending decisions. In our Priorities for Domestic Abuse Services, published in 2016, we acknowledged the importance of local authorities taking a strategic approach to provision of these vital services informed by an assessment of local need.

We are reviewing funding for domestic abuse services, including refuge, particularly the critical care and support costs. To inform our review, we have commissioned an independent, external audit of domestic abuse services. This will give us a complete picture of provision for all victims across England, enabling us to assess what impact services are having and identify any gaps in provision. The audit will report in spring 2018, and the review will be completed by summer 2018. We are committed to working closely with the sector and local authorities on the audit and overall review, drawing on their expertise and knowledge, to ensure we have a robust evidence base on which to take future decisions about the funding of these vital services.

The Spending Review 2015 announced £40 million to support victims of domestic abuse from 2016 to 2020. We were clear in the prospectus for the fund that bids from local authorities should be for long term approaches to supporting victims to ensure that each project in receipt of funding would be sustainable beyond the 2017/18 financial year. The prospectus for the fund and the Priorities for Domestic Abuse Services can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-fund-prospectus>

Frank Field:**[130909]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the Government's proposals for funding short-term supported housing services from 2020 on the (a) number of and (b) services provided by women's refuges in England.

Frank Field:

[\[130910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the viability of women's refuges of the Government's proposals to end a woman's entitlement to (a) housing benefit and (b) the housing element of universal credit when in refuge and instead to devolve that funding to local authorities.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The government has not proposed to end entitlement to housing benefit or the housing element of universal credit to any individual in refuge. The short-term supported housing funding model will instead ensure that the housing costs for people living in refuges and other forms of short-term supported housing will be met by a grant fund administered by local authorities.

The same amount of funding as would have been available through Housing Benefit in 2020/21 will be made available as grant instead, and will directly fund bed spaces. Everyone who would be eligible under the current system to have their housing costs met by housing benefit will continue to have their housing costs met through the short-term funding model.

We are continuing to listen to the sector and are considering feedback through the current consultation which closed on 23 January, which includes sector comments on the effect of the model on the number of and services women's refuges in England.

■ **Refuges: West Midlands**

Lucy Allan:

[\[130952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what support has been made available to (a) Shropshire County Council and (b) Telford and Wrekin Council for the provision of domestic refuges since 2010.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

Local authorities are responsible for making local spending decisions. In our Priorities for Domestic Abuse Services, published in 2016, we acknowledged the importance of local authorities taking a strategic approach to provision of these vital services informed by an assessment of local need.

Since 2014, the Department has dedicated £33.5 million in direct grant funding available to all local authorities for refuges, safe accommodation and other services.

In 2015 the Department launched a one year £3.5 million fund to help support victims of domestic abuse. Shropshire County Council submitted a successful bid for this fund and was awarded £45,156. Telford and Wrekin did not submit a bid for this round of funding.

In 2016, the Department launched a two year, £20 million fund for specialist accommodation based support and service reform to meet the Priorities for Domestic Abuse Services. Shropshire County Council worked in partnership with Telford and

Wrekin Council and local domestic abuse services to submit a bid and were awarded £115,753.

■ Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel

Neil Coyle:

[\[131000\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how the members of the Government's Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel were selected.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The aim of the Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel is to draw together a range of expertise and insight to inform the development of the Government's forthcoming strategy to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eradicate it by 2027. Members were invited from across local government, homelessness and housing sectors to bring that depth of expertise.

We are already taking action to support rough sleepers – including providing £28 million to pilot the Housing First approach for rough sleepers with the most complex needs. The pilots will cover the West Midlands Combined Authority, Greater Manchester, and the Liverpool City Region.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Gaza: Tunnels

Andrew Bowie:

[\[131188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that UK aid to Gaza is not used to fund the construction of tunnels from Gaza to Israel.

Alistair Burt:

DFID has a zero-tolerance approach to fraud and has robust controls against the diversion of aid. In Gaza, DFID Occupied Palestinian Territories has strong controls in place to monitor spending, including mapping the flow of funds through the delivery chain, regular audits of programme spending and conducting regular field visits to ensure that UK aid reaches the intended beneficiaries and achieves the best development outcomes, with a strong focus on ensuring value for money for the UK taxpayer. Additionally, DFID complies with UK and international counter terrorism legislation and our funding agreements commit partners to understand and comply with international counter terrorism legislation.

■ Nigeria and Pakistan: Religious Freedom

Mr George Howarth:

[\[131289\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking to support programmes to tackle discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in educational systems in (a) Nigeria and (b) Pakistan; and if she will make a statement.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK Government is committed to equal treatment and equality of opportunity. The Equality Act of 2010, under Section 149, requires that all public bodies, including DFID, consider the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations when making policy decisions and delivering programmes. The Act covers a number of protected characteristics, including religion. In both Nigeria and Pakistan, we have professional education advisers who design and monitor our programmes carefully. We work to build inclusive education systems in these countries, which makes a positive contribution to the lives of millions of children.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**Foreign Investment in UK: Republic of Ireland****David T. C. Davies:****[130941]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how much foreign direct investment there was into the UK from the Republic of Ireland in the last year for which figures are available.

Graham Stuart:

In 2016/17 the Department for International Trade recorded a total of 56 foreign direct investments into the UK from the Republic of Ireland with the creation of 2,914 new and 751 safeguarded jobs.

Overseas Trade**Nigel Dodds:****[130795]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the amount of trade was between the UK and countries with whom the UK has (a) a Customs Union arrangement and (b) no Customs Union arrangement in each of the last five years.

Greg Hands:

Estimates of the value of trade in goods and services between the UK and countries with whom the UK has (a) a Customs Union arrangement and (b) no Customs Union arrangement for 1999-2016 are available from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/balanceofpayments/adhocs/007716additionalcountrydatafortradeingoodsandservicesbetween1999and2016>

Data for 2017 will be published by the ONS on 31st July 2018.

Nigel Dodds:**[130796]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the volume of trade was between the UK and countries with whom the UK has (a) a Free Trade Agreement and (b) no Free Trade Agreement in each of the last five years.

Greg Hands:

Estimates of the volume of trade in goods and services between the UK and countries with whom the UK has (a) a Free Trade Agreement and (b) no Free Trade Agreement are not available.

Her Majesty Revenue and Customs (HMRC) publish trade statistics by partner country in volume (kgs) terms (1996-2017) but these cover trade in goods only. These are available from HMRC's Build Your Own Tables tool at:

<https://www.uktradeinfo.com/Statistics/BuildYourOwnTables/Pages/Home.aspx>

Estimates in value terms, covering trade in both goods and services, are available from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/balanceofpayments/adhocs/007716additionalcountrydatafortradeingoodsandservicesbetween1999and2016>

Data for 2017 will be published by the ONS on 31st July 2018.

Nigel Dodds:**[130803]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the volume and value of UK trade conducted with other countries on (a) WTO and (b) Free Trade Agreement or other preferential terms was in each of the last five years.

Greg Hands:

Estimates of the volume of trade in goods and services between the UK and (a) WTO and (b) Free Trade Agreement or other preferential terms countries are not available.

Her Majesty Revenue and Customs (HMRC) publish trade statistics by partner country in volume (kgs) terms (1996-2017) but these cover trade in goods only. These are available from HMRC's Build Your Own Tables tool at:

<https://www.uktradeinfo.com/Statistics/BuildYourOwnTables/Pages/Home.aspx>

Estimates in value terms, covering trade in both goods and services, are available from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/balanceofpayments/adhocs/007716additionalcountrydatafortradeingoodsandservicesbetween1999and2016>

Data for 2017 will be published by the ONS on 31st July 2018.

JUSTICE**■ Approved Premises****David Hanson:****[130899]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many recorded crimes were committed by people residing in bail and probation hostels by site in England and Wales in each of the last 12 months.

Rory Stewart:

At the time of conviction, offenders who commit a further offence while resident at Approved Premises (AP) may have left the AP, which will therefore have no record of the conviction. To obtain the requested information, it would therefore be necessary to cross-check thousands of AP and court records, which could not be done without incurring disproportionate cost.

■ Brixton Prison: Ministers of Religion**Sir Desmond Swayne:**[\[131692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what (a) resignations and (b) dismissals there have been from the Chaplaincy Service at HMP Brixton in each of the last six months.

Sir Desmond Swayne:[\[131696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for what reason classes in Christian dogmatics were discontinued at HMP Brixton.

Rory Stewart:

Other than one sessional chaplain (who resigned in October in order to take up a post in the police force), there have been no resignations or dismissals from the Chaplaincy Service at HMP Brixton during the last six months.

Regular Christian classes are held throughout the week, including several Bible study classes. The Alpha course has not been provided at the prison for a number of years – records show the most recent session as having been held on 27 January 2010. Plans are in place, however, to restart the course.

We recognise the importance of faith and the positive impact that it can have on the lives of offenders, which is why there are multi-faith chaplaincy teams in every prison.

■ Carillion**Richard Burgon:**[\[129724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 2 February 2018 to Question 125576 and the Answer of 9 February 2018 to Question 126482, on prisons: repairs and maintenance, on how many occasions his Department paid for (a) repairs due to the wear and tear being over £750 and (b) repairs required due to vandalism in 2015 in prisons with a contract with Carillion.

Rory Stewart:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. The requested information is not recorded in the format requested and would require manually searching through thousands of lines of data.

■ Crime Prevention: Young People

Crispin Blunt: [\[129049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether it remains his policy for prisons to give permission for young people referred by (a) police and (b) young offending teams to visit prisons as part of the KeepOut crime diversion scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Crispin Blunt: [\[129050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what guidance his Department has issued to Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service on young people at risk of offending visiting prisons under (a) the KeepOut crime diversion scheme and (b) other initiatives.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The Review of the Youth Justice System in England and Wales, published in December 2016, considered the use of programmes in which either prison officers or prisoners themselves attempted to deter children from criminality by showing or explaining the realities of life in prison. The report of the Review expressed concern at the use of such programmes in England & Wales, in the light of international evidence that such interventions can increase the likelihood of offending among children and young people.

In view of the report's examination of this issue, HM Prison & Probation Service reviewed these programmes and decided that they should no longer be facilitated.

■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Temporary Employment

Richard Burgon: [\[123654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 15 January 2018 to Question 121830, how much was paid from the public purse to each company providing agency staff in each year since 2010.

Lucy Frazer:

We can confirm that the below table shows the spend across the department on Contingent Labour staff through the Commercial Team for professional Services call off contracts via CCS:

CONTINGENT LABOUR ONE (CL1) SPEND			
Financial year	CAPITA	HAYS	BROOK STREET
2011/2012	£ 15,722,346.03	£ 10,753,952.00	£ 12,237,418.63
2012/2013	£ 21,499,236.69	£ 16,110,202.00	£ 29,663,430.76
2013/2014	£ 2,217,588.93	£ 19,013,681.00	£ 30,996,698.33
2014/2015	£ 36,607,966.38	£ 27,064,429.00	£ 38,364,083.55
2015/2016	£ 49,904,326.58	£ 14,982,843.00	£ 45,143,872.50

CONTINGENT LABOUR ONE (CL1) SPEND

2016/2017	£ 44,811,850.00	£ 9,646,682.00	£ 51,529,354.19
2017/2018(up to Nov 17)	£ 36,058,985.00	£ 9,343,526.00	£ 46,438,579.00

■ Prisoners' Release

Stephen Timms:

[\[131737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average waiting time is after the issue date of the judgment for prisoners who have been granted release to directed premises by Parole Boards (a) being found suitable premises and (b) being released from prison in the most recent period for which figures are available.

Rory Stewart:

The information requested could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

Case management systems cannot readily distinguish between releases that are made to “directed” premises and those that are not. 2017 saw the release of over 2100 prisoners who were serving indeterminate or determinate parole eligible sentences. To obtain the requested information would require a manual check of all records for the prisoners directed to be released in this period.

Where the release plan of a prisoner requires accommodation in National Probation Service approved premises then the prisoner cannot be released until a place in those premises becomes available, allowing the prisoner to be safely released.

Where possible, HMPPS aim to release prisoners within 14 days of receipt of the Parole Board’s decision.

■ Prisoners: Childbirth

Richard Burgon:

[\[128822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2018 to Question 125711, on Prisoners: Childbirth, whether his Department plans to record the number of women who give birth in prison.

Dr Phillip Lee:

We currently do not record the number of women who give birth in prisons centrally but consideration will be given on recording this information locally on prison systems.

■ Prisons: Contracts

Ms Marie Rimmer:

[\[131645\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what scoping of the state of the prison estate was conducted prior to the formulation of (a) lot 1, (b) lot 2, (c) lot 3 and (d) lot 4 and

before the declaration of preferred bidders for the prison facilities management contracts awarded by the Government in 2014; and if he will make a statement.

Rory Stewart:

The four prison facilities management contracts referred to were awarded by the Department in January 2015 and services commenced in June 2015.

Prospective bidders were permitted to undertake site visits to establishments during the procurement process to familiarize themselves with the estate.

Prospective bidders were provided with information on the number and type of assets in establishments that they were required to maintain. Following the award of the contract the successful bidders were allowed a six month period to verify the number and type of assets in establishments with the information provided by the Department during the procurement.

Ms Marie Rimmer:

[\[131646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the (a) names of providers and (b) value of each of the bids was of tenders submitted for (a) lot 1, (b) lot 2, (c) lot 3 and (d) lot 4 for the prison facilities management contracts awarded in 2014.

Rory Stewart:

The names of providers who submitted tenders are as follows:

	LOT 1	LOT 2	LOT 3	LOT 4
Regions	North East, North West, Yorkshire and Humberside	East Midlands, West Midlands, Wales	East of England, London	South West, South Central, Kent and Sussex
Successful bidder	Amey	Amey	Carillion	Carillion
Unsuccessful bidders	Mitie, Sodexo, Carillion	Mitie, Sodexo, Carillion	Mitie, Sodexo, Amey	Mitie, Sodexo, Amey

All Tender prices were entered into a permutation table which calculated the most economically advantageous submission for each Package Order or combination of Package Orders. The most economically advantageous permutation of tenders are as follows:

Package Order E: £117,861,047 (Amey)

Package Order F: £ 93,429,773 (Amey)

Package Order G: £ 98,790,002 (Carillion)

Package Order H: £ 100,195,572 (Carillion)

The Department does not publish the value of unsuccessful bidders due to commercial sensitivity.

■ Sexual Harassment

Wera Hobhouse:

[\[129466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what support the Government is offering to women who have been the victims of up-skirting.

Dr Phillip Lee:

[Holding answer 28 February 2018]: 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 are spending £96m in 2017/18 to fund support services for victims of crime. Around £68m of this has been allocated to Police and Crime Commissioners to locally commission or provide support services for victims of crime, including for victims of offences related to up-skirting.

■ Undocumented Workers

Paul Blomfield:

[\[131686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people have been convicted of the offence of illegal working since the introduction of that offence.

Paul Blomfield:

[\[131687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much money has been obtained in fines from people found guilty of an offence of illegal working since the introduction of that offence.

Lucy Frazer:

Centrally held court proceedings data indicates that no offenders were found guilty of illegal working up to the end of 2016. Court proceedings data for 2017 will be available in May 2018.

It is not possible to identify how much has been collected in fines from persons convicted of this, or any other, offence as our systems enable us to capture the total amount of financial imposition but do not allow that to be broken down by offence type. To extract information on financial imposition by offence type we would need to conduct a manual search of all current financial penalty accounts within our fine database.

■ Witnesses: Video Recordings

Ann Coffey:

[\[131011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 22 November 2017 to Question 113046 on witnesses: video recordings, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the initial rollout in six Crown Courts of Section 28 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 been; which courts he expects to be in the next phase of the that rollout; and when the national rollout will be completed.

Dr Phillip Lee:

We are upgrading the technology that will record and playback the cross examination which is essential to support the roll out of s.28. However, testing of this technology identified some issues that we are working hard to resolve and it is still our intention to roll out s.28 this year. We want to make sure we get this right for some of the most vulnerable people in society and that no technical obstacles stand in their way of giving their best evidence possible.

SCOTLAND■ **Scotland Office: Land****Jack Lopresti:**[\[131278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will request from the Scottish Government details of (a) the land it holds and (b) the proportion of that land which has been judged surplus; and if he will place that information in the Library.

David Mundell:

Information on the Scottish Government's land holdings is a matter for the Scottish Government. I would suggest contacting them in the first instance.

TRANSPORT■ **Blue Badge Scheme****Tulip Siddiq:**[\[131762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish how many people were registered for the Blue Badge scheme in each of the last five years.

Jesse Norman:

The number of valid blue badges held in England on the 31st March in each of the last five years is given in the table below.

Valid blue badges held: England, 2013 to 2017

		THOUSANDS
Year	Data Source	Valid Blue Badges ¹
2013	Survey and BBIS	2,571
2014	Survey and BBIS	2,465
2015	BBIS only	2,394
2016	BBIS only	2,378
2017	BBIS only	2,382

¹ Blue Badge counts are as at 31 March in year shown.

Survey and BBIS: The source for the number of Blue Badges was a combination of DfT Blue Badge Survey and the Blue Badge Improvement Service.

BBIS only: The sole source for number of Blue Badges is the Blue Badge Improvement Service rather than the DfT Blue Badge Survey.

■ **British Transport Police: Scotland**

Andrew Bowie:

[131193]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will decline to lay any orders devolving the management of British Transport Police to the Scottish Government.

Joseph Johnson:

Legislative competence for railway policing in Scotland has already been devolved, and the UK Government remains fully committed to supporting an effective and orderly transfer of the functions of the British Transport Police (BTP) in Scotland to Police Scotland. The planned transfer has been delayed and will not now take place on 1 April 2019. The delay, which was announced by Scottish Ministers last month, will provide further time for the Scottish Government to ensure that all of the necessary actions have been completed to deliver a seamless transition which ensures the safety and security of rail passengers and staff.

The Orders necessary to facilitate the transfer of BTP officers and staff to Police Scotland will therefore not now be brought before Parliament in the Autumn as originally planned, but will be brought forward in due course, once a new delivery date for the transfer has been established following a re-planning process.

■ **Department for Transport: Motor Vehicles**

Mary Creagh:

[131715]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many vehicles his Department (a) owns and (b) leases.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Department for Transport consists of a central department and four executive agencies as follows:

Government Car Service (GCS) a division of the central department.

Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)

Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA)

Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA)

Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA)

The table below lists how many vehicles are in each fleet with totals for (a) owned and (b) leased:

	OWNED	LEASED
GCS	89	5
DVSA	329	846
DVLA	1	25
MCA	429	0
VCA	13	2
Totals	861	878

■ Government Departments: Electric Vehicles

Mary Creagh:

[\[131717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many cars in central Government departmental fleets are electric.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

Each department is responsible for its own car fleet and this information is not held centrally.

The Government Car Service (GCS) provide cars to departments for use by ministers. There are currently six electric and one hydrogen fuel cell car in the GCS fleet.

■ Luton Airport: Railways

Karl Turner:

[\[131098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to include increased rail services to Luton Airport Parkway as part of the East Midlands rail franchise.

Joseph Johnson:

We are also considering the case for additional services to Luton Airport Parkway and have been working collaboratively with Luton Airport to understand their proposals. Any outcome will seek to secure the best value for money for the taxpayer, and be in the best interests of rail passengers.

All options for rail services in the next East Midlands rail franchise are subject to analysis of the potential benefits and our consultation with stakeholders, which closed on 11 October 2017. Thus, no decisions have been made on rail services that will be specified for the next franchise. The next franchise is planned to start in August 2019. Invitations to Tender (ITT) are due to be issued to potential bidders later this year. The ITT will set out the minimum requirements and provide the baseline that we expect the next franchise to build on.

■ Motor Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions

Rosie Duffield:

[\[131331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to reduce the number of diesel-fuelled vehicles to meet carbon emissions targets.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has announced an end to the sale of all new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040, and a key element of the Future of Mobility Grand Challenge in the Industrial strategy is our long term mission to see every new car and van being effectively zero emission by 2040. The Department will provide more details shortly on the actions we are taking to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollution from road vehicles dramatically, and to bring about our ambition for a future where every road vehicle has zero emissions at the tailpipe.

For diesel cars and vans the relative efficiency of diesel engines compared with petrol engines results in improved fuel economy and lower greenhouse gas emissions per kilometre than from petrol equivalents. Whilst real-world emissions of nitrogen dioxide from current diesel cars and vans are at present typically substantially higher than their petrol equivalents, the UK has led the calls for action at a European level to ensure that manufacturers now have to limit emissions of nitrogen dioxide in a wide range of real-world driving conditions, and not just against laboratory test limits.

■ Railways: Concessions

Caroline Lucas:

[\[131477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 6 February 2018 to Question 126126, whether details have been agreed with the railway industry on the roll-out of the 26-30 railcard; whether the roll out will be implemented before Easter 2018; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

The rail industry has announced that trial of the 26-30 Railcard is to be extended nationally. This will enable research into the 26-30 Railcard to be conducted and will be used to inform discussions with the government about a national roll out.

■ Railways: Standards

Clive Efford:

[\[131156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what (a) procedures and (b) regulations his Department has put in place to ensure the (i) welfare and (ii) safety of passengers held on trains for long periods of time; whether those procedures and regulations were adhered to by (A) Network Rail and (B) Southeastern Rail on 2 March 2018 in respect of passengers held on trains for over four hours outside Lewisham Station; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

Southeastern are appointing an independent investigator to lead a full review of the incident which will establish if correct procedures and regulations have been adhered to. This will be shared with my Department.

Railways: Tickets**Alex Chalk:**[\[131766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that rail companies provide passengers with the best possible ticket price for train journeys in order to eliminate the practice of split ticketing.

Joseph Johnson:

Passengers benefit from a range of tickets and competition between train operators on the railway allowing them to choose the best ticket for their journey based on a number of factors including journey times and fares. However, as a result it can sometimes be cheaper to buy two or more tickets for individual parts of the journey rather than buying a through-ticket. Going forward, we will review rail ticketing, removing complexity and perverse pricing.

Southeastern: Compensation**Clive Efford:**[\[131155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with (a) Network Rail and (b) Southeastern Rail on compensation for passengers left on trains outside Lewisham Station for over four hours; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

Southeastern have announced that they will be doubling Delay Repay payments for all passengers delayed for 30 minutes or longer from Tuesday 27 February to Friday 2 March. For passengers stranded for 2 hours or more on trains on Friday 2 March, Southeastern will be providing compensation of £100 or double Delay Repay – whichever is greater.

Southeastern: Standards**Clive Efford:**[\[131153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether (a) Southeastern Rail and (b) Network Rail have written to his Department on the matter of passengers being held on a train for over four hours outside Lewisham station on 2 March 2018; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

Southeastern made the Department aware of the incident and Officials have discussed the impact it had on passengers. Southeastern are appointing an independent investigator to lead a full review of the incident to identify lessons learnt. This will be shared with my Department.

Clive Efford:

[\[131154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on when the need to evacuate passengers from Southeastern Rail trains near Lewisham station on 2 March 2018 was (a) first discussed and (b) taken; who took the decision to evacuate the trains; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

Southeastern made the Department aware of the incident and subsequently the impact it had on passengers. Southeastern are appointing an independent investigator to lead a full review of the incident to identify lessons learnt which will include the management of incidents when trains become stranded between stations.

Clive Efford:

[\[131157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how long passengers were held on trains outside Lewisham Station after the electricity supply was turned off on Friday 2 March; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

Network Rail turned the power off to ensure the safety of people who had self-evacuated from delayed trains. The power was off for nearly 3 hours while railway staff and the emergency services worked to ensure that all tracks were clear, and the power could be safely restored.

During this time, a number of passengers on other trains also self-evacuated over a 2-mile long stretch of railway, which resulted in longer delays than might have otherwise been the case.

Southeastern are appointing an independent investigator to lead a full review of the incident to identify lessons learnt which will include the management of incidents when trains become stranded between stations.

Clive Efford:

[\[131158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on when a risk assessment of passengers self-evacuating from the trains stranded outside Lewisham Station on 2 March 2018 was undertaken; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

Southeastern and Network Rail have jointly announced an independently-chaired investigation to carry out a full review of this incident. The findings will be used to improve the management of such incidents in the future. These lessons, will be shared across the whole rail sector. This will include how Southeastern responded to the reports of passenger self-evacuating.

Clive Efford:

[\[131378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on steps taken by (a) Southeastern Trains and (b) Network Rail to stop trains becoming caught behind the broken down train outside of Lewisham Station on 2 March 2018; and if he will make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

Southeastern and Network Rail have jointly announced an independently-chaired investigation to carry out a full review of this incident. The findings will be used to improve the management of such incidents in the future. These lessons, will be shared across the whole rail sector.

TREASURY■ **Aggregates Levy**

Peter Dowd: [\[131682\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption from the aggregates levy for china clay waste and ball clay waste in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Peter Dowd: [\[131683\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption from the aggregates levy for building (dimension) stone in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Peter Dowd: [\[131684\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption from the aggregates levy for material arising from utility works in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Peter Dowd: [\[131685\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received relief for aggregate exported from the UK in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Robert Jenrick:

To minimise administrative burden on business, HMRC's Aggregates Levy returns do not require taxpayers to specify which relief applies to material that is not subject to tax. It is therefore not possible to establish how many taxpayers benefited from these reliefs.

■ **Apprentices: Minimum Wage**

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[131642\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what information his Department holds on the number of (a) male and (b) female apprentices who were paid less than the minimum wage in (i) the West Midlands and (ii) the UK in the last 12 months.

Mel Stride:

I refer the hon Member to the answer given to the hon Member for Newcastle upon Tyne North (Catherine McKinnell) on 12 March to PQ UIN 131487.

■ Bank Services

Emma Little Pengelly:

[\[131733\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the progress made by the banking sector on meeting the needs of vulnerable consumers.

John Glen:

The Government believes it is vitally important that the banking sector meets the needs of vulnerable consumers. The nine largest personal current account providers in the UK are legally required to offer fee-free basic bank accounts to customers who do not have a bank account or who are ineligible for a bank's standard current account. The Treasury's December 2017 publication shows that in total there are nearly 8 million basic bank accounts open in the UK, and that just over 900,000 new accounts were opened between July 2016 and June 2017.

The Government has also given the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), the independent conduct regulator for the financial services sector, a statutory objective to protect consumers. The FCA continually assesses whether the banks they regulate are meeting the rules regarding the needs of vulnerable consumers.

UK banks' treatment of their customers is governed by the FCA in its Principles for Businesses, as well as specific requirements in its Handbook. The FCA's Principles require firms to conduct their business with due skill, care and diligence, and to pay due regard to the interests of its customers and treat them fairly.

Understanding vulnerability is central to how the FCA makes decisions. At the end of last year, the FCA published its 'Approach to Consumers' Paper, which details how the FCA measures the effects of its actions on consumers, particularly with respect to access and vulnerability. This was a consultation and the FCA plans to publish its Final Approach to Consumers Paper later this year.

■ Climate Change Levy

Peter Dowd:

[\[130908\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption from climate change levy for energy used in some forms of transport in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Peter Dowd:

[\[130912\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption from climate change levy for energy supplies not used as fuel in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Peter Dowd:

[\[130914\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption from climate change levy for electricity provided to third parties from certain combined heat and power schemes in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Mel Stride:

HMRC does not hold sufficiently detailed information on the beneficiaries of these reliefs to be able to answer these questions. HMRC does not require this level of detail because it would place a disproportionate administrative burden on business.

■ Combined Heat and Power: Taxation**Peter Dowd:****[131680]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption from the carbon price floor for fuels used in small combined heart and power stations in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Peter Dowd:**[131681]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption for oil used to generate electricity where that electricity is not subject to the Climate Change Levy in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Robert Jenrick:

HMRC does not hold sufficiently detailed information on the beneficiaries of these reliefs to be able to answer these questions.

■ Corporation Tax: Scotland**Deidre Brock:****[131024]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much was collected in corporation tax from companies in Scotland in each of the last five years.

Mel Stride:

Estimates of the amount of corporation tax collected from companies in Scotland in each of the last five years are published at the following link;

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/648324/Disaggregated_tax_and_NICs_receipts_-_statistics_table.pdf

■ Environment Protection: Taxation**Peter Dowd:****[130915]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption from carbon price floor for coal slurry for use in electricity generation in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Peter Dowd:**[130916]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption from carbon price floor for fuels used in small generators in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Peter Dowd:

[\[130917\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received an exemption from carbon price floor for fuels used in stand-by generators in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Peter Dowd:

[\[130918\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people in Northern Ireland received an exemption from carbon price floor for taxable commodities used in electricity generation in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Mel Stride:

HMRC does not hold sufficiently detailed information on the beneficiaries of these reliefs to be able to answer these questions. HMRC does not require this level of detail because it would place a disproportionate administrative burden on business.

■ **European Investment Bank**

David T. C. Davies:

[\[130940\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much the UK has contributed to the European Investment Bank since that bank's inception.

John Glen:

Throughout its membership, the UK has made payments totaling c.£1.8bn to the capital of the EIB.

■ **Marginal Tax Rates**

Anneliese Dodds:

[\[131209\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the marginal tax rates applying to (a) men and (b) women at different income levels.

Elizabeth Truss:

The Chancellor has not had any recent discussions with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions about marginal tax rates.

■ **Natural Gas: Northern Ireland**

Peter Dowd:

[\[130911\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received a lower rate for supplies of gas to Northern Ireland in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Peter Dowd:

[\[130913\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received a lower rate on climate change levy for supplies for use in certain metal recycling processes in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Mel Stride:

These reliefs were withdrawn before 2015-16 so there were no beneficiaries in the periods covered in the questions.

■ **Tobacco: Scotland**

Deidre Brock: [131020]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much was paid in excise duties on tobacco products in Scotland in each of the last five years.

Deidre Brock: [131022]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much was paid in VAT refunds to Scottish taxpayers in each of the last five years.

Deidre Brock: [131023]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much was collected in insurance premium tax in Scotland in each of the last five years.

Deidre Brock: [131169]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much was paid in fuel duties in Scotland in each of the last five years.

Mel Stride:

The requested information is not available. However, an estimate of insurance premium tax, tobacco and fuel duty receipts attributed to Scotland is published in HMRC's 'Disaggregated HMRC Tax Receipts' publication:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/disaggregation-of-hmrc-tax-receipts>

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ **Department for Work and Pensions: Motor Vehicles**

Mary Creagh: [131716]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many vehicles her Department (a) owns and (b) leases.

Kit Malthouse:

The Department currently own 15 vehicles but are unable to share any details as they are used for benefit fraud detection and prevention.

The department lease 814 vehicles. These vehicle types are:

790 Cars

24 Vans

■ Ethnic Minority Engagement Stakeholder Group

Tulip Siddiq:

[131616]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will list the meetings he has attended with former members of the Department's Ethnic Minority Engagement Stakeholder Group since its closure.

Kit Malthouse:

The Department publishes on a quarterly basis, meetings with Ministers and external stakeholders.

The most up to date information can be found at www.gov.uk via the following link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dwp-ministers-hospitality-and-gifts>

■ Flexible Support Fund

Lucy Powell:

[131066]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much of the Jobcentre Plus Flexible Support Fund budget was spent on (a) transport, (b) childcare, (c) training and (d) other costs in each of the last five years.

Lucy Powell:

[131067]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much and what proportion of the Flexible Support Fund was unspent in each of the last five years.

Alok Sharma:

The requested information is detailed in the table below:

CATEGORY	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Total Budget	£99.9 m	£127.6 m	£178.8 m	£76.8 m	£51.7 m
- Transport	£13.4 m	£19.2 m	£20.2 m	£15.4 m	£13.5 m
- Childcare	£1.6 m	£1.8 m	£1.5 m	£1.6 m	£1.2 m
- Training	£15.5 m	£18.6 m	£10.6 m	£15.2 m	£8.4 m
- Other	£84.5 m	£70.6 m	£59.2 m	£26.1 m	£27.8 m
Total	£115.0 m	£110.1 m	£91.5 m	£58.4 m	£51.0 m
Underspend	(£15.2m)	£17.5 m	£87.3 m	£18.4 m	£0.7 m
Underspend (%)	(15.2%)	13.7%	48.8%	24.0%	1.4%

All figures have been rounded to the nearest £100,000, with negative values enclosed in brackets.

The budget for the Flexible Support Fund is subject to annual review and change based on claimant needs and volumes, and as new policies are agreed and old policies are withdrawn. As discretionary expenditure, it is also dependent upon overall Departmental affordability.

The level of expenditure reflects these changing policies and the level of claimant demand. In 2014/15 the Department received funding as part of the Spending Review 2013 in order to meet travel and childcare costs to facilitate additional support for claimants. However, the demand for this increased funding was limited.

■ **Jobcentre Plus: Schools**

Stephen Crabb: [\[131410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will meet with Ministers of the Welsh Government to discuss the potential merits of extending the Jobcentre Plus Support for Schools scheme to Wales.

Alok Sharma:

The provision of careers information, advice and guidance is a devolved matter in Wales. In partnership with Careers Wales, DWP is currently providing support for schools similar to that provided in England through the Jobcentre Support for Schools programme.

■ **Mortgages: Government Assistance**

Dr David Drew: [\[131040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if his Department will issue guidance on accessing free and impartial financial advice on the support for mortgage interest payments loan.

Kit Malthouse:

All existing SMI claimants are sent information about how the SMI loan will work, about possible alternatives to the loan and organisations that may offer further information and support. This is followed up by telephone calls from Serco to explain the information and answer any questions. A leaflet containing Frequently Asked Questions is issued to support this informed discussion. The information provision explicitly does not provide advice but does signpost to other impartial organisations that can help customers who may need assistance on reaching a financial decision such as Money Advice Service.

Dr David Drew: [\[131148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps (a) her Department and (b) SERCO have taken to provide the full terms and conditions of the Support for Mortgage Interest Payments Loan to people who are entitled to apply for those loans.

Kit Malthouse:

The information provision process for Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI) loans is being conducted by Serco on behalf of the Department. Existing SMI claimants are

sent information about how the SMI loan will work, about possible alternatives to the loan and organisations that may offer further information and support. This is followed up by telephone calls from Serco, to explain the information and answer any questions. A leaflet containing Frequently Asked Questions is issued after this informed discussion. Where a claimant expresses an interest in taking up the offer of an SMI loan they will be sent a loan agreement and charge form, including all terms and conditions, to complete and return. They also receive detailed guidance on how to complete these documents.

Peter Kyle:

[131689]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people who are in receipt of support for mortgage interest have applied for the replacement loan.

Kit Malthouse:

At week commencing 5th March 2018, 10,179 claimants have stated their intention to take up the offer of an SMI loan.

Margaret Greenwood:

[131698]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the ability of Support for Mortgage Interest claimants to afford financial advice on whether to take out a loan to replace the benefit that they are currently receiving.

Kit Malthouse:

The Department anticipates that many Support for Mortgage Interest claimants may not be able to afford commercial financial advice. All existing recipients of Support for Mortgage Interest will be contacted and given information about the changes. The information leaflet and Frequently Asked Questions booklet point claimants to organisations who can offer impartial, free support such as Money Advice Service. We believe that this will provide claimants with the information that they need to assess their options and make an informed decision on an SMI loan.

Margaret Greenwood:

[131705]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, which organisations Serco signposts Support for Mortgage Interest claimants to for advice on deciding whether to take out a loan from her Department to replace the benefit they are currently receiving; and whether such organisations are able to offer financial advice on taking out a loan.

Kit Malthouse:

All existing recipients of Support for Mortgage Interest will be contacted and given information about the changes. The information leaflet and Frequently Asked Questions booklet point claimants to organisations who can offer impartial, free support. These include Money Advice Service, Shelter and Citizens Advice Bureau. These organisations do not offer regulated financial advice, however they can support claimants to understand the options available to them.

Margaret Greenwood:[\[131707\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 20 February 2018 to Question 127702, if her Department will put transitional protections in place for the continued payment of support for mortgage interest for claimants of that benefit who have not been contacted by Serco by the end of February 2018.

Kit Malthouse:

A managed information provision process began in July 2017 to inform all existing recipients of Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI) benefit of the new scheme. The regulations contain provision for all claimants to be given at least 6 weeks from the loan offer to make a decision whether to accept or decline an SMI loan before their SMI benefit payments cease.

Margaret Greenwood:[\[131708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many face-to-face interviews have been conducted with Support for Mortgage Interest claimants to explain the replacement of that benefit with the new loan.

Kit Malthouse:

The Department has not carried out any face to face interviews for Support for Mortgage Interest loans.

■ State Retirement Pensions: Females

Derek Twigg:[\[131612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 5 March 2018 to Question 130479, on state retirement: pensions, how many complaints the Independent Case Examiners Office has received in total by constituency.

Kit Malthouse:

The information requested is not collated centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Unemployment: North East

Mr Stephen Hepburn:[\[130843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to reduce youth unemployment in (a) Jarrow constituency, (b) South Tyneside and (c) the North East.

Alok Sharma:

For the quarter October to December 2017, youth unemployment in the North East was 29,000 – down by over 15,000 since the 2010 General Election (quarter: February-April 2010).

In April 2017, a new programme of intensive support was introduced for 18-21 year olds making a new claim to Universal Credit full service. We are introducing this

programme in line with the roll-out schedule for Universal Credit, which is being introduced in a planned, gradual and safe way.

A number of sites in the North-East are already full service sites, and are able to provide claimants with intensive support through this new programme. Remaining sites in the North-East will continue to be rolled out in line with the revised schedule for Universal Credit Full Service, including Jarrow, which is expected to deliver our new programme from May 2018.

Considerable additional support is also available to young people who are claiming Jobseeker's Allowance. This includes (but is not limited to): basic skills training, work-related training, and 2-8 weeks work experience opportunities.

For pupils aged 12 to 18 in England, the Jobcentre Plus Support for Schools programme assists schools in delivering their statutory duty to provide high quality, independent and impartial careers advice. It also helps pupils make a smooth and effective transition from school to work, training or further study.

■ Universal Credit

Ruth George:

[\[130827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate her Department has made of the saving to the public purse as a result of the removal of disability premiums under universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

Universal Credit simplifies and rationalises the current system of overlapping disability premiums and tax credits, through increasing the level of support from £158 a month under the Employment and Support Allowance Support Component to £318 a month under Universal Credit.

By restructuring the rates in this way, the Government made clear that it was not looking to reduce overall spending. Savings from the simplification of Universal Credit support for the disabled do not go back to the Exchequer, but are reinvested to fund the increased higher basic rate of support available for all claimants with Limited Capability for Work and Work-Related Activity.

Frank Field:

[\[130878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the ability of vulnerable households without access to the internet to (a) make a new claim for universal credit and (b) manage their claim once it has been set up.

Alok Sharma:

All Jobcentres across the country have free Wi-Fi, and there are more than 8,000 computers available to support customers who need help with making their claim digitally and applying for jobs online. This provides access to digital channels in every Jobcentre for claimants to use when they do not have access at home.

There will always be people for whom engaging with us digitally is not a feasible proposition. As a result, a freephone telephone helpline and face to face support are

also available for claimants to make and manage a Universal Credit claim. Where needed, the Work Coach will provide the claimant with a written note to remind them of the date of their next appointment, especially if the claimant has difficulty accessing or using online services. A home visit can also be arranged to support a claimant in making their initial claim and completing any other administrative tasks required to ensure the claimant receives the correct payment on time.

Frank Field: [\[130881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people claiming universal credit are in paid employment and are paid weekly.

Alok Sharma:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

However, based on current numbers of Tax Credit claimants paid on particular patterns, we estimate the proportion of employees that are likely to be paid according to different pay frequencies once Universal credit is fully rolled out to be:

Monthly / 4 weekly: 69%

Weekly: 26%

Fortnightly: 3%

Debbie Abrahams: [\[131697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much her Department has spent on legal costs seeking to prevent the publication of the Universal Credit Project Assessment Reviews conducted between March 2012 and October 2015.

Alok Sharma:

The costs of defending the public interest in this specific case were £10,750 internal legal costs, and counsel has a cost of £8,330 + £1,660 of recoverable VAT.

■ Universal Credit: Carers

Neil Gray: [\[131322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many responsible carers with children have been sanctioned under universal credit provisions in the last two quarters.

Alok Sharma:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

We engage at a personal and individual level with all of our claimants and are committed to tailoring the support that we give, and any conditionality requirements to the specific circumstances of the individuals.

We take a number of steps to make sure our decisions are fair. When considering whether a sanction is appropriate, a Decision Maker will take all the claimant's

individual circumstances, including any childcare responsibilities and any evidence of good cause, into account before deciding whether a sanction is warranted.

■ **Universal Credit: Disability**

Frank Field:

[130877]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many disabled universal credit claimants have been sanctioned for failing to undertake the required work-related activities.

Alok Sharma:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

However, we engage at a personal and individual level with all of our claimants and are committed to tailoring the support that we give, and any conditionality requirements to the specific circumstances of the individuals.

We take a number of steps to make sure our decisions are fair. When considering whether a sanction is appropriate, a Decision Maker will take all the claimant's individual circumstances into account, including any health conditions or disabilities and any evidence of good cause, before deciding whether a sanction is warranted.

■ **Universal Credit: Temporary Employment**

Frank Field:

[130880]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate her Department has made of the number of agency and zero-hour workers who are enrolled on universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

Universal Credit collects information on earnings drawn from the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs's Real Time Information (RTI) system. The RTI system does not provide information on agency employment status, or type of work (for example the number of hours worked/contracted to work).

■ **Welfare Tax Credits**

Frank Field:

[131421]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many households are in receipt of (a) child tax credit, (b) working tax credit and (c) both those tax credits by income decile.

Kit Malthouse:

INCOMEDECILE	CHILD TAX CREDIT	WORKING TAX CREDIT	BOTH CHILD TAX CREDIT AND WORKING TAX CREDIT
1	0.5m	0.3m	0.2m
2	0.9m	0.4m	0.3m
3	0.8m	0.4m	0.4m
4	0.6m	0.4m	0.3m
5	0.5m	0.3m	0.2m
6	0.3m	0.2m	0.2m
7	0.1m	0.1m	0.1m
8	0.1m	0.1m	-
9	-	-	-
10	-	-	-
Total	3.8m	2.2m	1.8m

The number of individuals in receipt of tax credits is based on Households Below Average Income (HBAI) data sourced from the 2015-16 Family Resources Survey (FRS). In the FRS tax credit receipt is based on self-assessment and therefore may be subject to misreporting, and the FRS is known to undercount receipt of certain benefits. The numbers in the table have been corrected for the undercount. They have been produced by scaling the proportion in each decile from HBAI to the overall number of families in receipt of child tax credit, working tax credit and both child tax credit and working tax credit, from administrative data. The tax credit administrative data is available at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-and-working-tax-credits-statistics-finalised-annual-awards-2015-to-2016>

The calculation of income deciles uses disposable household income, adjusted using modified OECD equivalisation factors for household size and composition. All estimates are based on survey data and are therefore subject to a degree of uncertainty. Small differences should be treated with caution as these will be affected by sampling error and variability in non-response. Numbers of individuals have been rounded to the nearest hundred thousand. Numbers that round to less than one hundred thousand have been suppressed (“-”).

■ Welfare Tax Credits: West Midlands

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[131632]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many households are in receipt of (a) child tax credit, (b) working tax credit and (c) both child and working tax credit by income decile in (i) Coventry and (ii) the West Midlands.

Kit Malthouse:

West Midlands

DECILE	CHILD TAX CREDIT	WORKING TAX CREDIT	BOTH CHILD TAX CREDIT AND WORKING TAX CREDIT
1	0.1m	-	-
2	0.1m	-	-
3	0.1m	-	-
4	0.1m	-	-
5	-	-	-
6	-	-	-
7	-	-	-
8	-	-	-
9	-	-	-
10	-	-	-
Total	0.4m	0.2m	0.2m

The number of individuals in receipt of tax credits is based on Households Below Average Income (HBAI) data sourced from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). A three year average (2015/16, 2014/15 and 2013/14) is used to support the small sample size at a regional level. The number in receipt of tax credits are not available at local authority or constituency level in this publication because the survey sample sizes are too small to support the production of robust estimates at this geography.

In the FRS tax credit receipt is based on self-assessment and therefore may be subject to misreporting, and the FRS is known to undercount receipt of certain benefits. Therefore the numbers in the table have been produced by applying the proportion in each decile from HBAI to the overall number of families in receipt of child tax credit, working tax credit and both child tax credit and working tax credit,

from administrative data. The tax credit administrative data is available at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-and-working-tax-credits-statistics-finalised-annual-awards-2015-to-2016>

The calculation of income deciles uses disposable household income, adjusted using modified OECD equivalisation factors for household size and composition. All estimates are based on survey data and are therefore subject to a degree of uncertainty. Small differences should be treated with caution as these will be affected by sampling error and variability in non-response. Numbers of individuals have been rounded to the nearest thousand individuals. Numbers that round to less than one hundred thousand have been suppressed ("–").

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Foreign Affairs Council – 26 February 2018

Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan):

[\[HCWS539\]](#)

My Rt Hon Friend, the Minister for Asia and the Pacific attended the Foreign Affairs Council on 26 February. The Council was chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP), Federica Mogherini. The meeting was held in Brussels.

Foreign Affairs Council *Current Affairs*

Ministers called for urgent implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2401 of 24 February which demanded a cessation of hostilities in Syria to enable delivery of humanitarian assistance. They agreed that the High Representative would send a letter to the Foreign Ministers of Russia, Turkey and Iran (the three guarantors of the Astana Process), to ask them to work on implementation of the resolution.

Moldova

Ministers discussed the Republic of Moldova and adopted Conclusions. Ministers reiterated the EU's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations whilst underlining the need to continue adopting and implementing key reforms for the benefit of Moldovan citizens.

Venezuela

Ministers exchanged views on the political stalemate in the country following the suspension of the Santo Domingo talks between the Government and the Opposition and the announcement of Presidential Elections scheduled for 22 April.

Ministers expressed their solidarity with Spain, following the decision by the Venezuelan authorities to declare the Ambassador of Spain in Caracas persona non grata and agreed to continue closely monitoring the situation and to keep channels of communication open, both with the opposition and with the government.

Middle East Peace Process

Ministers discussed recent developments in the Middle East Peace Process in preparation for the lunch with representatives of the League of Arab States.

Informal lunch

Over lunch with the Secretary General of the League of Arab States (LAS) and members of the LAS Ministerial Delegation on Jerusalem, Ministers discussed options for reviving the Middle East Peace Process in an inclusive manner, with the objective of achieving a two-state solution and Jerusalem as the future capital of both states. Ministers also

discussed the importance of increasing collective, international support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Ministers agreed a number of measures without discussion: The Council adopted conclusions on Burma; The Council adopted conclusions on Cambodia; The Council adopted conclusions on the Maldives; The Council adopted conclusions on Climate Diplomacy; The Council adopted conclusions on EU priorities at United Nations human rights fora in 2018; The Council adopted conclusions on human trafficking in South / South-East Asia; The Council increased the restrictive measures against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; The Council added the Minister of Industry and the Minister of Information of the Government of Syria to the list of those targeted by EU restrictive measures; The Council adopted legal texts imposing restrictive measures on one person for his activities in support of Da'esh; The Council adopted the Common Military List of the EU; The Council adopted a decision on the continuation of EU funding for the activities of the European Network of Independent Non-proliferation and Disarmament Think Tanks; The Council approved an extension for the implementation of EU Strategy against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; The Council adopted a decision on continuing to provide assistance to the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organisation; The Council agreed the annotated agenda for the first meeting of the EU-Cuba Joint Council; The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of five Commission food regulations (Health)

TREASURY

■ Spring Statement

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Elizabeth Truss):

[\[HCWS540\]](#)

Making a success of EU exit is a priority for the Government and the Treasury. At the Autumn Budget 2017, my right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Philip Hammond) committed £3 billion over the next two financial years to helping departments and the devolved administrations to prepare. Working with colleagues across government to prioritise the essential programmes to realise the opportunities from EU exit, the Treasury has allocated funding to departments as follows in 2018-19:

DEPARTMENT	£M
Cabinet Office	49.4
Competition and Markets Authority	23.6
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	185.1
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	26.2
Department for Environment, Food and Rural	310.0

DEPARTMENT	£M
Affairs	
Department for International Trade	74.0
Department for Transport	75.8
Department of Health and Social Care	21.1
Food Standards Agency	14.0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	29.6
HM Revenue & Customs	260.0
HM Treasury	24.8
Home Office	395.0
Ministry of Defence	12.7
Ministry of Justice	17.3
Northern Ireland Office	0.4
Office for National Statistics	2.0
Scotland Office	0.3
The National Archives	1.2
Wales Office	0.3

This has generated the following Barnett consequential for the devolved administrations:

	£M
Northern Ireland Executive	15.2
Scottish Government	37.3
Welsh Government	21.4

This Government is committed to seeking a new future economic partnership with the European Union and this funding will help us to prepare for all eventualities. As the negotiations continue, we will need to reflect upon any progress and consider requirements accordingly. I will work with my colleagues across government to ensure these allocations achieve value for money for the taxpayer. Final allocations will be made at the 2018-19 Supplementary Estimates in early 2019.

■ Spring Statement - consultations

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Philip Hammond):

[HCWS541]

Today I set out the Government's first Spring Statement, as part of the move to a single fiscal event. As described in in December, the new fiscal cycle provides opportunities for the Government to consult more openly at earlier stages of policy-making. This Statement delivers on that commitment. It does not make tax or spending changes, but sets out some areas on which the Government will consult over the Summer.

Today the Government will publish the following policy documents that set out our approach to adapting the tax system to meet the challenges and opportunities of the digital economy:

Corporate tax and the digital economy – an update on the Government's position paper on the challenges posed by the digital economy for the international corporate tax framework. This sets out the Government's proposed approach to addressing those challenges to ensure the corporate tax system is fair across different types of businesses, while protecting the UK's start-up culture and position as a global tech leader.

Alternative methods of VAT collection - split payment a consultation on a proposed split payment model to reduce online VAT fraud and improve how VAT is collected.

The role of online platforms in ensuring tax compliance by their usersa call for evidence to explore what more online platforms can do to help their users pay the right amount of tax.

Cash and digital payments in the new economya call for evidence looking at the role of cash and digital payments in the new economy. This will explore how the Government can further support digital payments, ensure the ability to pay by cash is available for those who need it, and crack down on the minority who use cash to evade tax and launder money.

Business rates: delivering more frequent revaluationsa summary of responses to a consultation on the implementation of more frequent revaluations of non-domestic properties for business rates purposes, and the announcement that the next revaluation will be brought forward by one year to 2021. This means three-year revaluations will take effect in 2024.

Today the Government will publish the following consultations on changes to help boost productivity and growth across the UK economy:

a consultation on improving the way the tax system supports self-funded training by employees and the self-employed. This will explore extending the scope of tax relief

currently available to employees and the self-employed for work-related training costs to support upskilling and retraining.

The VAT registration threshold as set out at Autumn Budget 2017, the Government is not minded to reduce the VAT threshold. This call for evidence will seek views on whether the design of the VAT threshold could better incentivise small business growth.

Allowing Entrepreneurs' Relief on gains made before dilution a technical consultation on changes to Entrepreneurs' Relief to ensure that it does not discourage entrepreneurs from seeking external finance for their companies.

Knowledge intensive Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS) fund a consultation on the introduction of a new knowledge intensive EIS fund structure with additional incentives to attract investment.

VAT, Air Passenger Duty and tourism in Northern Ireland a call for evidence that will look at the impact of VAT and Air Passenger Duty on tourism in Northern Ireland.

In the coming months the Government will publish:

Improving business productivity - BEIS will publish a call for evidence to understand how best we can help the UK's least productive businesses to learn from, and catch-up with, the most productive.

Delivering a fair payment culture for small businesses - BEIS will launch a call for evidence on how to eliminate unfair payment practices to small businesses.

Prompt payment by government suppliers – the Cabinet Office will launch a consultation on making a supplier's approach to payments to its own suppliers part of the selection process for larger government contracts.

Transferable Tax History (TTH) for oil and gas – a consultation on draft legislation to introduce a transferable tax history for oil and gas companies, to encourage new investment in UK oil and gas fields.

Petroleum Revenue Tax (PRT) deduction for decommissioning costs a consultation on draft legislation to allow a petroleum revenue tax deduction for decommissioning costs incurred by a previous licence holder, to encourage investment in UK oil and gas fields.

The tax system can be a lever to encourage people and businesses to make healthier, more environmentally responsible choices. The Government is committed to improving air quality in the UK's towns and cities, and protecting the environment for future generations.

Today the Government will publish:

a call for evidence seeking views on how the tax system or charges could reduce the amount of single-use plastics waste, to protect the environment. This will look at the whole supply chain for single use plastics, including alternative materials, reusable

options and recycling opportunities, to consider how the tax system and charges can help drive technological progress and behavioural change.

In the coming months the Government will publish:

Red diesel use in non-agricultural, non-road mobile machinery— a call for evidence into whether the use of red diesel tax relief discourages the purchase of cleaner engines. The primary focus of this call for evidence will be on improving air quality outcomes, particularly in urban areas. Red diesel for agricultural use will be outside the scope of the call for evidence, as will home heating use and other static generators.

Reforming VED rates for vans – a consultation on reducing VED rates for the cleanest vans through creating a graduated first year rate, as is already in place for cars, to encourage cleaner choices and improve environmental outcomes.

Today the Government will publish:

Extension of security deposit legislation a consultation on how to extend existing security deposit policy to include corporation tax and Construction Industry Scheme deductions for taxpayers deemed at high risk of not paying and with a history of non-compliance.

In the coming months the Government will publish:

Off-payroll working a consultation on how to tackle non-compliance in the private sector, drawing on the experience of the public sector reform. The Government will work with businesses and individuals to mitigate the potential administrative burdens of any future changes.

Tackling Corporate Insolvency and phoenixism risks a discussion document exploring further means for tackling the small minority who deliberately abuse the insolvency regime in trying to avoid or evade their tax liabilities, including through the use of phoenixism.

Tackling construction sector supply chain fraud a technical consultation on draft legislation for a VAT reverse charge. This will help to eliminate the threat of ‘missing trader’ fraud in construction industry supply chains, which is where the supplier retains the VAT that it collects on its sales. The reverse charge will achieve this by shifting responsibility to the customer for paying VAT to HMRC where the customer is a VAT-registered construction business.

Profit fragmentation a consultation on the best way to prevent UK traders or professionals from avoiding UK tax by arranging for UK trading income to be transferred to unrelated foreign entities.

Today the Government will publish:

Heated tobacco— a response to the consultation on the tax treatment of heated tobacco products.

In the coming months the Government will publish:

Gaming Duty: review of accounting periods – a consultation to seek views on bringing the administration of gaming duty more into line with the other gambling duties.

Short term business visitors – a consultation on how to simplify the tax treatment of short-term business visitors from the foreign branch of a UK company, to ensure the UK is an attractive location to headquarter a business.

Capital Gains Tax payment window – a technical consultation on the design of the system requiring capital gains tax due on a disposal of residential property to be paid within 30 days of completion.

VAT and vouchers – a response to a consultation on changes to the VAT treatment of vouchers. This change will amend VAT law to ensure that when customers pay with vouchers, businesses account for the same amount of VAT as when other means of payment are used.

Taxation of trusts a consultation on how to make the taxation of trusts simpler, fairer and more transparent.

Large business compliance – a response to the consultation into HMRC's process for risk-profiling large businesses, to improve HMRC's Business Risk Review process, reflecting and further enhancing the shift in large business compliance behaviours.

This statement has also been made in the House of Lords: