



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 30 April 2019 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:45 P.M., 30 April 2019). 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

■ Criminal Proceedings: Evidence

Ben Lake:

[\[245945\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for the Home Department on failures relating to the disclosure of evidence in criminal cases and police culture.

Robert Buckland:

The Attorney General and I engage frequently with the Home Office, and issues relating to disclosure remain of paramount importance to us. Extensive action is underway to bring about the necessary cultural change within the CPS and policing, and we are clear that this is a collaborative effort. In June the Minister for Policing and I will be co-chairing a Tech Summit, in order to address the increasing amount of digital material involved in the disclosure process.

■ Fraud

Julian Knight:

[\[245828\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what steps he taking to ensure a joined-up response to the evolving threat of economic crime; and what plans he has to involve prosecutors in that work.

Robert Buckland:

The Government is committed to tackling economic crime. We know this requires a multi-agency response and that is why both the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) play their part, alongside others, including through their support of the new multi-agency National Economic Crime Centre (NECC).

The NECC, which has been operational since October 2018, will drive the tasking and coordination of the UK's response to economic crime. It will access the full range of capabilities available to ensure the right tools are used by the right agencies at the right time - ensuring that economic crime is tackled in the most effective and impactful way.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Business: Conditions of Employment

Martyn Day:

[\[245891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) small, (b) medium-sized and (c) large businesses that

have (i) fired and (ii) rehired employees in accordance with his Department's guidance on changing an employment contract in each of the last five years.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Government do not hold statistics on this matter. In general, the terms and conditions of employment are for negotiation and agreement between employers and employees (or their representatives). Once agreed, however, they form a legally binding contract of employment. While it is always open to either party to seek to renegotiate the terms of the contract, if the employer changes any of the terms without the employee's agreement, the employee may be entitled to seek legal redress.

Additionally, employees who consider that their dismissal was unfair can complain to an employment tribunal, generally subject to a qualifying period of continuous service.

Both employers and employees are strongly encouraged to follow the guidance available on GOV.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/your-employment-contract-how-it-can-be-changed> when considering changing their terms and conditions of employment.

■ **Conditions of Employment**

Martyn Day:

[245890]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to prevent employers (a) firing and (b) rehiring employees by changing employment contracts.

Kelly Tolhurst:

On 17 December 2018 we published the Good Work Plan, which sets out our vision for the future of the labour market and our ambitious plan for implementing the recommendations arising from the Taylor Review. This important package represents the biggest upgrade to workers' rights in over 20 years and demonstrates how we are leading the way internationally to ensure workers have access to the rights and protections they deserve in the context of a changing world of work.

Successive governments have introduced a legal framework which ensures that employers should always treat their employees fairly.

In general, the terms and conditions of employment are for negotiation and agreement between employers and employees (or their representatives). Once agreed, however, they form a legally binding contract of employment. While it is always open to either party to seek to renegotiate the terms of the contract, if the employer changes any of the terms without the employee's agreement, the employee may be entitled to seek legal redress.

Additionally, employees who consider that their dismissal was unfair can complain to an employment tribunal, generally subject to a qualifying period of continuous service.

Both employers and employees are strongly encouraged to follow the guidance available on GOV.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/your-employment-contract-how-it-can-be-changed> when considering changing their terms and conditions of employment.

■ Consumers: Internet

Paul Farrelly: [245672]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the (a) accuracy and (b) integrity of consumer reviews on major retail websites.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPRs) prohibit traders giving consumers false or misleading information about goods and services including reviews on their websites. It also prohibits the practice of falsely representing itself as a consumer. Enforcement of the legislation is by local authority trading standards services.

The Advertising Standards Authority through its code of advertising practice has recently published guidance for marketers on making claims in testimonials and endorsements. A copy of the guidance can be found at:

<https://www.asa.org.uk/advice-online/testimonials-and-endorsements.html>.

The Citizens Advice consumer service provides consumers with free advice and information on their rights. The helpline can be contacted on 03454 04 05 06 (www.citizensadvice.org.uk/). However, if the consumer resides in Scotland, they should contact Advice Direct Scotland on 0808 164 6000 (www.consumeradvice.scot).

■ Employment: Females

Helen Whately: [910613]

What steps his Department is taking to support women at work.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Industrial Strategy aims to boost productivity by backing businesses to create good jobs and increase earning power for all.

This includes removing barriers faced by women in accessing and progressing at work and in starting and growing a business, as explored in the recent Rose Review.

We are also giving parents more choice about who is the primary carer in the first year of their babies' lives through the Shared Parental Leave and Pay scheme.

■ Energy: Prices

Gareth Thomas: [910595]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the energy price cap on consumers.

Greg Clark:

The cap is protecting 12 million households – many elderly or vulnerable - from paying too much, saving them on average £75-100 a year.

With London having some of the lowest levels of switching, the cap is protecting households in Harrow West from the loyalty penalty.

Industry**Richard Harrington:**[\[910608\]](#)

What plans he has to bring forward new sector deals in the near future.

Greg Clark:

My Honourable Friend has been a fantastic champion of Sector Deals. He has been integral to the delivery of the ten Sector Deals published so far, creating over £3bn of investment from industry and Government.

We are building on his excellent work with new deals for the tourism and food and drink sectors which will be published shortly.

Passenger Ships**Zac Goldsmith:**[\[247691\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Transport on the potential effect of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's proposals for older UK passenger boats on (a) businesses (b) investment and (c) skilled engineering jobs in boatyards.

Andrew Stephenson:

BEIS officials remain closely engaged with DfT on the delivery of the recently published Maritime 2050 strategy and to support growth ambitions across the maritime sector. BEIS and DfT officials speak regularly about a range of topics.

Post Office: Pay**Marion Fellows:**[\[245850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the average increase to postmaster pay under the new payment deal for banking cash deposits at post offices.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Government recognises the critical role that post offices play in communities and for small businesses across the UK. This is why the Government committed to safeguard the post office network and protect existing rural services. The overall number of post offices across the UK remains at its most stable in decades with over 11,500 branches thanks to significant Government investment of over £2 billion since 2010.

While the Government sets the strategic direction for the Post Office, it allows the company the commercial freedom to deliver this strategy as an independent

business. The Department has made no such estimate because the management of postmasters' remuneration for banking services is an operational matter for Post Office Limited. I have therefore asked Alisdair Cameron, the Group interim Chief Executive of Post Office Limited, to write to the hon Member on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

■ **Whirlpool Corporation: Tumble Dryers**

Sir Vince Cable:

[\[245584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many instances the Office for Product Safety and Standards found of Whirlpool's tumble dryer modification being applied incorrectly (a) in the machines it has tested and (b) in the tumble dryers of Whirlpool customers it assessed as part of its inquiry into that company's modification programme.

Sir Vince Cable:

[\[245585\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many of the modified Whirlpool tumble dryers tested by the Office for Product Safety and Standards as part of its review of Whirlpool's modification programme displayed, as stated under the terms of that review, discrepancies between Whirlpool's specifications for the modifications and the condition of the machines as found.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) published the findings of its review of Whirlpool's tumble dryer modification programme on 4 April.

The review explored whether Whirlpool's technical modification, designed to further reduce the risk of lint fires arising from its tumble dryers, was effective in both design and installation. The review concluded that there is a low risk of harm or injury from lint fires in modified machines and that the modification reduced the level of risk.

As part of the review OPSS considered the quality assurance used by Whirlpool when undertaking the modifications in consumers' homes and OPSS purchased 20 used tumble dryers from online sales sites that appeared to have been modified at some point. Examination of these machines revealed variations from Whirlpool's specifications for the modifications. It was not possible to establish the history of individual machines including whether, when and how the machine had been modified. It was not therefore possible to draw firm conclusions regarding the cause of these variations. OPSS has therefore written to Whirlpool requiring them to set up a more rigorous system of quality assurance, including a programme of examinations of dryers that have been used by consumers, to ensure modifications are correctly installed. OPSS will scrutinise Whirlpool's actions against these requirements.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:

[\[245942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of mandating the recall of faulty Whirlpool machines in the UK.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) published the findings of its review of Whirlpool's tumble dryer modification programme on 4 April. The review found that there is a low risk of harm or injury from lint fires in modified machines.

OPSS has written to Whirlpool setting out the actions it must take, including using more creative ways to reach affected consumers to minimise the risk of faulty machines still being in people's homes. Whirlpool has 28 days to respond from the date of the letter setting out what further actions it will take. OPSS will hold Whirlpool to account in regard to these requirements.

■ Working Conditions: EU Action**Justin Madders:**[\[910614\]](#)

Whether he has plans to bring forward legislative proposals to introduce the proposed EU directive on transparent and predictable working conditions into UK law.

Greg Clark:

The UK has led the development of this Directive. We already meet, exceed or plan to take action in all key areas.

Last month, the Government published proposals that would give Parliament the right to consider and vote on any future changes in EU law that strengthened workers' rights.

CABINET OFFICE**■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Procurement****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[245685\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that the greatest economic benefit is generated from (a) public procurement and (b) the award of contracts.

Oliver Dowden:

The overarching principle in all public sector procurement is to secure the best value for money for the taxpayer. To this end, we have simplified procurement processes, and we are implementing a range of measures, such as taking account of social value when awarding contracts. From September, if government contractors are late with supplier payments, they could be prevented from winning public contracts. These measures help to deliver value for money for taxpayers through better procurement, and support a healthy, competitive and diverse market.

■ European Parliament: Elections**Catherine West:** [246562]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what information his Department holds on the number EU citizens eligible to vote in forthcoming European Elections in (a) the UK, (b) London and (c) in the London Borough of Haringey.

Catherine West: [246563]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his department holds information on the number of EU citizens who are registered to vote in the upcoming European Parliament elections in (a) the UK, (b) London and (c) the London Borough of Haringey.

Kevin Foster:

The Cabinet Office does not hold this information centrally.

Each Electoral Registration Officer maintains a register for their own local area. Some headline registration statistics by area are collated and published annually by the Office for National Statistics, however, this does not include a breakdown of the numbers of EU citizens registering to vote. The total number of UK local government electors – which includes EU citizens – in the year to December 2018 was 47.8 million.

The latest bulletin is available at

www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/elections/electoralregistration.

Tom Brake: [246581]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that local authorities are sending out postal ballots for the elections to the European Parliament to eligible UK voters in EU countries in sufficient time for (a) voters to return the postal ballots and (b) for those ballots to be counted.

Kevin Foster:

It remains the Government's intention to leave the EU with a deal and not participate in European Parliamentary elections.

In preparation for the delivery of elections, Returning Officers, who are statutorily independent, will work to deliver the polls, including through following guidance issued by the Electoral Commission.

The Electoral Commission's guidance advises Returning Officers to prioritise postal ballot packs that are to be sent overseas in order to allow as much time as possible for the ballot pack to reach the elector and to be completed and returned. The Government has agreed to fund International Business Response Licences for the return of postal votes from overseas and has met with Royal Mail and British Forces Post Office to ensure there is effective planning in place for the dispatch and return of postal votes from overseas including those for service voters based overseas.

■ Grenfell Tower Inquiry

Emma Dent Coad:

[\[246580\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Prime Minister's letter to Sir Martin Moore Bick of 10 May 2018 announcing her intention to appoint two additional panel members to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry for Phase 2, and the Grenfell Tower inquiry's subsequent update on 17 April 2019 explaining that preliminary work, for Phase 2 has already started, if he will appoint the two additional panel members to the Grenfell Tower inquiry.

Mr David Lidington:

The process of identifying suitable panel members is underway. Prior to the appointment of panel members, the Prime Minister will consult with the Chair of the Inquiry and seek his consent as required by the Inquiries Act 2005. An announcement will be made as soon as this process is completed.

■ Hereditary Titles (Female Succession) Bill

Philip Davies:

[\[246970\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, for what reason the Government objected to the Hereditary Titles (Female Succession) Bill on 22 March 2019.

Kevin Foster:

The Government takes the issue of gender inequalities very seriously. I have carefully noted the points made about the current system of hereditary peerage in the context of the Hereditary Titles (Female Succession) Bill. However, this issue is complex and is linked with several equally complex issues, including the system of courtesy titles.

Under the current arrangements, the Equality Act 2010 provides that neither a life peerage nor a hereditary peerage (as an honour conferred by the Crown), is a public or personal office for the purposes of the Act. This exemption means the rules surrounding the by-elections of hereditary peers is ultimately a matter for the House of Lords in regulating its own affairs.

■ Service Industries: Exports

Bill Esterson:

[\[247690\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of non-UK nationals employed in the services export sector in the UK.

Kevin Foster:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Holding Response [PQ247690 Holding Response.pdf]

DEFENCE**■ Aircraft Carriers: Construction****Douglas Chapman:**[\[245822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the two new aircraft carriers were built to Lloyd's Register's Naval Ship Rules.

Stuart Andrew:

Yes. Both Aircraft Carriers comply with 'Lloyd's Register's Rules and Regulations for the Classification of Naval Ships - January 2005' for structures and machinery. Military ships, due to their operational purpose, require additional classifications and Lloyd's Rules are tailored to comply with the more challenging requirements and standards of military vessels. These are agreed between Lloyd's Register, the Ministry of Defence Naval Authorities and the Aircraft Carrier Alliance.

■ Armed Forces: EU Defence Policy**Tom Brake:**[\[246008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the effect of leaving the EU (a) with a deal and (b) under a no-deal scenario on the legal status and chain of command for UK armed forces personnel serving on EU-led missions.

Mark Lancaster:

The Political Declaration on the future relationship between the European Union and the United Kingdom sets out the basis for our future cooperation as a third country. This includes providing the legal framework, in the form of a Framework Participation Agreement, for the UK to contribute to EU crisis management operations and missions, on a case-by-case basis and when in the mutual interests. Such a partnership must respect the sovereignty of the UK, the UK will maintain control over its defence policy and decision making.

In a No Deal scenario, the UK would withdraw from Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations - both military and civilian, and associated personnel seconded to the EU institutions. The UK would continue to act through other multilateral fora, including through the UN and NATO.

■ Armed Forces: Pay**Luke Pollard:**[\[246002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish the recommendations made by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body in each year since 2008-09 to date; and what the final settlement was for Royal Navy personnel in each such year.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) is an independent advisory non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Ministry of Defence (MOD). Copies of

the AFPRB's reports, containing their recommendations, can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/armed-forces-pay-review-body>

The AFPRB's recommendations have always been accepted by the MOD. The reports contain the final settlements for the Armed Forces.

Copies of the AFPRB's reports are also available in the Vote Office.

■ **Army: Recruitment**

Liz Saville Roberts:

[247752]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many walk-ins there were to each Army Careers Centre in the last financial year.

Mark Lancaster:

The information is not held in the format requested. While some Army Career Centres may record some data locally, this will not be consistent or comparable with other sites.

■ **India: Military Alliances**

Mr Kevan Jones:

[245690]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how the Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and India supports increased defence ties between the UK and India.

Mr Kevan Jones:

[246484]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the renewed Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and India on the volume of UK defence equipment exports to India.

Stuart Andrew:

The Memorandum of Understanding underpins the commitment of the UK and India to strengthening our bilateral defence relationship. It will help us identify common defence and security capability needs, thereby allowing our defence and security industries to focus and collaborate more effectively on procurement opportunities, both in the UK and in India. The improvements in technology and manufacturing capabilities flowing from this co-operation will bolster our mutual security and prosperity for the long term.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Per Capita Costs**

Jonathan Edwards:

[246495]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his Department's expenditure per head has been in each (a) nation and (b) region of the UK in each of the last five years.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Statistics on Ministry of Defence (MOD) expenditure per person, broken down by region is published in Tables 4 and 5 of the MOD regional expenditure with UK

industry and supported employment 2017/18 bulletin, which can be found at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mod-regional-expenditure-with-uk-industry-and-supported-employment-201718>

Data for 2018/19 will be published in January 2020.

■ Ministry of Defence: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones:

[245689]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department has taken to ensure the greatest economic benefit to the UK from his Department's (a) public procurement and (b) award of contracts.

Stuart Andrew:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) continually seeks to improve its public procurement and contract award processes to obtain the best commercial outcome for the taxpayer. We do this in a way that looks to strengthen our economy and prosperity where it is relevant to what is being procured and is fair and non-discriminatory. To maximise UK economic benefits, the MOD uses the Treasury's Green Book framework when making these decisions.

Since 2015, we have published a National Shipbuilding Strategy, launched the Future Combat Air Strategy, and refreshed our Defence Industrial Policy to help strengthen UK competitiveness. We also routinely engage with global primes to create opportunities for all tiers of the UK supply chain.

On 14 March 2019, the Defence Secretary announced an ambitious Defence Prosperity Programme to grow Defence's contribution to UK prosperity. As part of this programme we are working jointly with industry and academia to improve the quality and relevance of defence economic data that is available to decision makers.

■ Ministry of Defence: Property

Douglas Chapman:

[245820]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress has been made on realising the planned savings between 2016-17 and 2020-21 from disposals of his Department's estate.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Department has achieved £413.4 million from the completion of 170 disposal transactions in the period 2016-17 to 2018-19. The Department continues to work closely with stakeholders to release additional sites for disposal in line with previously announced defence estate optimisation plans.

■ Navy: Training

Douglas Chapman:

[\[245821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what proportion of Royal Navy Leading Hands working on the Astute class submarines have completed the qualifying sea time.

Mark Lancaster:

There is no 'qualifying sea time' requirement within individual branches for a Leading Hand. All Leading Hands assigned to the first four Astute Class submarines have passed the Basic Submarine Qualification.

■ Royal Fleet Auxiliary: Pay

Luke Pollard:

[\[246003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the pay settlements were for the civilian staff of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary in each year since 2008-09 to date.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

All Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) personnel are Ministry of Defence civilian employees and are, therefore, subject to HM Treasury Civil Servant Pay Guidance.

For the pay period 2008-09 to 2010-11 the settlement was for a 1.9% increase to all pay scales for each of the three years.

For the pay period 2011-13, in line with public sector pay restraint, there were no pay increases.

For the pay period 2013-15, again in line with the rest of the public sector, RFA personnel received a 1% increase to consolidated pay for each year.

For the pay period 2015-18, a 1% pay settlement was agreed for RFA personnel each year.

The pay settlement for 2018-19 was 1.5%.

■ Veterans: Housing

Gareth Thomas:

[\[245570\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the number of former military personnel who have experienced difficulties in finding accommodation after their discharge from the armed forces in each of the last three years.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Housing for veterans is the responsibility of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and the number of former military personnel who have experienced difficulties in finding accommodation after discharge is not known.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is developing a new tri-Service policy to provide more comprehensive support to Service personnel and their families as they transition out of the Armed Forces, and this will include advice and support on housing matters.

As set out in the Annual Population Survey: UK Armed Forces Veterans Residing in Great Britain 2017 report, published on 31 January 2019, MHCLG has introduced a package of measures to ensure the Armed Forces community have the same access to social housing and are not disadvantaged by the requirement for mobility whilst in Service. In 2016/17 a greater proportion of the UK Armed Forces veterans were estimated to spend less than six months waiting for social housing compared to the non-veteran population.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Hampton Court

Sir Vince Cable:

[\[245586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when he last met with Historic Royal Palaces to discuss the effect of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's proposals for older UK passenger boats on tourism and visitors at Hampton Court Palace.

Michael Ellis:

Ministers and officials have regular discussions with their counterparts at Historic Royal Palaces concerning a wide range of issues. There have been no conversations specifically regarding the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's proposals.

■ Historic Buildings

Daniel Kawczynski:

[\[245735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Government holds 3D laser maps of historic buildings to provide an accurate record of their construction in the event of damage.

Michael Ellis:

Government does not have a central repository of 3D laser maps that record historic buildings. However, Historic England (HE) have taken steps to record the most notable historic buildings. The HE Geospatial Survey team have created and hold data for 101 historic sites, of which 55 are English Heritage properties. Notable sites that have complete laser scans include Stonehenge, Ironbridge and Harmondsworth Barn. There are a number of buildings in Shrewsbury that have been scanned and mapped. These include Shrewsbury Old Market Hall, the Charles Darwin statue and the Catholic Cathedral and sections of the town wall, by Arrol and Snell. Ironbridge, already noted, is just outside the constituency and is one of the notable sites which has had complete laser scan coverage.

There are more than 400,000 buildings and monuments on the National Heritage List for England, the vast majority in private ownership. It is likely that only a small fraction of these have been subject to comprehensive laser or photogrammetric survey of any kind. Such surveys that do exist are likely to be held by the owners and organisations carrying out the work.

■ Loneliness

Julian Knight:

[\[245825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the capability of tech businesses to tackle loneliness.

Mims Davies:

The Government's Loneliness Strategy stated that government would work with businesses to stimulate innovative solutions to loneliness across all ages, backgrounds and communities. To deliver on this commitment, government is engaging with tech businesses to explore what more can be done. For example, together with the Minister for Digital & Creative Industries, I recently hosted a roundtable with tech businesses focused on tackling loneliness using tech. The government is investing £1m in a Tech for Good Challenge Prize to further stimulate the capability of tech businesses to tackle social isolation. In April, DCMS started work with Nesta's Challenge Prize Centre to design the competition with the formal call for participants tentatively scheduled for June 2019. As part of the research and design of the project, DCMS is working closely with Buddy Hub, Digital Health and Care Alliance, No Isolation and Vodafone, who have publicly stated their aims and achievements in tackling loneliness.

■ Music: Licensed Premises

Alex Sobel:

[\[245978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what funding his Department has allocated to support the sustainability of independent music venues in rural communities.

Margot James:

Independent music venues are a vital part of the UK's music live music ecosystem which contributes around £1bn a year to our economy. (1)

Arts Council England is providing grant funding over four years to a range of National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs). Some of these NPOs are based in rural locations and programme live music including:

- Pocklington Arts Centre (East Riding of Yorkshire)
- Ropery Hall (Barton on the Humber)
- Queens Hall (Hexham)

Rural music venues can also benefit from Arts Council NPO and Project Grant funding as receiving houses for touring work and festival performances.

1. UK live music attendance and music tourism in 2017 (UK Music).

■ Sanitary Protection: Taxation

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck: [\[247081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of restricting the Tampon Tax Fund to charities which specialise in women's issues.

Mims Davies:

The purpose of the Tampon Tax Fund is to allocate the funds generated from the VAT on sanitary products to projects that improve the lives of disadvantaged women and girls. The existing criteria for the Fund - with the focus on onwads grants to small and medium sized charities and direct support for vulnerable women and girls - maximise the reach and impact of the Tampon Tax Fund across the UK. Whether directly or through onwads grants, tampon tax fund is exclusively made available to projects that support vulnerable women and girls.

■ Sports

Julian Knight: [\[245823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential role of sport in the Government's strategies to tackle serious violent crime.

Mims Davies:

We are clear that sport and physical activity has a key role to play to tackle serious violent crime in our community. At the Prime Minister's Summit on Serious Violence on 1st April 2019, government departments, the National Governing Bodies of sport, the Premier League and other partners announced they are working together on a 'sport offer' to improve interventions to tackle violence.

Sport and physical activity can help people to gain skills, build confidence and potentially reduce violence and recidivism.

EDUCATION**■ Adoption Support Fund**

Rachael Maskell: [\[247118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has for the future of the Adoption Support Fund after March 2020.

Rachael Maskell: [\[247119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he plans to announce proposals for the future of the Adoption Support Fund.

Rachael Maskell: [\[247120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what therapeutic support provision will be provided to adoptive families after July 2020.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Funding for the Adoption Support Fund beyond March 2020 is subject to the Spending Review process taking place later this year.

Until the review has been concluded, the government is unable to provide information on the future of the Adoption Support Fund.

■ Apprentices: Finance**Angela Rayner:****[245808]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 11 April 2019 to Question 242148 on Schools: Apprentices, how many of the 6,300 apprentices were funded by (a) the apprenticeship levy and (b) directly by local authorities.

Angela Rayner:**[245809]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 11 April 2019 to Question 242148, Schools: Apprentices, how many of the 6,300 apprentices are teaching apprentices.

Anne Milton:

The Education and Skills Funding Agency does not require levy-paying employers to register an industry sector when registering an apprenticeship service account and is therefore unable to supply the information on apprenticeships spending in schools.

The 6,300 figure represents our best estimate of the number of apprenticeship starts in schools during the first year of the public sector apprenticeship target. It is not possible to provide robust breakdowns of the numbers of starts on individual apprenticeship standards. We know from talking to schools that they use a range of standards and frameworks such as Teacher, Teaching Assistant, Supporting teaching and learning in schools, Supporting teaching and learning in physical education and school sport, Children's care learning and development, Business Administration, Business Administrator and Senior Leader, among others.

The department regularly publishes figures for apprenticeship starts broken down by sector subject area and by framework or standard. The latest figures, published in March 2019, can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788809/201819_March_MonthlyAppStartsFwk_FINAL.xlsx.

■ Apprentices: Logistics**Sir Mike Penning:****[245719]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of apprenticeship levy funds logistics businesses have drawn down to pay for apprenticeships; and will he make a statement.

Anne Milton:

The information requested is not held centrally.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency does not require levy-paying employers to register an industry sector when registering an apprenticeship service account and is therefore unable to supply the information requested on the proportion of levy funds drawn down by logistics businesses.

Sir Mike Penning:

[245720]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many logistics apprenticeships have been taken up since the apprenticeship levy was introduced.

Anne Milton:

The department regularly publishes figures for apprenticeship starts broken down by sector subject area and by framework or standard. The latest figures, published in March 2019, can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788809/201819_March_MonthlyAppStartsFwk_FINAL.xlsx.

■ Apprentices: Nottinghamshire

Ben Bradley:

[245983]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to increase the number of apprenticeships in Nottinghamshire.

Anne Milton:

The National Apprenticeship Service is working with Nottingham City Council to raise awareness of high value apprenticeships in the Nottingham area. The 'Opportunities Through Apprenticeships' project launched in November 2018. We are supporting the council in their work with local providers and employers to encourage the creation of more apprenticeships in high value sectors, such as digital, manufacturing and engineering.

We have introduced a wide range of reforms to apprenticeships to improve their quality and encourage employers across England to increase the number of apprenticeships they offer.

To support all employers to make the long-term, sustainable investment in training, from April 2019 we have halved the co-investment rate from 10% to 5% for new starts and have increased the amount that levy paying employers can transfer to other employers from 10% to 25%.

We are working to raise awareness of apprenticeships across the country and the benefits they bring to both employers and apprentices. Our 'Fire it Up' communication campaign, seeks to change the way people think about apprenticeships and demonstrate that they are an aspirational choice for anyone with passion and energy.

■ Asylum: Scholarships

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[245632]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to further increase the number of scholarships available to refugees, asylum seekers and forced immigrants.

Chris Skidmore:

Last year the government invested £5 million to expand the Queen Elizabeth Commonwealth Scholarships, allowing 150 students to benefit from a scholarship by 2025. These Masters scholarships for study in low and middle income Commonwealth countries are open to Commonwealth citizens, including those who hold refugee status in a Commonwealth country.

Most higher education providers, as independent and autonomous organisations, provide support direct to their students through scholarships and bursaries. Such support is available to refugees and asylum seekers. Organisations such as the Refugee Support Network and the Student Action for Refugees provide information to students on the availability of such support.

Asylum seekers and refugee children in the UK are entitled to a school place and must be considered for admission in the same way as local residents.

■ Children and Young People: Organised Crime**Frank Field:**[\[246583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to prevent children and young people in Birkenhead from being criminally exploited by organised crime networks.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The government is committed to taking action against all forms of child exploitation.

The department has commissioned the new 'Tackling Child Exploitation' support programme to provide dedicated expertise, advice and practical support to safeguarding partners in local areas to help them develop an effective multi-agency response to a range of child exploitation threats including child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

By June 2019 all local areas are required to publish new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements that will safeguard and promote the well-being of all children in their area. Under the new duty, the local authority, police and health must work together to put in place robust arrangements to respond to all safeguarding concerns that affect their area, including child criminal exploitation. They will report their actions and progress in their published annual reports.

To support local practitioners in preventing children and young people from being criminally exploited statutory safeguarding guidance documents 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' were revised last year to reflect extra familial threats to children. Exploitation threats to children were also reflected in our communications campaign 'Together We Can Tackle Child Abuse'.

The Department for Education is making Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory in all secondary schools and Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools, from September 2020. New content, that all children and young people will be taught,

includes exploitation. In addition, the department is taking action to tackle persistent absence, reviewing exclusions practice, updating school security guidance and improving the quality of our schools and children's social care services. We are also in discussion with the Home Office and the National Police Chiefs' Council to identify best practice and how we can encourage police-school partnership working.

■ Children: Mental Health

Mr George Howarth:

[\[245655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he take steps to ensure his Department works with the Department for Health and Social Care to develop a children's mental health workforce.

Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education has a joint programme of work with the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England, and Health Education England to deliver the proposals set out in the green paper 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision'. It covers action to incentivise all schools and colleges to identify and train senior mental health leads, to introduce and fund new Mental Health Support Teams linked to schools and colleges, and to pilot a four week waiting time for access to specialist NHS children and young people's mental health services.

Mental Health Support Teams will be established in 20-25% of England by 2023. The teams will be made up of additional trained mental health workers, supervised by suitable NHS staff and will work closely with other professionals such as educational psychologists, school nurses, counsellors and social workers. The impact of the new teams will be evaluated, including the effect they have on wider provision. The new teams will make up part of the wider increase in NHS children and young people's mental health services and workforce set out in the NHS Ten-Year Plan. The joint delivery programme is linked to the management of the Ten-Year plan to ensure that the increase in workforce is delivered in a coherent way.

■ Children: Social Services

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[246526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has held with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on increasing the level of funding available for children's services in the forthcoming Spending Review; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education and I regularly meet our ministerial colleagues from HM Treasury and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to discuss children's services including funding.

As part of our preparation for the Spending Review, our departments are working together to assess the level of funding local government needs to meet demand and deliver its statutory duties.

■ Children's Play

Mr George Howarth:

[\[245653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he will take to ensure that every child between the ages of five and fourteen years has access (a) in school and (b) close to home to play equipment to improve the mental wellbeing and emotional development of children.

Nick Gibb:

In 2018-19, £100 million was made available for schools through the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund for improving access to facilities for physical activity, healthy eating, mental health and wellbeing – including playgrounds and sports facilities.

The Department allocates approximately £200 million in capital funding each year directly to schools in England to invest in small capital projects to meet the needs of their pupils and school. This could, for example, include investing in improving the provision of playgrounds and equipment to support health and well-being. On top of this, at Budget 2018, my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer allocated an additional £400 million in capital funding for schools to spend on their own priorities.

Local authorities continue to be the biggest investors in community sport and leisure infrastructure in England, which is important for delivering wider community and health benefits. In addition, Sport England is investing over £194 million (between 2016-21) into projects focusing on improving children's capability and enjoyment of physical activity as well as providing opportunities for talented athletes to develop their potential. It is important that all children have access to high-quality facilities and spaces in their local areas, so that they can be active in safe and well-designed places. In order to support this, Sport England are investing £40 million through their strategic facilities and £15 million per year on improving Community Sport facilities for the benefit of local communities.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is working with the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care on a new cross-government action plan, to get children active both in and out of school.

■ Construction: Apprentices

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[247581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of apprenticeships in the construction sector.

Anne Milton:

We have introduced a wide range of reforms to apprenticeships to improve their quality and encourage employers in all sectors to increase the number of apprenticeships they offer.

We are pleased that the construction sector has committed to increase apprenticeship starts to 25,000 a year by 2020, as part of its Sector Deal with the

government. We are working closely with them to achieve this (for example, the Construction Industry Training Board links employers and apprentices, and can see encouraging momentum towards this goal).

In the first half of 2018-19, there were 16,700 starts in the Construction, Planning and Built Environment sector, an increase from 16,080 and from 15,060 at the same points in 2017-18 and 2016-17 respectively. 70 industry-designed apprenticeship standards are available in the construction sector, with 30 more standards in development.

To support all employers to make the long-term, sustainable investment in training, in April 2019 we halved the co-investment rate from 10% to 5% for new starts and increased the amount that levy paying employers can transfer to other employers from 10% to 25%.

Through our 'Fire it Up' communication campaign, we are also working across the country to raise awareness of apprenticeships and the benefits that they bring to both employers and apprentices.

■ Curriculum

Sir Vince Cable:

[245583]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance is given to schools in the maintained sector to ensure that they teach a broad and balanced curriculum.

Nick Gibb:

All state schools (including academies and free schools) must offer a school curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Maintained schools in England must follow the statutory National Curriculum and are also free to teach any other subject or topic they deem relevant for their pupils, as part of the school's curriculum. Guidance on all requirements is set out in the National Curriculum framework for Key Stages 1 to 4:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4>.

The National Curriculum was introduced in September 2014 and the guidance specifies that all state schools (including academies) should also make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE).

Ofsted have consulted on their inspection arrangements. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, the new framework will be published in May and introduced in September. The proposals retain a strong emphasis on schools providing a broad and balanced curriculum for all their pupils.

■ Erasmus+ Programme

Chi Onwurah:

[247051]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many school (a) teachers and (b) pupils have benefited from Erasmus programmes in each of the last five years.

Chris Skidmore:

Statistics about the number of individuals participating in international mobilities through the Erasmus+ programme are available on the European Commission website: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about/statistics_en.

Data are available covering the 2014, 2015 and 2016 call years are as below:

YEAR	2014	2015	2016
Numbers of school staff mobilities outgoing from the UK	1,067	1,147	1,393
Number of teachers in England	4,549,000	4,569,000	4,573,000
% of school staff participating in international mobilities	0.02%	0.03%	0.03%

Figures taken from the School Workforce in England, 2014, 2015, 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-workforce>.

These will include teachers but also wider school staff.

Numbers of school pupils participating in international mobilities through the Erasmus+ programme are not available.

These statistics give numbers of individuals who have travelled on international mobilities but will not reflect the full number of teachers and pupils who will have otherwise benefited from the Erasmus+ programme, for example through strategic partnerships and cooperative projects. It is not possible to quantify the total numbers of school staff and pupils who will have benefited.

Comparing the number of school staff mobilities to the number of teachers in England gives a sense of the proportion that benefit from the Erasmus+ programme.

These figures give the number of teachers working in state-funded schools in England only. They do not include the number of teachers working at other types of schools in the UK eg independent schools, who are also eligible to participate in the Erasmus+ programme.

■ Home Education

Afzal Khan:

[245991]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to pages 16 and 17 of the document entitled, Elective Home Education: Call for Evidence 2018 Government consultation response, what progress his Department has made on (a) providing clearer guidance to (i) schools and (ii) local authorities on (A) how to operate and (B) the effect of flexi-schooling arrangements and (b) establishing a separate code of practice to ensure that schools are not penalised as a result of the absence of flexi-schooled pupils.

Anne Milton:

The department's revised guidance for local authorities on elective home education published on 2 April 2019 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education>.

This document can be used by schools and contains guidance on flexi-schooling at pages 34-35. The guidance makes clear that schools are free to agree to flexi-schooling arrangements and need not suffer any disadvantage in doing so.

■ Literacy

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[245715]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to include teaching learners with literacy difficulties in early career framework curricula and training materials.

Nick Gibb:

The Department has worked closely with the teaching profession to develop the early career framework. Teachers and academics with expertise in supporting special educational needs and disabled (SEND) pupils were closely involved in the design of the early career framework (ECF). The framework has, at its centre, approaches that support the needs of all pupils, including those pupils with the four areas of need set out in the SEND Code of Practice. Drawing on the ECF, the Department intends to procure the development of high-quality curricula and materials which can help schools to put in place effective support and training for the early career teachers. The curricula and materials will be designed to meet the needs of all early career teachers.

The Department will continue to engage the sector as our plans develop to ensure the policy is delivered successfully.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[245717]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of support for learners with literacy difficulties; and if he will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

The Government is committed to continuing to raise literacy standards, ensuring all children can read fluently and with understanding.

Building on the success of the phonics partnerships and phonics roadshows programmes, in 2018 the Department launched a £26.3 million English Hubs Programme. The Department has appointed 34 primary schools across England as English Hubs, who are taking a leading role in supporting nearly 3000 schools to improve their teaching of reading through systematic synthetic phonics, early language development, and reading for pleasure.

The Department gives schools a catch-up premium, totalling around £50 million a year nationally, for Year 7 pupils who have not achieved the expected standard in reading by the end of key stage 2. This enables schools to deliver additional support, such as individual tuition or intensive support in small groups, for those pupils that most need it.

For pupils with specific types of SEND, including speech, language and communication needs, the Department has invested heavily since 2010 in the development of resources and training to ensure that teachers are equipped to support all pupils.

A range of free, quality assured resources and training materials for schools to use in supporting pupils with SEND is available via the National Association for Special Educational Needs. The link is available here: <https://www.sendgateway.org.uk/>.

The Department introduced the light touch phonics screening check for Year 1 pupils. Phonics performance is improving; in 2018, 163,000 more six year olds were on track to become fluent readers, compared to 2012. This represented 82% of pupils meeting the expected standard, compared to 58% in 2012 when the check was introduced.

■ Literacy and Special Educational Needs

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[245716]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to establish new national professional qualifications on SEND and literacy.

Nick Gibb:

As set out in the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy, the Department has committed to develop new specialist National Professional Qualifications (NPQs). The focus of the specialist NPQs is yet to be finalised but they will be linked to the core areas in which teachers receive training at the start of their career. This includes: assessment; behaviour management; subject and curriculum expertise; and pedagogy. The Department will continue to work with the education sector, including SEND stakeholders, as these qualifications are developed and we will release further details in due course.

■ Mental Health: Curriculum

Mr George Howarth:

[245656]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what changes he will make to the National Curriculum to ensure that an understanding of emotional wellbeing and the principles of good mental health are embedded within it at every developmental stage.

Nick Gibb:

The Department recognises the importance of supporting children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. That is why from September 2020, teaching about mental health will be part of compulsory health education in all state-funded schools in England. The draft guidance sets out that pupils will be taught about the importance of good physical and mental health including the steps pupils can take to protect and support their own health and mental wellbeing. The content will also cover understanding emotions; identifying where someone is experiencing signs of poor mental health; simple self-care; and how and when to seek support. The guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/relationships-and-sex-education-and-health-education>.

Health education is being introduced as part of the basic curriculum alongside Relationships Education in all primary schools, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in all secondary schools. To support schools to enable them to deliver high quality teaching in these subjects, the Department recently announced an additional £6m funding in 2019/20 to support schools to design and develop the training and resources that schools need. The Department has also invited schools to become 'early adopters' of the new curriculum and begin teaching the new subjects from September 2019 and to assist the department to shape the support package.

■ National College Creative Industries

Jon Trickett: [245618]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2019 to Question number 234688 on National College Creative Industries, how many applications for the opportunity to partner the National College Creative Industries have (a) been received and (b) been rejected; and when the application process will close.

Jon Trickett: [245619]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2019 to Question 234689 on National College Creative Industries, whether other formal or informal processes in addition to public advertising were used to pursue potential partners for the National College of Creative Industries.

Jon Trickett: [245620]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2019 to Question 234689 on National College Creative Industries, (a) how and (b) when the National College Creative Industries first contacted potential partners.

Jon Trickett: [245621]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2019 to Question 234690 on National College Creative Industries, who was involved in the preparation of the expressions of interest application form for partnerships with the National College of Creative Industries; and who evaluated those applications.

Jon Trickett:

[\[245625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2019 to Question 234690 on National College Creative Industries, which criteria were specified in the EOI document; and whether those criteria included (a) national and international initiatives, (b) engagement in the development of professional standards or professional training experience, (c) industry relationships and (d) relationship with the global market place.

Jon Trickett:

[\[245626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2019 to Question 234690 on National College Creative Industries, what criteria were used to assess the institutions.

Anne Milton:

The National College Creative Industries received 6 Expressions of Interest: 2 were sifted out at the Expression of Interest (EOI) stage, 1 withdrew at the shortlisting stage and 1 was sifted out following the full application stage.

The period to submit an application is now closed and the process is due to be completed in autumn 2019.

We understand that no other formal processes were employed to pursue potential partners, however the college ensured that potential interested parties were made aware of the opportunity that was advertised.

Initial contact was made with potential partners by telephone and in person over a period from 14 January 2019 up until the EOI submission date of 11 February 2019.

The EOI documentation was prepared by the steering group which included college board members with a high level of creative industries experience and Further Education (FE) Commissioner team members with FE leadership experience. The same group evaluated the applications.

The criteria was not explicitly specified in the EOI documentation but they were linked to the National College for Creative and Cultural Industries vision which was set out on the front page of the EOI form. The criteria included national initiatives and reach, engagement in the development of professional standards or professional training experience and industry relationships but did not include relationship with the global market place.

Jon Trickett:

[\[245622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 25 March 2019 to Question 234682 on National College Creative Industries, what criteria his Department uses to assess the value for money of the apprenticeships made available through the National College Creative Industries.

Jon Trickett:

[\[245623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 25 March 2019 to Question 234686 on National College Creative Industries: Students, whether his

Department's policies are intended to provide equal regional representation in the intake to the National College Creative Industries.

Jon Trickett:

[\[245624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 25 March 2019 to Question 23468 on National College Creative Industries and with reference to the student to staff ratio in 2018, what assessment he has made of the (a) effectiveness and (b) value for money of staffing for the National College of Creative Industries.

Anne Milton:

The department has not assessed the value for money of the apprenticeship provision of the National College for Creative and Cultural Industries. However, as the College is a new institution, the department is working closely with them to monitor and review their progress against their business plan as they become established.

As with all of the National Colleges, the National College for Creative and Cultural Industries aims to have national reach and to attract students from across the country once it has become fully established.

No assessment of effectiveness or value for money has been made of the National College for Creative and Cultural Industries with regard to student to staff ratio in 2018 at this time. However, further education colleges and other providers including National Colleges are subject to robust accountability arrangements that promote high standards and continual improvement, ensure value for money and help to inform learner choice.

The government publishes detailed information on the performance of providers including metrics for 16-19 study programmes, qualification achievement rates for learners aged 16 to 19 and over 19, outcome-based success measures for adult learners (based on employment and educational destinations) and employer and learner satisfaction survey results.

■ Pre-school Education: Assessments

Mr George Howarth:

[\[245652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make an assessment of the effect of testing upon children of primary age; and what steps he is taking to research different methods of measuring achievement that benefits children.

Nick Gibb:

Statutory tests have been an important part of the education system under different governments since the 1990s. They help teachers to identify the areas where children need additional support in order to master the fundamentals of English and mathematics, and in doing so ensure that every child is given the best chance to go on to succeed at secondary school. The core purpose of these tests is not to measure pupils, but rather to enable the Government to hold schools to account for

the education they provide, and as such they should not be stressful for the children that take them.

Assessments in primary school also enable the Department to measure education standards over time, for example improvements in children's reading and a declining attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. Removing tests would risk jeopardising these gains.

As well as being an established feature of the education system in England, testing is also common practice across European and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries, with 28 out of 35 countries assessing primary school pupils through national, standardised assessments.

All assessments produced by the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) are developed to a high standard. The test development process is rigorous, and includes trialling with pupils in a classroom setting to ensure they are suitable. The STA's test handbook sets out this approach in more detail, and can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2018-national-curriculum-test-handbook>.

■ Pre-school Education: Teachers

Mr George Howarth:

[245654]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will take steps to ensure that children that attend Early Years settings, from newborn to five years old, have access to a graduate workforce led by specialist Early Years teachers that (a) understand children's development and (b) can offer (i) advice, (ii) encouragement and (iii) support to (A) parents and (B) carers.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework is mandatory for all early years providers in England. It sets out the staffing requirements for early years settings, including ratios and qualifications. There are no plans to change the staffing requirements under the EYFS framework.

■ Primary Education: Assessments

Paul Farrelly:

[245673]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect of the new baseline test on children's (a) confidence and (b) relationships with (i) teachers and (ii) other pupils.

Nadhim Zahawi:

As we develop the reception baseline assessment (RBA), we are continuing to discuss its implementation with a wide range of stakeholders, including teachers, early years practitioners and assessment experts. We will conduct a voluntary national pilot in the autumn of this year, which will enable us to consider pupils' experiences of the assessment ahead of its scheduled statutory rollout in September 2020.

Most, if not all, schools carry out assessments of pupils when they start reception so they can ascertain their level of development and plan teaching and learning. While the precise nature of these assessments may vary, the RBA will be broadly consistent with activities that take place in reception classrooms – for example, counting and describing pictures.

■ Pupils: Gender Recognition

Alex Sobel:

[245972]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to provide adequate mental health support for (a) transgender and (b) gender-questioning children in schools.

Nick Gibb:

It is up to schools to decide, in dialogue with parents, how to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) pupils, including transgender and gender-questioning pupils. The Government Equalities Office has provided guidance and links to support and services for LGBT individuals, including support for children and young people. This guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/advice-and-support-for-lgbt-people#children-and-young-people-up-to-the-age-of-19>.

Counselling can play an effective role as part of a whole school approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing. To support the provision of counselling support in schools, the Department published a blueprint for school counselling services. This provides schools with practical evidence-based advice informed by schools and counselling experts, on how to deliver high quality school-based counselling. It also offers information on how to ensure that children who have a higher prevalence of mental illness, including those who are LGBT, can access counselling provision.

This is available here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/counselling-in-schools.

The Government is also making sure that there is better access to specialist mental health support and treatment for pupils that need it. In March, the Government appointed the first ever National Adviser for LGBT Health in the NHS and Advisory Panel, to help improve the health and wellbeing of LGBT people. Under the NHS long term plan, mental health services will continue to receive a growing share of the NHS budget, with funding to grow by at least £2.3 billion a year by 2023/24. For the first time, funding for children and young people's mental health services will grow faster than both overall NHS funding and total mental health spending. This will mean that by 2023/24 an extra 345,000 children and young people aged 0-25 will receive mental health support via NHS-funded mental health services and school or college-based Mental Health Support Teams.

■ Schools: Discipline

Paul Farrelly:

[245678]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the potential negative effects of the use of isolation booths on children's education.

Nick Gibb:

Schools develop their own behaviour policies and strategies for managing behaviour. To help schools develop effective strategies, the Department has produced advice for schools which covers what should be included in the behaviour policy. This advice can be viewed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>.

Schools can adopt a policy which allows disruptive pupils to be placed in isolation away from other pupils for a limited period. If a school uses isolation rooms as a disciplinary penalty, this should be made clear in their behaviour policy. As with other disciplinary penalties, schools must act lawfully, reasonably and proportionately in all cases. The school must also ensure the health and safety of pupils.

As part of Ofsted inspections schools will be asked to provide records and analysis of any use of internal isolation. Ofsted inspectors will expect schools to have clear and effective behaviour policies that promote high standards of behaviour that are applied consistently and fairly. In reaching a judgement on pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, inspectors will take account of a range of information, including schools' use of internal isolation.

The Department regularly reviews the guidance issued to schools and updates it as appropriate.

■ Schools: Water Supply

Tim Loughton:

[247540]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what regulations are in place to ensure that schools provide fresh water for their pupils; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The supply of drinking water in schools is required by regulation 9(1) of the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012. Drinking water must be provided free of charge at all times to registered pupils on the school premises.

■ Special Educational Needs

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:

[245925]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to increase the level of (a) funding and (b) school staffing for children with (i) special educational needs and disability and (ii) autism.

Nadhim Zahawi:

In December 2018 my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education announced an increase of £250 million in the level of funding up to 2020, for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This brings the total level of high needs funding to £6.3 billion in this financial year 2019-20. The level of high needs funding in future years will depend on the next Spending Review. Decisions taken locally determine how much of this funding is spent on children with autism and other types of special educational needs (SEN). Information from local authorities or schools on how much of their funding is spent on children with autism is not held centrally.

We believe that all teachers should be teachers of children with SEN. We have provided £3.4 million funding over 2018-2020, for the SEND schools' workforce contract, which will be delivered by the Whole School SEND consortium, led by National Association of Special Educational Needs. The SEND schools' workforce contract's aim is to embed SEND into school improvement in order to equip the workforce to deliver high quality teaching across all types of SEND, including children and young people with autism.

We recognise that some schools, including special schools, are facing challenges in recruiting and retaining teachers. That is why in January 2019 we launched the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy.

Designed collaboratively with the sector, the centrepiece of the strategy is the Early Career Framework, which will underpin a fully-funded, 2 year package of structured support for all early career teachers. The strategy can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-recruitment-and-retention-strategy>.

Alex Sobel:**[245974]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the adequacy of (a) testing and (b) support for children at school with symptoms for (i) dyslexia and (ii) dyspraxia.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Schools are required under the Children and Families Act 2014 to identify and address the special educational needs (SEN) of the pupils or students they support, and guidance is set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice. This includes arranging for appropriate tests where the school's own assessments indicate that this is necessary. Schools receive funding through the notional SEN budget and would normally be expected to pay for tests such as an assessment for dyslexia or dyspraxia from this allocation.

We have invested heavily in practical and financial support for SEND including funding projects with the British Dyslexia Association to address issues around early identification and effective provision; and the Dyslexia SpLD Trust to provide expert advice, information and training to schools and parents.

We provide extensive support to schools to help them support pupils' needs, for example through the Whole School SEND consortium, which has been funded £3.4 million for 2 years (2018-2020) to deliver a programme of work to embed SEND within approaches to school improvement. As part of this contract, the University College London have engaged with the education sector to explore the supply, demand and drivers for SEND continuing professional development, including looking at dyslexia. This will provide an analysis of where gaps exist to inform our strategy going forward. This work is due to report shortly.

■ Teachers: Training

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[245718]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of initial teacher training on (a) SEND and (b) literacy difficulties.

Nick Gibb:

To complete teacher training and achieve qualified teacher status, trainees must meet the Teachers' Standards (2011). The Standards require trainees to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them. It also requires them to demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge, including taking responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject.

The Department published further guidance in July 2016, the Framework of core content for ITT, which provides additional advice for providers to ensure their courses support trainees to meet the above expectations.

It is Ofsted's responsibility to inspect the quality of teacher training and at their most recent inspection, 99% of all ITT providers were rated good or outstanding[1].

In the Recruitment and Retention Strategy, published in January 2019, the Department committed to reviewing ITT content guidance, to ensure the new Early Career Framework builds on and complements ITT.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-education-inspections-and-outcomes-as-at-30-june-2018>.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture

Paul Farrelly:

[246957]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect on investment in (a) farm infrastructure and (b) agri-environment schemes of uncertainty about when and on what terms the UK will leave the EU.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

In the 'Health and Harmony: the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit' consultation, which ran from February to May 2018, we asked 'what are the main barriers to new capital investment that can boost profitability and improve animal and plant health on-farm?' Over 3,000 responses were submitted to this question, and the most frequently selected option (77% of respondents) selected 'uncertainty about the future and where to target new investment'.

The UK Government [has guaranteed](#) that any Rural Development Programme projects where funding has been agreed before the end of 2020 will be funded for their full lifetime. This applies in both a negotiated and a no-deal scenario. It will ensure continued funding for these projects until they finish and means that Defra and the devolved administrations can continue to sign new projects after the UK leaves the EU during 2019 and 2020. The Government has also committed to provide the same total level of funding for farm support in cash terms until the end of this parliament, expected in 2022.

The Countryside Stewardship scheme is open for applications for both multi-annual agreements starting on 1 January 2020 and capital works, such as for water quality and hedgerows and boundaries. For agri-environment schemes we are developing proposals for the scheme offer from 2021.

As we develop the new Environmental Land Management system and evolve the Countryside Stewardship offer, we will work to ensure we can offer a smooth transition from Countryside Stewardship to the Environmental Land Management system when it becomes fully operational from 2024.

■ Angling: Licensing**Andrew Rosindell:****[247647]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to deter people from fishing without a licence.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Environment Agency undertakes a number of activities to deter people from fishing without a valid rod or net licence.

The principal mechanism used by fisheries enforcement officers is licence checking. Targets are set across Environment Agency areas linked to the number of fishing licences sold and during the 2017 to 2018 financial year (the last complete year of data), a total of 64,702 fishing licences were checked by fisheries enforcement staff.

2,257 anglers were prosecuted for fishing licence offences and successful prosecutions resulted in a total average penalty of £267 with total fines issued (including costs) totalling £583,483.

In addition the Environment Agency uses social media, produces a monthly newsletter, works with partners and attends angling and country shows to reduce evasion and highlight the consequences of fishing without a licence.

■ Beef: Prices

Dr Matthew Offord:

[247005]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what information his Department holds on the price of beef being achieved by UK producers in the last 12 months.

David Rutley:

Defra holds a range of beef cattle prices for Great Britain only. The monthly average finished price for clean cattle over the past 12 months has varied between a minimum of 185.2 p per kg (March 2019) and a maximum of 199.6 p per kg (May 2018), with an average of 193.2 p per kg across that time. In comparison to March 2018, the price for March 2019 has dropped by 6.4%. Other information is available and is published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/commodity-prices>

■ Birds of Prey: Conservation

Ruth George:

[247781]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to introduce a vicarious liability for estate owners in relation to (a) the actions of gamekeepers and (b) the illegal killing of birds of prey.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government does not currently have any plans to introduce vicarious liability in England. The introduction of new legislation, such as vicarious liability, requires evidence that it will be effective. So far there is no compelling evidence that the introduction of the provisions in Scotland and Northern Ireland has had a significant deterrent effect on those who persecute such birds.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Brexit

Tom Brake:

[247553]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent estimate he has made of the cost to his Department of preparations for the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

David Rutley:

HM Treasury has allocated over £4.2 billion of additional funding to departments and the devolved administrations for exit preparations so far. This breaks down as:

- £412 million of additional funding over the spending review period for the Department for Exiting the European Union, Department for International Trade and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the Autumn Statement 2016
- £286 million of additional funding for 2017/18 (a full breakdown of which can be found in Supplementary Estimates 2017/18). (

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/679738/PU2137_Supplementary_estimates_web.pdf)

- Over £1.5 billion of additional funding for 2018/19. A full breakdown of the allocations can be found in the Chief Secretary's Written Ministerial Statement, HCWS540, laid on 13 March 2018. (<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2018-03-13/HCWS540/>)
- Over £2 billion of additional funding for 2019/20. A full breakdown of the allocations can be found in the Chief Secretary's Written Ministerial Statement, HCWS1205, laid on 18 December 2018. (<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2018-12-18/HCWS1205/>)

This funding is to cover all exit scenarios, and is in addition to departmental efforts to reprioritise from business as usual toward preparations for the UK's departure from the EU.

Work on no deal exit preparations cannot be readily separated from other exit work. The department is preparing for all eventualities and the resources available to support preparations are kept under constant review.

■ **Electronic Equipment: Waste Disposal**

Zac Goldsmith:

[247693]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the volume of consumer electronics that end up in landfill.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government has not made an estimate of the volume of consumer electronics that end up in landfill. The 2013 Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations seek to reduce the amount of WEEE going to landfill by encouraging its separate collection and subsequent treatment, reuse, recovery, recycling and environmentally sound disposal.

Reports on the amount of WEEE (both household and non-household) collected in the UK under the WEEE Regulations is published by the Environment Agency here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/waste-electrical-and-electronic-equipment-weee-in-the-uk>.

Last year, producers financed the collection of 493,323 tonnes of household WEEE.

Additionally, based on a study carried out by the Waste and Resources Action Programme, we estimate that between 250k and 273k tonnes of large domestic appliances (cookers, washing machines etc.) are collected with scrap metal and recycled outside the WEEE system every year.

Zac Goldsmith:

[247694]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what guidance his Department issues on the processing of consumer electronics in landfill after metals have been harvested from them.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Defra has not issued any guidance on the processing of consumer electronics in landfill or removal from landfill sites after metals have been harvested from them.

The 2013 Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations seek to reduce the amount of WEEE going to landfill by encouraging its separate collection and subsequent treatment, re-use, recovery, recycling and environmentally sound disposal.

Defra has issued statutory guidance on the best available collection, treatment, recovery and recycling techniques (BATRRRT) for WEEE at approved authorised treatment facilities. The BATRRRT guidance sets out the minimum requirements which treatment facilities must comply with.

The guidance can be found here:

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130403043343/http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/producer/electrical/documents/weee-batrrt-guidance.pdf>.

■ Food: Labelling

Dr Matthew Offord:

[247673]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make it his policy not to adopt the proposal by the EU to classify vegetarian and vegan burgers and sausages as discs and tubes.

David Rutley:

The Government is aware of a proposed amendment by the European Parliament Agriculture Committee that terms used to describe meat products should be reserved exclusively for products made from meat. This proposed amendment has a long way to go through the legislative process.

If the amendment is accepted, Defra will seek views from all UK stakeholders and, while we remain a member of the EU, consult with other EU Member States. Our objective will be, as always, to ensure the regulatory framework protects consumers' interests while avoiding unnecessary regulatory burdens on food businesses.

■ Forests: Conservation

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[247579]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help prevent deforestation in (a) Brazil, (b) the Democratic Republic of Congo and (c) Indonesia.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Defra works alongside the Department for International Development and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to prevent deforestation overseas. Together, our three departments have committed to spending £5.8 billion in international climate finance (ICF) between 2016 and 2021, which includes programmes that aim to reduce emissions from deforestation and land use change. Since the ICF began in 2011, the UK has spent just over £800 million on forest and land use programmes, which includes projects that aim to reduce deforestation in Brazil, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Indonesia.

For example, the UK has made a £118 million commitment to support forests and sustainable land use in Brazil, focused on State governments and creating new businesses. This includes Defra's £64.9 million investment that aims to protect over 200,000 hectares of forest in the Amazon, Atlantic Forest and Cerrado regions and to support over 5,000 farmers to transition into low carbon sustainable agriculture.

Through its Blue Forests programme, Defra is investing £10.1 million, to reduce deforestation of mangroves habitats in Madagascar and Indonesia. The programme aims to protect around 20,000 hectares of mangrove forests; deliver around 13.9 million tonnes of carbon dioxide savings and benefit over 100,000 people.

The UK has also invested £115 million in the BioCarbon Fund – Initiative for Sustainable Forested Landscapes which seeks to improve landscape management and reduce emissions from the forest and land use sector in countries including Indonesia, while promoting alternative livelihoods that help take the pressure off the country's primary forests and peatlands.

The UK has also invested in the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility Carbon Fund, which includes both Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The UK's share of payments through the Fund will be up to about £20 million, phased over several years, if Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of Congo successfully preserve their forests and deliver verified emissions reductions.

■ Fungicides**Andrew Rosindell:****[247646]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has plans to lift the EU ban on the use of chlorothalonil after the UK leaves the EU.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The European Commission Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (pesticides legislation and residues) voted not to renew approval of chlorothalonil on 22 March. The Commission is now expected to adopt this proposal. Once the text is published, it will come into force after 20 days.

When we leave the EU, the UK will retain the list of EU-approved pesticides in UK law as it stands at the point of departure, or at the end of the Implementation Period, if this applies.

If we leave the EU without a deal and the EU decision on chlorothalonil is not in force at the point of leaving the EU, then the UK will make its own decision on this approval. We have made clear that we will not weaken standards. Decisions on the use of pesticides will continue to be based on a careful scientific assessment of the risks, and we would legally apply the same principles established under the EU regulation. Responsibility is shared between Defra and the Devolved Administrations. This would be based on a recommendation from our national regulator, the Health and Safety Executive, and additional independent advice and assurance from the UK Expert Committee on Pesticides.

■ Game: Birds

Ian Lavery:

[\[247714\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many game birds are kept in barren cages; and what legal recourse is available in relation to people caught keeping game birds in those cages.

David Rutley:

The Government shares the public's high regard for animal welfare and the welfare of our farmed livestock is protected by comprehensive and robust legislation.

The welfare of gamebirds is protected by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 which makes it an offence to cause unnecessary suffering. This is backed up by the statutory Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds Reared for Sporting Purposes, which recommends that barren cages should not be used for breeding birds. Keepers are required by law to have access to, and be familiar with this code, which encourages the adoption of high standards of husbandry. Failure to observe the provisions of a code may also be used in support of a prosecution.

Whatever the system of production, the most important factor in determining animal welfare is good stockmanship and the correct application of husbandry standards. This reflects the advice of our expert body, the Farm Animal Welfare Committee.

Data on numbers of gamebirds kept in barren cages is not held centrally by Defra.

Ian Lavery:

[\[247715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many inspections of game bird farms were undertaken by (a) the Animal and Plant Health Agency and (b) local trading standards in 2018; and how many of those visits resulted in an animal welfare prosecution.

David Rutley:

a) The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) does not undertake routine inspections of game bird establishments, however inspections will be carried out if specific welfare issues are reported.

During the year 2018 APHA completed 23 welfare inspections on game bird farms in England, Scotland and Wales.

The breakdown is as follows:

England 8

Scotland 13

Wales 2

Total 23

b) APHA is unable to provide a response on behalf of local authorities. Local authority trading standards services do not have a statutory duty to undertake inspections of game bird facilities, although they may undertake some based on their internal risk analysis and local decision making. In order to ascertain the number of inspections carried out, it would be necessary to approach each individual local authority in England and request this information.

Prosecutions made under the Animal Health Act 1981 and incidences of disease are published in Section 80 of the Act. These also include all prosecutions made by local authorities under farmed animal welfare legislation. The report for 2018 can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-80-report-for-2018-under-the-animal-health-act-1981>

Brief details of successful prosecutions are contained in Annex 1, but they do not detail any prosecutions against game bird farms specifically.

■ **Greyhounds: Animal Welfare**

Andrew Rosindell:

[247623]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he has taken to ensure sufficient income in greyhound racing to safeguard the welfare of greyhounds throughout their career and into retirement.

David Rutley:

On 10 January 2019, the Government announced a new funding commitment from bookmakers worth an estimated £3 million to ensure the welfare of greyhounds is protected and improved. The agreement was reached following discussions chaired by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) and is set to increase the total amount of funding from bookmakers to the British Greyhound Racing Fund (BGRF) to an estimated £10 million this year. We expect thousands of racing greyhounds are to be better cared for as a result of this new commitment.

Defra and DCMS will continue to work with the bookmaking industry to encourage all remaining bookmakers who take bets on greyhound racing, and who do not currently contribute, to commence payments to the BGRF to support the sport. The Ministers for Animal Welfare and Sport will soon be meeting to discuss what more can be done to secure the funding needed to ensure greyhound welfare.

■ Horses: Animal Welfare

Mike Hill:

[\[247761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will remove the responsibility for race horse welfare from the British Horseracing Authority and award it to a new, government-appointed, independent body.

David Rutley:

The British Horseracing Authority (BHA) works in collaboration with the RSPCA and World Horse Welfare to try and make racetracks as safe as possible. The number of racehorse fatalities at racetracks has been falling in general since 2012, except for an increase last year.

However, I and the BHA agree that more must be done to make horseracing safer and I have been in regular discussion with the horseracing authorities about how this can be achieved. I particularly welcome the establishment of the BHA's Horse Welfare Board and I will be meeting the newly appointed independent chair shortly. I will await evidence of how effective these new arrangements are in practice. I am not currently planning to establish a new regulator in the interim.

■ Plastics: Waste

Vernon Coaker:

[\[247586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to reduce the use of plastic; and if he will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government published the Resources and Waste Strategy last year, setting out our plans to reduce, reuse and recycle more plastic than we do now. Our target is to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste throughout the life of the 25 Year Environment Plan, but for the most problematic plastics we are going faster.

The 5p charge on plastic bags has reduced their use significantly and we have now consulted on increasing this charge and extending it to all retailers. We have also imposed a ban on microbeads in rinse-off personal care products and have consulted on banning plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds.

We are currently consulting on extending producer responsibility for packaging, so that producers will be responsible for the full costs of managing packaging waste. We are also exploring the introduction of a deposit return scheme for drinks containers and increasing consistency in the recycling system. We will develop legislative proposals taking account of the consultation responses.

■ Poultry

Tim Loughton:

[\[247538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 15 April 2019 to Questions 242653 and 242654, what criteria his Department

uses to distinguish between the (a) Greenland and (b) European White-Fronted Goose to avoid accidental killings of the Greenland sub-species.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

It is the responsibility of the person engaged in shooting activity to make sure that they are complying with the law, including ensuring that they are able to identify the species they are shooting.

■ **Recycling: Schools**

Layla Moran: [\[247775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 25 April to Question 245965 on Recycling: Schools, if he will make an estimate of the number of schools which have to pay for their own recycling collections.

Layla Moran: [\[247776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 25 April 2019 to Question 245965 on Recycling: Schools, if he will make an assessment of the environmental effects of charging schools for recycling collections.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Defra does not hold information on the number of schools that are charged for the collection and/or disposal of their recycling, therefore we are unable to make an estimate of this number.

The Resources and Waste Strategy highlights our plans to review the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012, which set out charging arrangements for different categories of waste. However, Defra has no plans at present to make an assessment of the environmental effects of charging schools for their recycling collection.

Defra are committed to increasing both the quality and quantity of recycling materials from schools, businesses and other not for profit organisations. Our consultation 'Consistency in Household and Business Recycling Collections in England', which closes on 13 May, seeks views on how we can do this.

■ **Slaughterhouses**

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[247668\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of trends in the level of foreign ownership of abattoirs in England.

David Rutley:

Abattoirs require veterinary control and approval by the FSA under Regulation (EC) 853/2004 - a full list of approved establishments can be found [here](#). Whilst trends in the level of foreign ownership of abattoirs in England is not something that we are monitoring specifically, we are aware of and welcome foreign investment in our meat processing facilities. In particular, there is significant investment from Irish and

Danish businesses in UK processing. Irrespective of ownership all abattoirs must comply with our high animal welfare and food safety standards.

■ **Slaughterhouses: Animal Welfare**

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[247644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the welfare standards of animals that are not stunned before slaughter in the UK; and if he will make a statement.

David Rutley:

The Government encourages the highest standards of animal welfare and would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter, but respects the rights of Jews and Muslims to eat meat prepared in accordance with their beliefs.

EC Regulation 1099/2009 sets down the welfare standards for animals at the time of killing, including regulations specifically concerned with animals which are slaughtered without stunning. In addition to these EU-level requirements, the Government has adopted stricter national regulations for animals that are slaughtered without stunning, which provide them with more extensive protections than the EU Regulation. These are set down in The Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015.

■ **Waste: Crime**

Paul Farrelly:

[\[247605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to tackle waste crime including (a) illegal exports of waste, (b) fly-tipping and (c) the burning of waste.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Last year, the Environment Agency issued 158 stop notices prohibiting the export of unsuitable waste. It stopped 367 containers of waste destined for illegal export at ports and intervened upstream to prevent 8,974 tonnes of waste from reaching our ports. Any UK operators found to be illegally exporting waste can face severe sanctions – from financial penalties up to imprisonment.

In the Resources and Waste Strategy, published in December last year, we stated that we are exploring ways to further address the illegal shipment of waste, for example through increased monitoring of international waste shipments and the introduction of a system for exporters to cover costs of waste repatriation where needed.

It is illegal to dispose of waste in a manner likely to cause pollution to the environment or harm to human health. This includes both fly-tipping and the burning of waste. We have given the Environment Agency an extra £60 million to tackle waste crime since 2014.

In January we gave local authorities the power to issue fixed penalties to householders who fail in their duty of care and give waste to fly-tippers. This built on powers given in 2016 to hand out financial penalties to fly-tippers themselves, and in 2015 to strengthen local authorities' ability to search and seize the vehicles of suspected fly-tippers. The latest figures show no increase in the number of incidents dealt with by local authorities for the first time in five years during 2017/18.

The Resources and Waste Strategy also contains commitments to reform the existing exemptions regime to prevent the use of exemptions in hiding illegal activity, such as misuse of the D7 exemption for burning waste in the open, to toughen penalties for waste criminals and to create a Joint Unit for Waste Crime which will coordinate a multi-agency response to the most serious cases.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Borders: Republic of Ireland

Susan Elan Jones:

[\[242791\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of a hard border between Wales and the Republic of Ireland.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Government has been working hard for some time on minimising the impact on trade flow in the event that the UK were to leave without a deal, this includes meeting with the Welsh ports, and we recognise the importance of trade between Wales and Ireland. As set out in the Political Declaration, the UK and EU have both agreed that the future economic partnership should be based on the principle of no tariffs, fees, charges or quantitative restrictions across all sectors.

The UK and Irish governments have also been clear that maintaining the CTA is a top priority. British citizens in Ireland and Irish citizens in the UK will continue to be able to live and work in each other's countries, and to access healthcare, education, social welfare and benefits including state pensions.

In a no deal scenario, the Government will introduce customs easements to ensure that the flow of imports into Wales will be as smooth as possible. A pragmatic approach has also been agreed with the secretariat of the Common Transit Convention for managing movements under that convention. For exports the impact depends on handling in Dublin, so the Government is working with all stakeholders to keep potential disruption to a minimum.

■ Brexit

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[247650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether the Government has stopped planning for the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

James Cleverly:

We remain focused on ensuring our smooth and orderly withdrawal from the EU with a deal as soon as possible. However, no deal remains the legal default at the end of the extension period.

In light of this, departments will make sensible decisions about the timing and pace at which some of this work is progressing, but we will continue to prepare for all Brexit scenarios.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Brexit**Tom Brake:**[\[247560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what recent estimate he has made of the cost to his Department of preparations for the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

James Cleverly:

The Department does not record costs on a scenario basis and therefore does not hold this level of information.

The Department has a budget of £94.4m for 2019-20. The Department's expenditure from previous years is available on GOV.UK and the 2018-19 accounts will be published online once the audit is concluded.

■ EU Defence Policy**Mrs Pauline Latham:**[\[247681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, which European defence structures the Withdrawal Agreement makes provision for the UK to remain in after the UK has left the EU.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Withdrawal Agreement sets out the terms for the UK's departure from the EU, including the implementation period. When the UK leaves the EU we will also leave all EU defence structures. The Political Declaration outlines the framework for the future UK-EU relationship, including close cooperation on security and defence. The UK will retain our leading role in NATO which is the cornerstone of the Euro-Atlantic defence.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ Ahmed Saddouma****Tom Brake:**[\[245552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will request that the Egyptian Government release Ahmed Saddouma from prison.

Tom Brake: [\[245553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Egyptian Government has (a) responded to any inquiries by his Department on Ahmed Saddouma, (b) indicated whether it considers Mr Saddouma a juvenile and (c) provided any guarantees that Ahmed Saddouma will not receive a death sentence.

Tom Brake: [\[245554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the implications for its policies of reports by the human rights group Reprieve that Egypt has issued preliminary death sentences to at least 10 juveniles since President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi came to power.

Tom Brake: [\[246434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment the UK Government has made of the legal basis of the sentencing to death of Ahmed Saddouma in Egypt.

Mark Field:

It remains a long-standing policy of the United Kingdom to oppose the death penalty in all circumstances as a matter of principle. We have regularly made our position clear to the Egyptian Government.

Our Embassy in Cairo has raised with the Egyptian authorities our concerns about Article 122 of the Child Law, which allows certain juveniles to be tried as adults, as well as the case of Ahmed Saddouma. The Egyptian authorities have told us they are looking into this and similar cases, in addition to our wider concerns about Article 122. We have also engaged with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) on this issue; our Embassy arranged for Reprieve to brief representatives of other EU Member States in Cairo on this subject last year.

■ **Azza Soliman**

Alex Sobel: [\[245971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his has made to his counterpart in Egypt on that Government's decision to prosecute Azza Soliman, co-founder the centre for Egyptian women's legal assistance and later Lawyers for Justice and Peace.

Mark Field:

We have followed Azza Soliman's case closely, and raised it publicly. We have raised the related issue of the foreign funding of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) with the Egyptian Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights. In September 2018, we made a statement at the UN Human Rights Council in which we expressed concern about the "arrests of activists, bloggers and journalists". Our Embassy in Cairo remains in regular contact with Ms Soliman.

■ Belarus: Mass Media

Stephen Gethins:

[\[245844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what diplomatic representations his Department has made to the Government of Belarus since recent reports of attacks on independent media outlets including the seizure of equipment and property and the arrests of journalists in that country.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The UK is concerned about restrictions on media freedom in Belarus. We consistently raise our concerns about media freedom as part of ongoing discussions with Belarusian counterparts on human rights and democracy. UK officials raised concerns about the lack of media freedom with the Belarusian Ambassador on 3 April and stressed the importance of a free media with the Belarusian Deputy Foreign Minister on 17 April. In February, our Embassy in Minsk attended the trial of the editor of the independent online media outlet, tut.by. Our Embassy is also closely monitoring the situation of the independent TV channel, Belsat, following a search of their offices in Minsk by Belarusian law enforcement officers. The UK continues to support a number of projects to promote and develop independent media in Belarus and regularly raises the need to engage with non-state media, most recently with the Deputy Minister of Information on 10 April.

■ Diplomatic Service: Training

Paul Farrelly:

[\[245675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what plans his Department has to ensure that diplomats receive training on local faith communities in advance of postings.

Mark Field:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) provides a wide range of resources to ensure that staff understand the influence of faith on foreign policy. For the past few years, we have offered two-day courses on religious literacy, in partnership with the London School of Economics. Other courses are held throughout the year, often tailored to geographical departments, for example the Political Islam, and Ethnic and Religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa courses. In countries where religion has an impact on the work of a diplomat, this is covered in both pre-posting briefings and during the first few weeks following arrival at post. More generally, religion and diplomacy forms part of the 'Key Themes in International Politics' module of the Diplomatic Academy, which is compulsory for new fast stream entrants into the FCO.

■ Gambia: Corruption

Lyn Brown:

[\[245744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of The Great Gambia Heist,

an investigation into corruption in The Gambia including the involvement of UK financial firms published by the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project on 27 March 2019.

Harriett Baldwin:

Corruption undermines the rule of law and democracy and damages trust in government, the efficient use of public resources and national security. It corrodes the fabric of society and creates barriers to doing business. The UK is committed to tackling corruption both at home and overseas, as set out in the UK anti-corruption strategy 2017-2022.

Corruption in The Gambia was rife under the regime of former President Yahya Jammeh. A recent report by the Organized Crime and Corruption Project (OCCRP) highlighted that potentially up to US\$1billion of state assets may have been stolen by Jammeh. The Gambia's Commission of Inquiry, investigating assets stolen by Jammeh, has also recently submitted its report to the Government. We urge the Government of The Gambia to act on the findings of the reports, ensuring due process is followed.

Corruption remains a concern in The Gambia, however the new Government has shown a welcome commitment to trying to stamp it out. A draft Anti-Corruption Bill will include proposals for the establishment of an Anti-Corruption Commission and is awaiting Cabinet approval. The Bill will also seek to provide effective measures for the eradication, suppression and prevention of corruption and corrupt practices in both private and public life in The Gambia. The UK would welcome the establishment of an Anti-Corruption Commission.

Lyn Brown:

[\[245745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the progress of proposals for an anti-corruption commission bill in the Gambia.

Harriett Baldwin:

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Lyn Brown:

[245746]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of a permanent anti-corruption commission for the Gambia.

Harriett Baldwin:

Corruption undermines the rule of law and democracy and damages trust in government, the efficient use of public resources and national security. It corrodes the fabric of society and creates barriers to doing business. The UK is committed to tackling corruption both at home and overseas, as set out in the UK anti-corruption strategy 2017-2022.

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■ Honduras: Contraceptives

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[247578]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to support efforts to tackle the spread of false information on emergency contraception in Honduras.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The UK is aware of the ban on emergency contraception in Honduras and the lack of accurate information about it available to Hondurans. We are not currently running any programmes in this area. DFID do not have a bilateral aid programme in Honduras. In the past, to encourage responsible media reporting by Honduran media,

the UK funded a project with Oxfam with a specific focus on violence against women in FY 2015/16.

■ **Huawei: 5G**

Conor McGinn:

[\[247736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what his Department's policy is on the involvement of Chinese telecoms firm Huawei in the construction of the UK's 5G data network.

Mark Field:

My right honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport gave details of the Government's position on this matter to Parliament on Thursday 25 April (Official Report, column 881)

■ **Iran: BBC Persian Service**

Conor McGinn:

[\[247735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to tackle the intimidation and harassment of BBC Persian journalists by the Iranian authorities.

Mark Field:

The reports of BBC Persian staff in Iran being harassed and subject to asset freezes and similar forms of mistreatment are deeply worrying. The Foreign Secretary raised this in Tehran in November 2018 as did the former Minister of the Middle East and North Africa in August 2018. In March 2019 we also supported the renewal of the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran. We will continue to regularly raise this issue at all levels of the Iranian Government.

■ **Jagtar Singh Johal**

Jo Stevens:

[\[247726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to secure the release of British citizen Jagtar Singh Johal since his imprisonment in India in 2017.

Mark Field:

We frequently make representations on Mr Johal's behalf. Most recently, I raised Mr Johal's case with the Indian Foreign Secretary, Vijay Gokhale on 12 March. I continue to engage with Mr Johal's family: alongside the Foreign Secretary, I met with the family and their MP, Martin Docherty-Hughes on 24 April. Our consular staff in India visit Mr Johal regularly.

■ Kenya: British Nationals Abroad

Nigel Dodds:

[\[246472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many UK citizens were afforded assistance by his Department following disruption at Nairobi airport in March 2019.

Harriett Baldwin:

No British nationals requested consular assistance from the British High Commission in Nairobi as a result of the recent disruption at Nairobi Airport.

■ Sri Lanka: Power Stations

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[245704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 25 March 2019 to Question 234859 on Sri Lanka: Water, what progress has been made by the Sri Lankan Government on determining whether the Chunnakam power plant was responsible for pollution in that area.

Mark Field:

On 4 April 2019 the Supreme Court in Sri Lanka ordered the Northern Power Company, which operated a thermal power station in Chunnakam to allocate 20 million Sri Lanka Rupees to compensate residents affected by contamination of ground water and soil near the station. We understand that the plant is no longer functioning.

■ Terrorism: British Nationals Abroad

Conor McGinn:

[\[247737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department provides financial support to assist in the repatriation of the bodies of British victims of terrorism killed abroad.

Harriett Baldwin:

In certain circumstances the Foreign and Commonwealth Office can enact Exceptional Assistance Measures (EAM) which can cover the cost of repatriation. EAM are only activated when a terrorist attack has occurred, and then only in exceptional circumstances, and on a case-by case basis. EAM does not replace the need for comprehensive travel insurance which will also cover costs such as repatriation.

■ Yemen: Peace Negotiations

Tim Loughton:

[\[247541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the recent escalation of military activity in Al Dhale in Yemen on the Stockholm process.

Mark Field:

We are aware of the recent escalation of military activity in al-Dhale'e. All parties must engage constructively and in good faith to overcome obstacles and find a political solution to end the conflict. We urge all parties to support and facilitate the UN's efforts.

The Foreign Secretary hosted a meeting of the Yemen Quad on 26 April in London. Quad members underlined their commitment to a comprehensive political solution for the conflict in Yemen and their endorsement of the agreements reached in Stockholm by the Yemeni parties in December 2018.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Alcoholic Drinks: Breast Cancer****Mary Glendon:**[\[245790\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the oral Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 909822, Official Report, column 521, whether his Department is planning a public information campaign to raise awareness of the links between alcohol and breast cancer.

Seema Kennedy:

The Department continues to promote the United Kingdom Chief Medical Officers' Low Risk Drinking guidelines in England through online platforms and by encouraging producers to reflect the guidelines on the labels of alcoholic drinks.

The online guidelines highlight that the risk of developing a range of health problems, including cancer, increases the more you drink on a regular basis. Local authorities also continue to promote these guidelines as part of their public health duties.

■ Alcoholic Drinks: Consumption**Mary Glendon:**[\[245791\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the public information campaign in Scotland on increasing awareness of the Chief Medical Officers' low risk-drinking guidelines of 14 units a week.

Seema Kennedy:

There are no plans to make an independent assessment of the recent count 14 campaign in Scotland. The Department will review the Scottish Government's evaluation of the campaign, when this becomes available.

The Department continues to promote the UK Chief Medical Officers' Low Risk Drinking guidelines in England through online platforms and by encouraging producers to reflect the guidelines on the labels of alcoholic drinks. Local authorities also continue to promote these guidelines as part of their public health duties.

■ Alcoholic Drinks: Labelling

Mary Glindon:

[\[245792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has plans to require alcohol producers to include warnings on their product labels about the health effects of alcohol and its link to cancers.

Seema Kennedy:

The Government has no plans to include cancer warnings on alcohol labels. The United Kingdom Chief Medical Officers' Low Risk Drinking guidelines highlight that the risk of developing a range of health problems, including cancer, increases the more you drink on a regular basis. Information on the low risk guidelines is also available on the NHS website.

■ Allergies: Medical Equipment

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[245895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the availability of adrenaline auto-injectors.

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[245896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that users are protected in the event that they are unable to have their prescriptions for adrenaline auto-injectors fulfilled by pharmacists.

Seema Kennedy:

Supplies of EpiPen and other adrenaline auto-injectors are currently available in volumes that are sufficient to meet normal levels of demand. The Department continues to work very closely with all the manufacturers of adrenaline auto-injectors and can confirm that the supply situation continues to improve with further deliveries expected over the coming months. All patients who require an adrenaline auto-injector should now be able to obtain a device from their pharmacy.

■ Anorexia: Death

Luciana Berger:

[\[247687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of anorexia nervosa patients have died prematurely each year (a) from complications arising from that condition and (b) by suicide in each of the last five years.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

This information is not held centrally.

■ Bowel Cancer: Screening

Ian Lavery: [\[245794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of additional endoscopists that will be required to deliver the Government's commitment to lower the bowel screening age to 50.

Seema Kennedy:

NHS England has committed over time to lowering the starting age for bowel screening from 60 to 50 years of age. Information to assess the number of additional endoscopists required to deliver this commitment is not currently available centrally.

NHS England is currently in the process of planning for delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan commitment to modernise the Bowel Cancer Screening Programmes. The first phase of the plan is the replacement of guaiac Faecal Occult Blood Test kit with the more sensitive Faecal Immunochemical Test for haemoglobin from summer 2019; local teams are developing services, including the workforce plans, ready for its implementation.

■ Breast Cancer: Mental Health Services

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[245627\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what information his Department holds on the number of secondary breast cancer patients who do not access emotional support services through their respective NHS Trust.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[245629\]](#)

To the ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of additional (a) breast cancer clinical nurse specialists and (b) other support workers required to meet the commitment in the NHS Long Term Plan.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[245630\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of NHS Trusts in England are recording data on the number of patients with secondary breast cancer.

Seema Kennedy:

Information on the numbers of cancer patients that do not access emotional support services is not routinely collected.

The NHS Cancer Programme aims to improve access to cancer Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) for all cancer patients when they need it, including those with secondary breast cancer. The new NHS Long Term Plan commitment is that all patients, including those with secondary cancers, will have access to the right expertise and support, including a CNS or other support worker by 2021.

Following publication of the Long Term Plan, Health Education England is working with NHS England and NHS Improvement to understand the longer-term workforce implications for further development of cancer services. My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has commissioned Baroness Dido

Harding to lead a number of programmes to engage with key National Health Service interests to develop a detailed workforce implementation plan. These programmes will consider detailed proposals to grow the workforce rapidly, including staff working on cancer, consider additional staff and skills required, build a supportive working culture in the NHS and ensure first rate leadership for NHS staff.

The latest published dataset on the number of patients with secondary breast cancer is for 2016. All 140 NHS trusts who were expected to submit data on the number of patients with secondary breast cancer did so.

■ **Cancer: Children and Young People**

Robert Halfon:

[\[247664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to publish for consultation the draft service specifications for children and young people's cancer services.

Seema Kennedy:

The draft service specifications for children and young people's cancer services are expected to be published for consultation in May 2019.

■ **Care Homes: Closures**

Luciana Berger:

[\[247683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many residential and nursing homes have closed permanently (a) nationally and (b) in the North West region since 2016.

Luciana Berger:

[\[247684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many residential and nursing home beds were available in each of the last five years in the (a) UK and (b) North West.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Department does not hold data on the number of care home closures since 2016. However, data from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) is available on the change in the number of care homes in England, which reflects both openings and closures over time.

Due to the devolved nature of social care, figures are only available for England and the North West. These are taken from averaging across quarterly CQC data.

The CQC's data shows that there were 16,839 care homes in England in January 2016 compared to 15,738 in April 2019, giving a net reduction of 901 homes, a 6.5% reduction.

However, the total number of beds in England has remained relatively stable since 2016 because the average size of a care home has increased over that period. There

were 461,793 beds in January 2016 compared to 456,333 beds in April 2019, a 1.2% reduction.

The CQC's data shows that there were 2,039 care homes in the North West in January 2016 compared to 1,914 in April 2019, giving a net reduction of 105 homes, a 6% reduction.

However, the total number of beds in the North West has remained relatively stable since 2016 because the average size of a care home has increased over that period. There were 63,005 beds in January 2016 compared to 61,704 beds in April 2019, a 2.06% reduction.

Nationally, England has seen a decrease of 1.5% in the number of residential and nursing beds from January 2015 to April 2019.

YEAR	AVERAGE NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING BEDS
2015	463,792
2016	460,763
2017	459,920
2018	459,001
2019	456,924

In the North West, there has been a decrease of 2% in the number of residential and nursing beds from January 2015 to April 2019.

YEAR	AVERAGE NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING BEDS
2015	63,282
2016	62,969
2017	62,657
2018	62,200
2019	61,920

■ Cervical Cancer: Screening

Dr Paul Williams:

[247785]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many CCGs (a) achieved and (b) did not achieve the turnaround target of 98 per cent of patients receiving their

cervical screening results within 14 days of having a test in the last month for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement.

Seema Kennedy:

Data is reported by local authority and published annually by NHS England, with the most recent information available at the following link:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/cervical-screening-programme/england---2017-18>

However, data by clinical commissioning group (CCG) was published by the National Audit Office (NAO) Investigation into the Management of Health Screening and is available at the following link:

<https://www.nao.org.uk/report/investigation-into-adult-health-screening/>

The data published by the NAO shows the target for delivering cervical screening results letters within 14 days was not met in 189 out of 207 CCGs in 2017-18.

The 2016 announcement of the planned introduction of human papillomavirus primary screening and planned reconfiguration of laboratories has impacted on cytology workforce retention and recruitment rates. This led to an increase in the turnaround times of cervical screening samples in 2016-17 and 2017-18.

NHS England is taking steps to make sure the delivery, performance and oversight of screening services meet the high standard NHS patients rightly expect. This includes moving samples around the country to reduce the burden on those laboratories most under pressure. Professor Sir Mike Richards has also been commissioned to undertake a major review of cancer screening as part the NHS Long Term Plan's renewed drive to improve care and save lives.

■ **Children: Mental Health**

Mr George Howarth:

[245651]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to support families to understand the importance of developing the mental health and wellbeing of their children; and if he will make a statement.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Department is taking a number of steps to support parents in the care of their children's mental health and wellbeing.

'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper', published by the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education in December 2017 aims to ensure joined up working between school and healthcare settings through its proposals, now being implemented, to create new Mental Health Support Teams in and around schools, and incentivise schools and colleges to identify and train a Senior Mental Health Lead. Mental Health Support Teams, the first cohort of which started training in January 2019, will work closely with parents and carers to support children with their mental health. This will include working directly with parents on evidence-based interventions, such as parent-led

cognitive behavioural therapy for anxiety or assisting with parent training for conduct problems, as well as supporting parents where interventions are delivered directly to children and young people.

For very young children, Public Health England's Start4Life information service for parents is a programme that helps parents adopt healthy behaviours, including providing advice and practical guidance on promoting the mental health of babies and pre-school age children. Further information is available at the following link:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/2-start4life/overview>

Also, the five universal health visitor reviews for all children under five promote positive parent-infant relationships, attachment and language development which are recognised as key factors influencing child mental wellbeing. Further information on the programme is available at the following:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-health-visitor-reviews-advice-for-local-authorities>

■ Commonwealth: Health Services

Rosie Cooper:

[245725]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has made to prepare for the upcoming Commonwealth Health Ministers meeting.

Seema Kennedy:

The Department of Health and Social Care will be sending a delegation to represent the United Kingdom at the Commonwealth Health Ministers' Meeting. As in previous years the Department of Health and Social Care is working with the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on our preparations for the wide ranging agenda items, which this year come under the theme of 'Universal Health Coverage: Reaching the unreached, ensuring no one is left behind'. This will include preparing cross-Government views on the papers for discussion at the meeting, and examples of UK practices we might want to share. We will also be encouraging follow up on the health commitments made at the Commonwealth Summit in London last year.

■ General Practitioners: Pharmacy

Bridget Phillipson:

[247689]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to facilitate engagement between GPs and community pharmacies as part of the Government's plan to refer patients with minor illnesses from NHS 111 to pharmacies.

Seema Kennedy:

The Digital Minor Illness Referral Service, being piloted in the North East, London, Devon and the East Midlands, means that patients can and already are being referred from NHS 111 to community pharmacy for support and advice with minor illnesses. The NHS Long Term Plan includes an ambition to build on this, to further

integrate community pharmacy into the health and care system to enable and encourage more collaborative working alongside other local National Health Service providers. To achieve this, it outlines the development of pharmacy connection schemes designed to facilitate the referral of patients to community pharmacy from other parts of the health and care system, including general practice.

The Government has been clear that it recognises the opportunity to better utilise community pharmacy to help more people in the community and is committed to working with the sector to make this a reality. The Department, with NHS England, has recently begun negotiations to determine the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework for 2019/20 and beyond. These are confidential negotiations and as such we are unable to provide further detail at this time.

■ **General Practitioners: Students**

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[245633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect on the health of university students of being unable to register at their university and home GP surgeries.

Seema Kennedy:

We recognise that students registered with a university general practitioner (GP) practice may wish to access treatment from another GP when returning home or when away from university. Students can therefore register as a temporary resident at another GP practice. Temporary residence applies where a person intends to be in an area for more than 24 hours but less than three months. Once registered, patients can receive treatment in the same way as other patients. Details of a patient's treatment whilst at their temporary practice will be passed to their permanent practice.

In addition, anyone who requires treatment that a GP or healthcare professional regards as an emergency, or as immediately necessary, should be provided that treatment free of charge, regardless of whether they are registered with a GP or not.

■ **Health and Care Professions Council: Fees and Charges**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[247580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Health and Care Professions Council equality impact assessment process for its recent decision to increase registrations fees.

Stephen Hammond:

The Government has made no assessment on the effectiveness of the Health and Care Professions Council's (HCPC) equality impact assessment process for its recent decision to increase registration fees. The HCPC is independent of Government and funded by registrants' fees on a cost recovery basis.

Following public consultation, the HCPC is planning to raise its annual fees by £16. If adopted, the HCPC's annual registration fee will rise from £90 to £106 a year from

October 2019. The HCPC registration fees will remain the lowest of any of the United Kingdom-wide health and care regulators. Registration fees are tax-deductible and this fee rise will amount to just over £1 a month extra for most of the HCPC's registrants.

■ Health Services: Foreign Nationals

Lyn Brown:

[246493]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish in full the findings of his Department's review into the functioning of the National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors) (Amendment) Regulations 2017.

Stephen Hammond:

The Department has no plans to produce and publish a formal review document or the evidence collected as part of it. A summary of the findings was laid in Parliament via a Written Ministerial Statement ([HCWS1174](#)) on 12 December 2018 and further details have been shared with contributors to the review. We will continue to keep the impact of the regulations under close review, working closely with our stakeholders.

■ Heart Diseases: Health Services

Alex Sobel:

[245973]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to prepare cardiac units for the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Stephen Hammond:

We have now reached agreement with the European Union on an extension until 31 October 2019 at the latest, with the option to leave earlier as soon as a deal has been ratified. Although Parliament has rejected leaving without a deal multiple times, this remains the legal default at the end of the extension period, unless a deal is passed by Parliament.

In light of the extension, Departments will make sensible decisions about the timing and pace at which some of this work is progressing, but we will continue to prepare for all exit scenarios. We remain focused on ensuring our smooth and orderly withdrawal from the EU with a deal as soon as possible.

The Department is considering the impact on our EU exit preparations and we are working closely with our stakeholders to review our position.

While we never give guarantees, we are confident that, if everyone does what they need to do, the supply of medicines and medical products, including for supplies of clinical trials and investigations, will be uninterrupted in the event we leave the EU without a deal.

In terms of EU exit preparations for local National Health Service organisations, on 18 April 2019 Professor Keith Willett, EU Exit Strategic Commander at NHS England and NHS Improvement, wrote to clinical commissioning group and trust Chief Executives to update them on the further extension to Article 50, and the actions that

now need to be taken locally to continue to prepare for the United Kingdom's exit from the EU. Further details are available in Professor Willett's letter that NHS England and NHS Improvement has published online at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/20130418-KW-EU-exit-letter-final-.pdf>

These actions will also apply to cardiac units as they are within trusts.

■ HIV Infection: Drugs

Caroline Lucas:

[245749]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 12 April 2019 to Question 241013, which clinics and local authorities in England are not participating in the expansion of the HIV PrEP Impact trial.

Seema Kennedy:

Participation in the pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) Impact Trial is on voluntary basis. Information on participating sexual health clinics, those whose participation is pending and those currently closed to recruitment is set out by region on the trial website at the following link:

<https://www.prepimpacttrial.org.uk/join-the-trial>

The website will be updated as the trial expansion is rolled out.

Sexual health services not currently taking part in the trial have been given an additional opportunity to participate following the trial's expansion.

■ Hospices: Shrewsbury

Mark Pritchard:

[245736]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will hold discussions with Telford and Wrekin Clinical Care Commissioning Group on its funding for the Severn Hospice for 2019-2020; and if he will make a statement.

Seema Kennedy:

In the previous financial year Telford and Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was able to maintain a £1 million grant but this year has taken the very difficult decision to reduce it to £750,000. The CCG has been having discussions with their Chief Executive since June 2018 about possible schemes which the CCG could commission to offset the loss from 1 April 2019 onwards. The CCG remains committed to continuing to explore alternatives with the Hospice and they are engaging with them to find solutions together.

■ Medicine: Research

Chris Green:

[245817]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to encourage the National Institute for Health Research and the Clinical Research Network

to diversify their research portfolios to include a greater proportion of commercially funded research and clinical trials.

Caroline Dineneage:

Through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), including the NIHR Clinical Research Network, the Government is increasing the volume of clinical trials and other well-designed studies undertaken, and increasing the proportion of commercially funded research.

In 2017 the Government announced more than £950 million investment in research infrastructure in the National Health Service including Biomedical Research Centres (BRCs), Clinical Research Facilities, Experimental Cancer Medicine Centres (funded in partnership with Cancer Research UK and the devolved administrations) and Medtech and In vitro diagnostics Co-operatives. These centres and facilities conduct and support translational research to transform scientific breakthroughs into life-saving treatments for patients.

In 2017-18, the NIHR's research infrastructure generated over £231 million of industry research investment, and the NIHR's BRCs supported over 1,770 industry collaborative and contract research studies, filed 199 patents, and created five spin-out companies.

Chris Green:

[\[245818\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of medical research is (a) commercially funded and (b) funded by grants and non-commercial sources.

Caroline Dineneage:

The best estimates that we have is that the proportion of commercial and non-commercial funded medical research is 48% and 52% respectively. This is taken from analysis produced by the UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC) published in 2014 which estimated total health research and development (R&D) funding in the United Kingdom was £8.5 billion.

The figures for commercial research come from a variety of sources. The 2014 UKCRC analysis draws on the Office for National Statistics Business Enterprise Research and Development (ONS BERD) survey which was used to provide private sector data where relevant research is categorised as 'pharmaceuticals'. This will under-estimate private sector investment as other product groups may be relevant to health research and the private sector will fund research outside of the business, for example, in academia. In 2014, pharmaceuticals R&D totalled £4.1 billion. The more recent ONS BERD survey of 2017 indicated that this has increased to £4.3 billion.

For the 52% of non-commercial funded medical research in 2014, approximately £4.4 billion, this was made up of funding predominantly from the Medical Research Council (MRC), the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), other research councils and from medical research charities.

In 2016/17, Government funding for medical research was mainly distributed by the MRC, now part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), and the NIHR, funded by the Department, which invested £0.8 billion and £1.0 billion in medical research respectively. Other UKRI research councils also contribute to medical research in addition to funding from other Government departments and the devolved administrations.

In 2016, the Association of Medical Research Charities' members invested £1.6 billion into medical research.

■ **Mental Health Services: Children**

Mr George Howarth:

[245650]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support is available for parents and carers of children with a diagnosable mental health disorder in each region; what plans he has to provide additional support; and what steps he is taking to ensure joined up working between school and healthcare settings to improve the effectiveness of current levels of support.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Data on the support available for parents and carers of children with a diagnosable mental health disorder is not collected by the Department.

The Department is committed to ensuring carers can continue to give care as they wish. Last summer, the Department published the Carers Action Plan which gives visibility to the work that is being done or is planned across government to support carers. In the plan the Department has committed to funding a project to support parent carers navigate the transition from child to adult services as their child approaches 18.

'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper', published by the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education in December 2017, also ensures joined up working between school and healthcare settings through its proposals to create new Mental Health Support Teams in and around schools, and incentivising every school and college to identify and train a Senior Mental Health Lead. Mental Health Support Teams, the first cohort of which started training in January 2019, will work closely with parents and carers to support their children with their mental health. This will include working directly with parents on evidence-based interventions, such as parent-led cognitive behavioural therapy for anxiety or assisting with parent training for conduct problems, as well as supporting parents where interventions are delivered directly to children and young people, to help them support their children.

Public Health England's Start4Life information service for parents is a programme that helps parents adopt healthy behaviours, including providing advice and practical guidance on promoting the mental health of babies and pre-school age children. Further information is available at the following link:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/2-start4life/overview>

Mr George Howarth:

[245658]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will convene a working party to agree standards for the development of practice-based evidence systems for interventions for children with mental health and emotional welfare problems.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is responsible for ensuring standards for health interventions. It provides national guidance, advice and published quality standards to improve health and social care, including on children's mental health, for example, guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in primary education and quality standards on the promotion of health and wellbeing in under fives.

The proposals set out in our Children and Young People's Mental Health Green Paper will ensure that interventions delivered by new Mental Health Support Teams are in accordance with NICE guidance and advice. This will include appropriate individual and group clinical interventions for mild to moderate anxiety and low mood, social problems and mild conduct problems and behavioural intervention with parents.

The Department therefore has no plans to convene a working party.

Mr George Howarth:

[245659]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the report entitled, Improving Children and Young People's Mental Health Services, published in October 2018 by the NAO, if he will make it his policy to (a) implement the recommendations in that report and (b) establish quantifiable objectives to monitor progress their implementation.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

On the basis of the National Audit Office report in October 2018, on 17 December 2018 the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) took evidence and then published a report 'Mental health services for children and young people' with recommendations. The Government's response to the PAC report was published in April 2019 and contains the response to each recommendation, including a commitment to provide annual updates to the Committee until April 2022 on a number of matters.

The PAC report and the Government's response is available at the following link:

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/public-accounts-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/inquiry12/>

■ Mental Health Services: Children in Care

Kerry McCarthy:

[245711]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health services in improving the mental health outcomes of children who have been in care.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Government asked the Care Quality Commission (CQC), to undertake in 2017/18 an in depth thematic review of children and young people's mental health services. The CQC published the review in two phases, with a first report in October 2017 and the second in March 2018, describing the findings and outlining its recommendations. The CQC found that the quality of mental health services for children and young people, including those who have been in care, is varied across England. The report is available at the following link:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications/themed-work/are-we-listening-review-children-young-peoples-mental-health-services>

In terms of improving services for children who have been in care, in 2016, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Department for Education commissioned the Social Care Institute for Excellence to convene an expert working group to ensure that the emotional and mental health needs of children and young people in care, adopted from care, under kinship care, under Special Guardianship Orders, as well as care leavers, would be better met. The group's report was published in November 2017 and many of their recommendations and findings are being addressed through a pilot scheme which will trial a new high quality mental health assessment framework that looked after children receive on entry to care, with a strong focus on evaluation and sharing learning rapidly, developed by the Anna Freud Centre. The report is available at the following link:

<https://www.scie.org.uk/children/care/mental-health/report>

The CQC's work informed the development of the Green Paper on Children and Young People's mental health services; the new Mental Health Support Teams will increase access to services for looked after children and previously looked after children. The significant expansion of children's mental health services in the NHS Long Term Plan will also improve access to services for this group.

Kerry McCarthy:**[245712]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether training is provided for staff working in child and adolescent mental health services to address the additional needs of children in care.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

This information is not held centrally. It is for trusts to define what training is mandatory for their own staff, based on the knowledge and skills they need to perform their role.

■ Mental Health Services: Older People**Paul Farrelly:****[247609]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 15 April 2019 to Question 242728, whether he plans to increase the number of older people accessing psychological therapies.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Department, through NHS England, remains committed to increasing older people's access to psychological therapies via the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme.

Referrals into IAPT services for people aged 65 and over show a consistent rise over the last five years, from 5.5% of referrals in 2012/13 to 6.8% in 2017/18. This equates to approximately 2,000 extra referrals of people aged 65 and over each year.

Since April 2018 all clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) have been expected to expand IAPT by commissioning services that are integrated into physical healthcare pathways. These services are designed to support people with combined physical health long-term conditions (LTCs) and mental health problems. It is expected that this expansion will further increase access for older people, who are more likely than working age people to live with one or more LTCs.

We have introduced financial incentives through the Mental Health Quality Premium in 2017/18 and 2018/19 to reward CCGs for improvements in access to, and outcomes from, IAPT services for under-represented groups, in particular older people.

The NHS Long Term Plan, published on 7 January 2019, commits the National Health Service to improving the provision of mental health support for older people with a range of needs and diagnoses, including common mental health problems and severe mental illnesses.

■ Mental Illness: Children**Chris Ruane:****[247597]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the prevalence of diagnosed mental health conditions in children in each National Statistics socio-economic classification in each of the last 10 years.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The most recent prevalence survey of children and young people was commissioned by the Department. It took place in 2017 and was published by NHS Digital in November 2018. This information is not collected annually and the previous survey was published in 2004.

The survey looked at the extent of mental ill health in the 5-19 year old population and considered a range of demographic, socioeconomic, relationship, and health-related characteristics. It did not use National Statistics Socioeconomic classifications.

NHS Digital made an assessment of the 2017 survey, in 'Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, Trends and characteristics', which reported on associated demographic factors, including family functioning, household income, receipt of benefits, and neighbourhood deprivation. This is available at the following link:

<https://files.digital.nhs.uk/A0/273EE3/MHCYP%202017%20Trends%20Characteristic%20s.pdf>

This assessment of the survey reported that living in a low-income household or with a parent in receipt of income-related benefits was associated with higher rates of mental disorder in children.

■ NHS 111

Luke Pollard:

[\[246000\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what training staff of the NHS 111 Service receive to ensure that all avenues of clinical assessment are considered before callers are signposted to the local Accident and Emergency Department.

Luke Pollard:

[\[246579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what training staff of the NHS 111 Service receive to ensure that all avenues of clinical assessment are considered before callers are signposted to the local Accident and Emergency Department.

Stephen Hammond:

The NHS Pathways License for NHS 111 providers requires that call handlers/health advisors receive 10 weeks' training, comprising a mix of classroom-based learning, supervised practice and four weeks' consolidated practice. Additionally, clinicians operating NHS Pathways are expected to receive 14 weeks' training, including additional learning, along with supervised and consolidated practice as a clinician. Staff must successfully pass through several competency gateways in their progression to independent practice. These include written and practical assessments as well as call audits during supervised practice.

Once call handlers and clinicians start practising independently, they are then subject to on-going performance management and professional development. As all calls are recorded they are routinely audited as a requirement of the NHS Pathways License using standardised national performance benchmarks; with monthly feedback provided to call handlers on both positive elements and areas of improvement .

■ NHS: Drugs

Stephen Lloyd:

[\[245751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure adequate supplies of treatments for (a) epilepsy and (b) bipolar disorder in all scenarios surrounding the UK's exit from the EU.

Stephen Hammond:

The Department fully understands that maintaining access to treatments for epilepsy and bipolar disorder is vitally important to many people in this country.

The Government remains committed to leaving the European Union with a deal. We have now reached agreement with the EU on an extension to the Article 50 period

until 31 October at the latest, with the option to leave earlier as soon as a Withdrawal Agreement has been ratified.

Under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement, there will be an implementation period running till the end of 2020, during which there will be no changes to the current trading arrangements with the EU. Therefore, if the Withdrawal Agreement is ratified, the supply of medicines will continue on the same basis it does now during this period.

Leaving without a deal remains the legal default at the end of the extension period if no Withdrawal Agreement is agreed. Therefore, as a responsible Government, we will continue to prepare to minimise any disruption to the supply of medicines and medical products in a potential 'no deal' scenario. We are considering what impact this longer extension may have on our EU exit preparations, and are working closely with our stakeholders to review our position.

While we never give guarantees, we are confident that if everyone does what they need to do, the supply of medicines and medical products including treatments for epilepsy and bipolar disorder should be uninterrupted in the event we leave the EU without a deal.

The Department has a long-established pharmacist-led team and dedicated processes to deal with medicine shortages, whatever the cause. This team works closely with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, the pharmaceutical industry, NHS England and others in the supply chain to help prevent shortages and to ensure that the risks to patients are minimised when they do arise.

■ NHS: Finance

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[245628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions his Department has had with the Treasury to ensure (a) all patients and (b) patients with secondary cancers have access to the right expertise and support as set out in the NHS Long Term Plan.

Seema Kennedy:

The NHS Cancer Programme is committed to delivering excellent care and support for people living with and beyond cancer, as outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan. Cancer Alliances are already working with their local cancer system partners and National Health Service trusts to develop local delivery plans for improving patient access to expertise and support.

■ NHS: Negligence

Jim Shannon:

[\[245793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to publish (a) the summary of responses to and (b) his Department's response to its consultation on appropriate clinical negligence cover.

Seema Kennedy:

The Department consulted on the future of clinical negligence indemnity cover for registered healthcare professionals in the United Kingdom.

The consultation ran between 6 December 2018 and 28 February 2019. We are analysing responses to the consultation, and will publish a summary of responses and a Government response in due course.

■ NHS: Pensions**Jo Stevens:**[\[247725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 8 April 2019 to Question 240581 on NHS: Pensions, what level of interest is applied to annual allowance charges paid through the scheme pays facility of the NHS Pension.

Stephen Hammond:

The 'Scheme Pays' facility allows NHS Pension Scheme members to settle their annual allowance tax charges without needing to find funds upfront. However, HM Revenue and Customs requires that if a defined benefit pension scheme pays an annual allowance charge there must be an adjustment to the benefits the member has accrued. The value of the scheme pays charge, plus interest, is recouped from the value of the member's pension on retirement. The interest rate for scheme pays charges is set at the scheme discount rate. The discount rate for public service pension schemes is currently consumer price index plus 2.4%, which represents the notional rate of investment return on contribution income.

■ NHS: Training**Justin Madders:**[\[245838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the criteria used by Health Education England to determine the clinical placement tariff for (a) nursing, (b) medicine and (c) allied health students.

Stephen Hammond:

The education and training placement tariffs for nursing, medicine and allied health professions are set by the Department in consultation with Health Education England (HEE) and NHS Improvement. Education and training tariffs are then administered by HEE. On an annual basis education and training tariffs are set taking in to account the overall quantum of funding made available to HEE as part of the Department's arm's length body budget setting process and taking into account delivery of the organisational priorities which are set by the Government through the annual HEE Mandate.

The undergraduate medical placement tariff was introduced in April 2013 and set at £34,623 per full time equivalent placement. The funding allocated looks to reflect the outcomes of a sample costing exercise carried out with National Health Service trusts in 2009 and was intended to cover the costs to the provider of delivering the placement. The move from local prices to a national price for undergraduate medical

placements resulted in a reduction in the overall funding quantum being paid to providers. This funding was reinvested into the NHS via the non-medical tariff that was also introduced in April 2013. The increase in the available funding enabled a payment of £3,175 per full time equivalent placement to be made to placement providers. Despite the increase in funding, the need to remain within the overall funding quantum allocated for placements meant that payments for non-medical remained a contribution to the costs of delivering the non-medical placement and not reflective of the actual costs to the provider.

The postgraduate medical tariff was introduced in 2014 and involved the redistribution of the existing funding, enabling HEE to make a 50% contribution to the costs of the basic salary, alongside a clinical placement fee of £12,400.

Subsequent increases and reductions to individual tariff payments have been limited, with any changes based on a need to ensure that the total funding paid to providers through the tariffs remains within the placement budget available to HEE.

The Department is working with HEE and NHS Improvement to consider the distribution of funding across the tariffs for 2020/21.

■ North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust: Road Traffic Offences

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[\[245639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many speeding fines have been received by vehicles belonging the North West Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust in the last (a) five years and (b) 12 months.

Stephen Hammond:

This information is not collected in the format requested. Since 2017, North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust has had a total of 254 speeding penalty notices issued. This figure does not record the number of notices cancelled by law enforcement agencies.

■ Opiates: Misuse

Chris Ruane:

[\[247598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the addiction rates of the 10 most commonly prescribed opioid drugs in each of the last 10 years.

Seema Kennedy:

No estimate has been made of the addiction rates of the 10 most commonly prescribed opioid drugs in each of the last 10 years.

■ Parkinson's Disease: Health Education

Paul Farrelly:

[\[245682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase public understanding of Parkinson's disease.

Seema Kennedy:

The National Health Service website provides information for patients and the public on a wide range of conditions, including Parkinson's disease. The website provides information on causes, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and further information on living with Parkinson's.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence published guidance on 'Parkinson's disease in adults' in July 2017. This provides recommendations and guidance for healthcare professionals, commissioners as well as adults with Parkinson's diseases and their families and carers.

This information and guidance can be found via the following links:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/parkinsons-disease/

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng71

■ Pharmacy**Bridget Phillipson:****[247688]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to expand existing public health and prevention services in community pharmacies in order to support the aims of the NHS Long Term Plan.

Seema Kennedy:

Both the NHS Long Term Plan and the 'Prevention is Better than Cure' vision document, published in November 2018, set out an ambition to encourage more people to make the most of their local pharmacy to stay well in the community. Within the prevention vision, the value of the advice and wide range of lifestyle and public health interventions being delivered by more than 9,500 community pharmacies already accredited as healthy living pharmacies was recognised. In line with this, the NHS Long Term Plan outlines an aim for voluntary sector partners, community pharmacists and general practitioner practices to work together to facilitate opportunities for the public to check on their health, through tests for high blood pressure and other high-risk conditions.

The Department is now developing a Green Paper to further work up this ambition and plans for delivering it. This will be published later this year.

Alongside this, the Department, with NHS England, has now begun negotiations to determine the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework for 2019/20 and beyond. These are confidential negotiations and as such we are unable to provide further detail at this time.

■ Pregnancy: Mental Health Services**Vicky Foxcroft:****[245897]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 5 December 2017 to Question 115732 on Baby Care Units, what progress his Department has made increasing access to specialist perinatal mental health support.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Department is committed to improving perinatal mental health services. NHS England has invested in better perinatal mental health care for new and expectant mothers, with at least 9,000 additional women receiving treatment last year. This represents significant progress against the target set out in the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health for at least 30,000 additional women each year to access evidence-based specialist perinatal mental health treatment by 2020/21.

The NHS Long Term Plan includes a commitment for a further 24,000 women to be able to access specialist perinatal mental health care by 2023/24, building on the additional 30,000 women who will access these services each year by 2020/21. Specialist care will also be available from preconception to 24 months after birth, which will provide an extra year of support.

■ Prescriptions: Fees and Charges**Mr George Howarth:**[\[245660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the annual cost is of administering NHS prescription charges.

Seema Kennedy:

The annual cost to the NHS Business Services Authority of administering National Health Service prescription charges is around £75,000 per year. This figure covers the work of NHS Prescription Services, which includes the reimbursement and remuneration of dispensing contractors in England on behalf of the Department and NHS England. It does not include the work of the NHS Business Services Authority's 'Loss Recovery Service' which involves checking prescription form exemption declarations, issuing Penalty Charge Notices and managing associated customer contact.

■ Psychiatric Hospitals: Older People**Luciana Berger:**[\[247686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many specialist inpatient services for older adult mental health patients have closed in each of the last five years.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

This information is not collected centrally.

■ Skin Cancer: Medical Treatments**Chris Bryant:**[\[245692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much the NHS has spent on providing skin cancer treatment in each of the last five years.

Seema Kennedy:

The requested information is not collected centrally.

■ Smoking: Health Education

Bob Blackman:

[\[245755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much funding his Department spent on campaigns to promote the cessation of smoking in 2018-19; and what funding has been allocated to such campaigns in 2019-20.

Seema Kennedy:

Expenditure on smoking cessation advertising media by Public Health England in 2018-19 was £2.5 million. Figures are net (rounded to nearest £10,000) and exclude Value Added Tax.

Media spend includes expenditure for advertising on television, radio, national press, regional press, out of home (outdoor), cinema and digital. Recruitment advertising and media partnerships are not included.

The funding allocation for 2019/20 is yet to be agreed.

■ Suicide

Luciana Berger:

[\[247685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many local authorities have a suicide prevention (a) group and (b) strategy.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health set a target for every local area to develop a multi-agency suicide prevention plan that demonstrates how they will implement interventions targeting high-risk locations and supporting high-risk groups within their population. As of March 2019 all local authorities have confirmed with Public Health England that they have a plan in place that has been agreed with their local partners.

The Department is working with the Association of Directors of Public Health and local government sector to assess the effectiveness of local suicide prevention plans, and a report will be published in spring with findings and themes, including areas for improvement and areas of best practice which can be shared across local authorities. This process will also inform a Sector-Led Improvement programme which will enable local areas to learn from each other and to further develop their plans.

■ Wheelchairs

Hugh Gaffney:

[\[245941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of access to free wheelchairs for people with short-term mobility conditions or injuries.

Caroline Dinanage:

No recent assessment has been made of the provision of wheelchairs for short-term use.

HOME OFFICE**■ Immigration: EU Nationals**

Jessica Morden: [247656]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate he has made of the number of EU citizens in (a) the UK, (b) Wales and (c) Newport East constituency who are eligible to apply for settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

Jessica Morden: [247657]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU citizens in (a) the UK, (b) Wales and (c) Newport East constituency have applied for settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

Caroline Nokes:

An estimated 3.4m EEA nationals currently resident in the UK are eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme (based on Home Office internal analysis of ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data for year October 2017 to September 2018).

The Impact Assessment for the EU Settlement Scheme was published in July 2018

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukia/2018/116/pdfs/ukia_20180116_en.pdf and an updated version was published in March 2019

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukia/2019/74/pdfs/ukia_20190074_en.pdf

The Home Office has estimated that the total number of EEA citizens and their family members eligible to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme by the end of the planned implementation period on 31 December 2020 is likely to be between 3.5 million and 4.1 million. This estimate is based on a number of assumptions as to how the size of the eligible EEA population will change over the period. The range should be considered indicative as future migration flows can be affected by many factors and are difficult to predict.

Two reports on the private testing phases have already been published

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-private-beta-1> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-private-beta-2/eu-settlement-scheme-private-beta-testing-phase-2-report>

So far more than 400,000 people have applied to the EU Settlement Scheme.

We will publish further data on the operation of the EU Settlement Scheme in due course.

■ UK Visas and Immigration: Training

Chi Onwurah: [244082]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what standard training and assessments UKVI Entry Clearance Officers receive (a) before they begin their role and (b) after they have started their role.

Caroline Nokes:

All UKVI Decision Makers, including Entry Clearance Officers, attend a training course, before they take up their positions.

Performance is managed through feedback and formal appraisal meetings with line managers, with any areas for development jointly agreed. They also receive further practical operational support to refine their training to deliver a high standard in decision making and consider applications on their own merits and in line with the Immigration Rules, which are applied impartially. Decisions are also reviewed by peers and managers.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Council Housing: Domestic Appliances****Stephen Timms:**[\[247564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the numbers of council housing tenants living without a (a) fridge, (b) freezer, (c) washing machine, and (d) cooker in each of the last six years.

Kit Malthouse:

The Department does not hold this information.

■ Council Housing: West Midlands**Liam Byrne:**[\[247600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many council housing units are planned to be built in (a) Birmingham, (b) Coventry, (c) Dudley, (d) Sandwell, (e) Solihull, (f) Walsall and (g) Wolverhampton local authority areas over the next five years.

Kit Malthouse:

We do not have information about the plans of individual local authorities to build council housing. It is for each local authority to determine its need for housing and to plan for it accordingly. To help, we have given local authorities the tools they need to build. We have abolished the Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap, so that local authorities have the freedom to borrow to build council housing, in line with the Prudential Code. Additionally, local authorities can bid alongside housing associations for the £9 billion Affordable Homes Programme to build affordable homes, and we are providing a longer term rent deal for 5 years from 2020, so that councils have a stable investment environment to deliver new homes. These measures will allow local authorities to double delivery to up to 10,000 homes per year by 2021/22.

■ Housing Associations

Stephen Timms:

[\[247566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to encourage Housing Associations to retain essential household items within properties during a change of tenancy.

Kit Malthouse:

In England, the Regulator of Social Housing requires registered providers to maintain their homes to the Decent Homes Standard. That includes a requirement to provide reasonably modern facilities and services. The Standard does not require social landlords to provide essential household items such as households goods or furnishings.

Where people need it, the Government provides a strong safety net through the welfare system for those who need extra support, including a system of hardship payments and benefit advances. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) may also be able to offer support for those that need help with the costs of intermittent expenses that are considered difficult to budget for, including furniture. For those on Universal Credit, budgeting advances provide access to interest free payments for one-off items. For those on other DWP means-tested benefits interest free budgeting loans are available.

■ Housing Infrastructure Fund: Oxfordshire

Layla Moran:

[\[247777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department communicated to representatives of Oxfordshire County Council that the B4044 Community Path was not necessary to unlock new homes under the council's housing infrastructure fund bid.

Kit Malthouse:

As part of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Forward Funding process, local authorities are provided access to expert advice in order to help them produce business cases that are as robust as possible and therefore more likely to secure funding.

An important element of this advice concerns the need for a strong, direct link between proposed infrastructure interventions and the delivery of new homes. Ultimately, the final decision as to what is included in a bid sits with the bidding authority.

Business cases submitted for HIF Forward Funding are currently undergoing assessment, with a funding decision expected in the coming months. The details of these bids and their development are commercially sensitive.

■ Landlords

Hugh Gaffney:

[\[245940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many rogue landlords were issued with banning orders in 2018.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

Banning orders were introduced in April 2018 and are an additional sanction for the worst offenders. It can take 12 months or more for a conviction for a banning order offence to be secured, after which a local authority may apply for a banning order. As such, no banning orders were entered onto the database of rogue landlords and agents during 2018.

■ New Monks Farm: Construction

Tim Loughton:

[\[247539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, for what reasons his Department has not made a determination on whether to call in Adur District Council planning application AWDM/0961/17 on New Monks farm; and when he plans to make an announcement on that application.

Kit Malthouse:

The application in question is one of three closely linked applications relating to New Monks Farm itself, development at Shoreham Airport and the public right of way network in the area. Ministers are carefully considering these cases against their policy on calling in planning applications and expect to issue a decision in due course.

■ Private Rented Housing

Stephen Timms:

[\[247565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people in privately rented property living without essential household items.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The Department does not hold this information.

■ Rented Housing: Older People

Nigel Dodds:

[\[246951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent discussions he has had with officials in Northern Ireland on providing assistance to the Housing Executive to improve the situation for older renters.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

Housing is a devolved matter in Northern Ireland and is the responsibility for the Department for Communities (Northern Ireland). Housing officials in my own

Department speak to officials in the devolved administrations to share their thoughts on the best approach.

Marion Fellows:

[\[247731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government is taking to improve the (a) availability and (b) affordability of housing for older renters.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

Affordable housing is a top priority for the Government and we believe that the key to improving availability and affordability for all tenants, including older renters, is to build more homes for rent. Institutional investment in purpose-built privately rented homes is increasing, with over 29,000 homes delivered since 2012, and around 110,000 in the pipeline.

We are also committed to making housing for rent more affordable now. This includes banning lettings fees paid by tenants and capping tenancy deposits with the Tenant Fees Act, which will come into force on 1 June 2019.

The Government is supporting those in receipt of housing benefit who are most in need, including older renters, through Targeted Affordability Funding. This fund provides a top-up in LHA rates for areas where affordability pressures are greatest, providing a Discretionary Housing Payment fund for Local Authorities to protect the most vulnerable claimants.

■ Sleeping Rough

Stephen Twigg:

[\[246437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent assessment he has made of trends in the level of rough sleeping in (a) Liverpool, (b) Merseyside and (c) England; and if he will make a statement.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

MHCLG's latest annual Rough Sleeping Statistics published on 31 January 2019 show the total number of people counted or estimated to be sleeping rough in England on a single night in Autumn 2018 was 4,677. This was down by 74 people or 2 per cent from the 2017 total of 4,751, and was up 2,909 people or 165 per cent from the 2010 total of 1,768.

These single night snapshots of the number of people sleeping rough are provided by all local authority areas in England. In Liverpool, there were 15 people sleeping rough on a single night in autumn 2018. This was down by 18 people or 55 per cent from the 2017 total of 33, and was up 12 people or 400 per cent from the 2010 total of 3.

The single night snapshots for (a) Liverpool and (b) those local authorities in Merseyside are provided in table below.

ROUGH SLEEPING SINGLE NIGHT SNAPSHOT, 2010 - 2018

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Liverpool 3		9	6	6	8	15	21	33	15
% change from previous year		200	-33	0	33	88	40	57	-55
Knowsley 1		1	3	1	0	1	2	0	0
% change from previous year		0	200	-67	-100	-	100	-100	-
St Helens 2		2	2	1	0	2	2	9	14
% change from previous year		0	0	-50	-100	-	0	350	56
Sefton 4		6	7	9	11	4	4	9	11
% change from previous year		50	17	29	22	-64	0	125	22
Wirral 4		5	7	7	5	8	11	14	16
% change from previous year		25	40	0	-29	60	38	27	14
England 1,768		2,181	2,309	2,414	2,744	3,569	4,134	4,751	4,677
% change		23	6	5	14	30	16	15	-2

ROUGH SLEEPING SINGLE NIGHT SNAPSHOTS, 2010 - 2018

from
previous
year

These statistics are available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2018>

This Government is committed to reducing homelessness and rough sleeping. No one should ever have to sleep rough. That is why last summer we published the cross-government Rough Sleeping Strategy which sets out an ambitious £100 million package to help people who sleep rough now, but also puts in place the structures that will end rough sleeping once and for all. The Government has now committed over £1.2 billion to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the spending review period. This year, Rough Sleeping Initiative investment totals £46 million and has been allocated to 246 areas – providing funding for an estimated 750 additional staff and over 2,600 bed spaces.

■ **Sleeping Rough: West Midlands**

Liam Byrne:

[247599]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many rough sleepers there were in (a) Birmingham, (b) Coventry, (c) Dudley, (d) Sandwell, (e) Solihull, (f) Walsall and (g) Wolverhampton local authority areas in each of the last five years.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

MHCLG's latest annual Rough Sleeping Statistics published on 31 January 2019 show the total number of people counted or estimated to be sleeping rough across local authority areas in England.

These statistics are available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2018>

This Government is committed to reducing homelessness and rough sleeping. No one should ever have to sleep rough. That is why last summer we published the cross-government Rough Sleeping Strategy which sets out an ambitious £100 million package to help people who sleep rough now, but also puts in place the structures that will end rough sleeping once and for all. The Government has now committed over £1.2 billion to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the spending review period. This year, Rough Sleeping Initiative investment totals £46 million and has been allocated to 246 areas – providing funding for an estimated 750 additional staff and over 2,600 bed spaces.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Armed Conflict: Sexual Offences

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[247577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the level of support for the United Nations resolution 2467 on sexual violence in conflict.

Harriett Baldwin:

Ending sexual violence in conflict, and indeed all forms of violence against women and girls in all settings, is a priority for the UK government. We welcome the successful adoption of the UN Security Council resolution on sexual violence in conflict, recognising the need for an integrated, effective, international approach to tackling such violence. The resolution adds to previous resolutions, for example highlighting the need to take a survivor-centred approach.

However, the UK deeply regrets that language on services for survivors of sexual violence, recognising the acute need for those services to include comprehensive reproductive and sexual health services, including safe termination of pregnancy, did not meet with all Council members' support and does not appear in the text. It is essential that we maintain the progress that we have made on this issue in previous Council resolutions. The UK will continue to champion, defend and support comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for survivors of sexual violence and all women and girls around the world. Following the vote, several likeminded members states also expressed their disappointment at the watering down of the language on SRHR. This is the first time that so many member states have spoken out in support of SRHR at the UN Security Council.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Export Credit Guarantees: Iran

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[245909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether any export credit guarantees relating to Iran have been written off in the past 10 years.

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[245910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether there are any outstanding export credit guarantees relating to Iran.

Graham Stuart:

In relation to export credit guarantee instalments that have fallen due in the past ten years, Iran has repaid principal and contractual interest in full. In alignment with other export credit agencies, UK Export Finance (UKEF) has written off default interest. UKEF does not have any outstanding export credit guarantees relating to Iran at present.

■ Export Credit Guarantees: Iraq**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[247648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment he has made of the potential benefits to British businesses of the £1 billion increase in support on offer from UK Export Finance for British firms exporting to Iraq.

Graham Stuart:

Over the last three years, UK Export Finance (UKEF) has provided more than £1 billion in support for UK companies delivering critical infrastructure projects in Iraq, including power stations, and water and waste water treatment projects. There is significant interest in UKEF support for UK companies' contracts in Iraq and the additional £1 billion in capacity will enable UK companies to participate in further priority projects that can promote nation-building efforts in Iraq. UKEF is working with the Government of Iraq to identify projects that can use its support with initial priorities including power, water and sanitation, and other infrastructure-related sectors.

■ Exports: East Midlands**Ben Bradley:**[\[245984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent steps the Government has taken to enable small businesses in the East Midlands to increase their exports.

Graham Stuart:

In the East Midlands a network of 24 experienced International Trade Advisers provide DIT's face to face service, supported by UK Export Finance Advisors when appropriate. They provide new and existing exporters with practical exporting advice and market know-how, and connect them to DIT's trade missions, sector specialists and wider international network.

Additionally, peer to peer support is provided through DIT's Export Champion community, part of the Exporting is GREAT campaign. East Midlands has 34 business leaders with a record of export success who help us to inspire other local businesses on their exporting journey: "if we can, you can".

The Exporting is GREAT campaign works closely with hundreds of UK companies and scores of partners to encourage more companies to start exporting or to export more. Further information on how DIT supports UK exporters can be found at www.great.gov.uk.

■ Overseas Trade: Tunisia**Damien Moore:**[\[247788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent steps he has taken to increase the UK's proportion of trade with Tunisia.

Graham Stuart:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) works closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department for International Development to advance our trade relationship with Tunisia; Ministers and senior officials incorporate discussions on trade issues in their engagements with counterparts in Tunisia. My Hon. Friend for South West Wiltshire (Dr Andrew Murrison), appointed as the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Tunisia in 2016, has helped develop a strong bilateral trading relationship.

As we prepare to leave the EU, to provide stability for businesses, consumers and investors, DIT has been working closely with the FCO and its Tunisian counterparts to achieve continuity of trading arrangements by replicating the effects of the existing EU-Tunisia Association Agreement in a bilateral agreement.

JUSTICE**■ Civil Proceedings****Julian Knight:**[\[245830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to make it easier for litigants to bring civil money claims through the courts.

Lucy Frazer:

This Government is investing over £1bn to modernise courts and tribunals, and this includes investments to improve the civil justice system.

The Online Civil Money Claims pilot, is a new service which went live in March 2018, and allows people to resolve money disputes online, for claims of up to £10,000. The digital service allows the public to easily and swiftly make their claim. The system is designed to be clear and intuitive. To date, the overall user satisfaction rate is 87% with over 62,000 claims made.

■ Convictions**David Hanson:**[\[245663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether time spent in court cells as a disposal to a conviction in lieu of a fine is categorised as a custodial sentence for the purposes of determining that the conviction cannot be filtered from a standard or enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate.

Rory Stewart:

The Police Act 1997 sets out the circumstances for the disclosure of certain convictions and cautions on a standard or enhanced criminal record certificate issued by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). In particular, the Act provides for the disclosure of any conviction receiving a custodial sentence. The DBS relies on information recorded on the Police National Computer (PNC) that determines whether a conviction should be disclosed under the Act.

Time spent in court cells as a disposal to a conviction in lieu of a fine is not categorised as a custodial sentence. The sentence is treated as a fine and any time spent in custody is a committal in default of payment of the fine.

■ Courts: Modernisation

Julian Knight:

[\[245829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to modernise the court system.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government is committed to investing over £1bn to modernise the courts and tribunals system. The modernisation programme has already started improving the experience of those who use and need our courts.

The public can now apply for uncontested divorce online, apply for probate online, make pleas online for low-level offences (such as traffic offences or evading bus fare), respond to jury summonses, track social security appeals online, and issue and respond to civil money claims.

More than 150,000 people used online justice services in 2018, taking the total number to over 300,000 in the past four years. Public feedback has been extremely positive with 82% user satisfaction rates for the online divorce service, 87% for civil money claims, 93% for make a plea and 92% for probate.

■ Criminal Proceedings: Recovery of Costs

Ben Lake:

[\[245946\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to ensure that acquitted defendants in criminal cases who were deemed ineligible for legal aid are able to recover costs to cover their legal fees.

Lucy Frazer:

If a defendant is acquitted at the magistrates' court and did not apply for criminal legal aid or applied and was financially ineligible, he/she can recover their legal costs at legal aid rates; at the Crown Court, an acquitted defendant can only recover their legal costs at legal aid rates if he/she first applied for and was refused criminal legal aid.

On 7 February 2019, the Government announced a review of the legal aid means tests. The review will consider the thresholds for legal aid entitlement and their interaction with the wider criteria, as well as assessing the effectiveness with which the means testing arrangements appropriately protect access to justice, particularly for the vulnerable.

Upon conclusion of the review, expected by Summer 2020, we will publish a full public consultation paper setting out our future policy proposals in this area.

■ Divorce

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

[\[245898\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Government response to the consultation on reform of the legal requirements for divorce, what steps he took to consult with the public before proposing change to the divorce laws.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government's consultation was predicated on the clear need for reform to reduce hostility and conflict between divorcing parents, which leave their mark on children and damage their life chances. We therefore sought views on how best to achieve this, not on the case for reform.

We held a full public consultation over twelve weeks last year to test our detailed proposals in light of the widest possible range of views and insights. We have reflected on the points raised in the consultation from all perspectives, not just from the many individuals and organisations who were supportive. A YouGov poll on the day we set out our proposals suggested 73% support for removing blame from the legal process. We have detailed the final results of the consultation in our response and outlined people's views on all sides, and we remain grateful to everyone who responded.

■ Legal Aid Scheme

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[245758\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make it his policy to establish separate legal aid funds for (a) increasing access to justice for people in civil, criminal and legal aid cases and (b) political and human rights cases.

Lucy Frazer:

Access to justice is a fundamental right and last year the government spent £1.6bn on legal aid.

Legal aid is available in a wide range of cases across different jurisdictions. This includes crime, family, housing, immigration, and areas where human rights may have been breached. In most of these areas, applicants have to satisfy statutory means and merits tests.

The legal aid fund is administered by the independent Legal Aid Agency, acting according to their statutory duty under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. Decisions on legal aid funding are made by the Director of Legal Aid Casework, who acts independently of Ministers.

We recently published the post-implementation review of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO). Alongside this we published the Legal Support Action Plan which outlines the steps the Government will be taking over the next two years to enhance the breadth of support to people experiencing legal problems. This includes delivering £5m in innovation funding to drive change across

the sector, and doubling our funding to support litigants in person to £3m for each of the next two years.

■ Legal Aid Scheme: Domestic Abuse

Sandy Martin:

[\[245999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will bring forward legislative proposals for the provision of legal aid for expatriates that have returned to the UK with their children after fleeing domestic abuse from their partners while abroad.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government is absolutely clear that victims of domestic abuse must have access to the help that they need, including access to legal aid.

Legal aid remains available for some private family proceedings where there is evidence of domestic abuse. To qualify for legal aid in a private family matter, applicants must provide evidence that they are a victim of, or at risk of being a victim of domestic violence or child abuse as well as meet the means and merits criteria.

The availability of legal aid is dependent on the type of legal proceedings and expatriates are not excluded.

■ Offenders: EU Nationals

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[245934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many non-UK EU nationals received a prison sentence of (a) less than 12 months, (b) between 12 months and four years and (c) over four years in each of the last five years.

Rory Stewart:

Any foreign national who comes to our country and abuses our hospitality by breaking the law should be in no doubt of our determination to punish and deport them. More than 47,000 Foreign National Offenders have been removed from the UK since 2010, and in the financial year 2017/18 almost 6,000 were removed from prisons, immigration removal centres, and the community.

The table below shows the prison sentences for non-UK EU nationals, for the period 2014/18.

SENTENCED PRISON ADMISSIONS OF NON-UK EU NATIONALS, BY SENTENCE LENGTH BAND FOR 2014 TO 2018

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total	5,779	5,246	4,912	4,163	3,946
Determinate sentences					
Less than 12 months	3,467	3,362	2,975	2,404	2,245

SENTENCED PRISON ADMISSIONS OF NON-UK EU NATIONALS, BY SENTENCE LENGTH BAND FOR 2014 TO 2018

12 months to less than 4 years	1,337	1,292	1,296	1,164	1,130
4 years or more	502	487	532	495	469
Indeterminate sentences	27	24	30	18	35
Other / Not Recorded	446	81	79	82	67

Data sources and quality The figures in these tables have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large-scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. The data for 2015 onwards has been taken from a new data source; and this change has significantly reduced the number of 'other / not recorded' sentenced admissions.

■ Prisoners: Rehabilitation

Julian Knight:

[\[245831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to introduce new technology into prisons to assist with rehabilitation.

Rory Stewart:

The Digital Prisons Programme was established to pilot technology in prisons so that an assessment could be made as to whether technology could lead to safer and more effective prisons.

Although this programme has now closed, the In-Cell Telephony Project will continue rollout of in-cell telephones and offender self-service kiosks. By March 2020, 50 prisons will have in-cell phones and 11 prisons will have self-service kiosks. In-cell telephones will provide a crucial means of allowing prisoners to build and maintain family relationships, something we know is fundamental to their rehabilitation.

Work is also currently underway to look at forming the future strategy for technology in prisons and the Ministry of Justice is conducting research to evaluate the benefits of the technology already deployed. The evaluation report is intended for publication in 2019.

■ Prisons: Crime

Julian Knight:

[\[245832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to tackle criminal activity and drug abuse in prisons.

Rory Stewart:

Our prisons face a range of security challenges stemming from criminal activity, including the availability of drugs and mobile phones in prison. We must strengthen security and searching to make it much more difficult for anyone to get contraband into prisons. As part of the Ten Prison Project we are using technology to search letters, bags and people on entry to the estate. More widely, we are closing down other routes, such as by using netting to prevent drone flights and throw-overs. We are also using dedicated search teams and phone-detection technology to locate contraband that does get in.

Assisted by our investment in intelligence teams, a new Financial Investigations Unit, a new Serious Organised Crime Unit and the changes we have made to our dedicated counter-corruption unit, we work with law enforcement partners to disrupt criminal activity pro-actively and help obtain convictions. As a result, prisoners who break the law in prison should expect to be sanctioned according to the severity of the crime, with serious crimes being referred to the police for investigation. The revisions that we are making, together with the Crown Prosecution Service and the police, to our cross-agency protocol on how crimes in prison should be handled will further assist our efforts in this area.

The steps we are taking to reduce drug misuse are set out in the Prison Drug Strategy published on 3 April. This sets out the co-ordinated response needed to deal with the scourge of drugs which are fuelling record levels of violence. In common with the Government's Drug Strategy, the Prison Drug Strategy is centred around three objectives – restricting supply, reducing demand and building recovery. This coordinated approach will better protect staff and prisoners and create conditions for offenders to get the help they need to turn their lives around.

■ Prisons: Crimes of Violence**Imran Hussain:****[247717]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many assaults on staff took place in each prison in each quarter from 2010 to 2018.

Imran Hussain:**[247718]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many serious assaults on staff took place in each prison in each quarter from 2010 to 2018.

Rory Stewart:

The Government publishes quarterly statistics on violence in prison, and a more detailed annual breakdown, and both are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/safety-in-custody-quarterly-update-to-december-2018>

The relevant link is 'Assaults in prison custody 2000 to 2018' and the information can be found in

table 3.15: Assaults on staff by establishment, England and Wales, 2000-2018 and table 3.18: Serious assaults on staff by establishment, England and Wales, 2000-2018

The tables have a breakdown by month and you will need to use + and - , to be able to view these figures.

The Government is taking unprecedented action to improve safety in prisons. We have recruited over 4,700 more prison officers since October 2016, and we now have the greatest number in post since early 2012. The Challenge, Support and Intervention Plan case management process for prisoners at risk of violence has been mandated for all prisons to help staff to manage violent prisoners and those identified as posing a raised risk of being violent.

We are investing an extra £70 million to improve safety, security and decency, and equipping officers with PAVA incapacitant spray and body-worn cameras to help prevent serious harm to staff and prisoners when dealing with violent incidents. We are improving perimeter security and introducing new x-ray scanners, drug-detection dogs and dedicated search teams to address the supply of drugs that we know are fuelling much of the violence in custody. We are confident that these initiatives, together with the many other measures that we are taking to protect our staff, will reduce the level of violence in prisons.

■ Prisons: Suicide

Paul Farrelly:

[247608]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the number of suicide prevention practitioners in prisons.

Rory Stewart:

Suicide prevention is the responsibility of all staff in prisons who have contact with prisoners. This includes prison staff and those employed by partner organisations, including healthcare providers. All staff with prisoner contact are trained in suicide and self-harm prevention, and we have delivered improved training to nearly 25,000 staff since April 2017.

The Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) case management process for prisoners identified as being at risk includes specialist roles for assessors and case managers, and we provide additional training for staff taking on these roles. ACCT relies for its effectiveness on multi-disciplinary working, and contributions from a range of specialist staff, from prison chaplains and psychologists to mental health nurses working for healthcare providers, who bring their specific training and skills to the review teams responsible for managing each individual who is at risk.

■ Probation: Contracts

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[247757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether the new probation contracts will include break clauses to ensure that those contracts can be terminated at no cost to the public purse in the event that private companies fail to reduce re-offending rates.

Rory Stewart:

All major Government contracts have standard clauses to allow for termination for poor performance. This will not differ for any future contracts we let as part of future probation arrangements.

PRIME MINISTER**■ Grenfell Tower: Fires**

Emma Dent Coad: [\[246011\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, if she will set a date for the meeting she agreed to with bereaved Grenfell families four months ago.

Mrs Theresa May:

The meeting took place as arranged with my Rt Hon Friend the Minister for Grenfell Victims in March 2019

TRANSPORT**■ Bus Services: Disability**

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan: [\[245926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the document entitled, Bus Services Act 2017: Bus Open Data Consultation Response, whether his Department has plans to bring forward legislative proposals to require audio-visual equipment be installed on local bus services.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Government understands the importance of clear, accessible information in helping bus passengers to make informed journey decisions and to travel with confidence, and in Summer 2018 consulted publicly on plans to improve the availability of open data and to ensure that accessible information is provided onboard local bus services across Great Britain.

We continue to analyse responses to the accessible information consultation and expect to announce our next steps regarding the making of Regulations and publication of guidance later in the year.

Thelma Walker:

[\[245952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the document entitled, Bus Services Act 2017: accessible information, published by his Department in July 2018, when he plans to publish the steps his Department will take in response to the responses received to that consultation.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Government understands the importance of accessible on-board information in helping bus passengers to travel with confidence, and in Summer 2018 published a public consultation on proposals to require its provision on local bus services throughout Great Britain.

We continue to analyse responses to the consultation and expect to announce our next steps regarding the making of Regulations and publication of guidance later in the year.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Lee Rowley:

[\[245953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if her Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of making the HS2 Rural Support Zone scheme eligible for property owners through trusts that do not occupy those properties.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

Extending the RSZ schemes to non-owner occupiers in this way would be inconsistent with the eligibility requirements for statutory blight upon which the eligibility requirements of HS2 non-statutory property compensation schemes are broadly based.

HS2 property compensation schemes will be, however, kept under review for the entirety of the programme to ensure that people who are directly affected by HS2 are properly supported.

Under established arrangements people with special circumstances who are not eligible to apply under HS2 non-statutory property compensation schemes can request that their circumstances are considered atypically.

■ Invalid Vehicles

Tom Brake:

[\[245549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's paper entitled, Future of Mobility : Urban Strategy policy paper, published on 19 March 2019, when his Department plans to publish information on local limited trials of micromobility vehicles, including e-scooters; and if he will publish the timeframe for the proposed trials for e-scooters.

Tom Brake:

[\[245550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions officials in his Department have had with representatives of providers of e-scooters.

Jesse Norman:

No trials of this kind have taken place. The Department is presently determining the scope and timing of the regulatory review announced in the Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy.

Officials have had introductory meetings with representatives from leading e-scooter hiring companies. However, active travel methods remain the best option for short urban journeys, and the Government is keen to stress the importance of these methods of travel.

■ **Kew Palace: Boats**

Zac Goldsmith:

[\[247692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he last met the (a) Royal Botanic Gardens and (b) Historic Royal Palaces to discuss the potential effect of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's proposals for older UK passenger boats on tourism and visitor numbers at (i) Kew Gardens and (ii) Kew Palace.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) consulted upon an Impact Assessment (IA) during a public consultation which ran from 6 November 2018 to 29 January 2019. Consultees were invited to comment on the validity of the analysis in the IA and encouraged to provide information that would help to strengthen this. The IA is now being updated to reflect the range of further information provided through consultee feedback.

This process is ongoing and policy officials in the MCA are happy to discuss impacts with any interested parties and take onboard relevant evidence for the assessment.

■ **Motor Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions**

Paul Farrelly:

[\[245676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the number of fines issued under regulations 98 and 107 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 in 2018.

Jesse Norman:

The Department does not keep a record of fines issued under Regulations 98 and 107 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986. Local Authorities are responsible for enforcement of these offences, but they are not required to pass information on their use to the Department.

Paul Farrelly:

[\[245677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to impose limits on the amount of time an engine can be left running if a vehicle is stationary in traffic.

Jesse Norman:

Regulation 98 of The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 already makes it an offence to leave an engine running unnecessarily if a vehicle is stationary, with an exception when this is “owing to the necessities of traffic”.

The Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002, sets out how these offences should be enforced and guidance is provided to Local Authorities on the practicalities of enforcement. This guidance is currently being updated and the Department is planning to send this out to Local Authorities in the coming months.

■ Offences against Children: Victims

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[247633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to tackle the use of (a) taxis and (b) private hire vehicles being used to transport victims of child sexual exploitation.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Department for Transport has consulted on draft statutory guidance to be issued to taxi and private hire vehicle licensing authorities on how their extensive existing powers should be used to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm when using these services.

The consultation closed on 22 April and the responses are now being analysed.

■ Transport: Renewable Fuels

Mr Edward Vaizey:

[\[245739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the development renewable transport fuel obligation scheme will include non-biogenic waste.

Jesse Norman:

Fuels made from non-biogenic waste are not currently eligible for support under the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO). The Department is working to determine whether it is appropriate to amend the RTFO to include incentives for fuels made from non-biogenic waste. It is important that any fuels being considered for inclusion in the RTFO deliver carbon savings, and ultimately contribute to the UK's climate change commitments.

Officials have been working closely with industry and held a workshop in November 2018 where the issues relating to these fuels were discussed. Any proposal to include fuels from non-biogenic waste in the RTFO would be subject to a public consultation and the Parliamentary process.

TREASURY■ **Apprentices: Logistics**

Sir Mike Penning: [\[245721\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much has been paid by logistics businesses into the apprenticeship levy fund since the introduction of that levy.

Sir Mike Penning: [\[245722\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many logistics businesses pay into the apprenticeship levy; and what proportion of all companies does that figure represent.

Mel Stride:

The 'Transportation and storage' sector has paid a total of £280m into the Apprenticeship Levy between April 2017 and March 2019.

HMRC collects data on a Pay As You Earn (PAYE) scheme basis, and employers may have multiple PAYE schemes. HMRC is currently exploring the feasibility of accurately aggregating PAYE schemes to employer level.

■ **Apprentices: Taxation**

Nic Dakin: [\[248034\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 23 April 2019 to Question 243425, what proportion of the £8.8 billion his Department estimates will be paid into the apprenticeship levy between 2019 and 2022 will be spent on apprenticeships; and if he will make a statement.

Nic Dakin: [\[248036\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to run a budget (a) surplus or (b) deficit for the apprenticeship levy in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021 and (iv) 2022; and if he will make a statement.

Elizabeth Truss:

The Apprenticeship Levy was introduced on a UK wide basis from 6 April 2017. Employers are charged at 0.5% of their pay bill over £3 million. In 2018-19, £2.7 billion was raised from the levy.

Employers' levy funds are distinct from the Department for Education's ring-fenced apprenticeship budget, which is set to fund apprenticeships in England only. The budget has been set in advance for the current spending review period (to 2019-20). The budget was £2.2 billion for the 2018-19 financial year and it will rise to over £2.5 billion in 2019-20 – double what was spent on apprenticeships in 2010. Currently, we expect to remain within budget in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years. The programme budgets for 2020/21 and beyond will be determined by the forthcoming Spending Review.

The apprenticeship budget is used to fund new apprenticeship starts in levy and non-levy paying employers and to cover the ongoing costs of apprentices that are already

in training. A detailed breakdown of spending for 2018-19 will be published in the Education and Skills Funding Agency Annual Report and Accounts.

■ **Brexit: Credit Rating**

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[247653\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government's analysis concurs with the finding of credit rating agency DBRS that the UK economy could withstand the UK leaving the EU without a deal with its AAA rating intact.

John Glen:

The government has not assessed the recent report by credit rating agency DBRS. DBRS is an independent organisation. Their analysis and reporting of the UK economy represents their own views.

■ **Buildings: Insulation**

Alan Brown:

[\[245880\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to page 121 of the report entitled, UK Housing, Fit for the Future? published by the Committee on Climate Change on 21 February 2019, if he will take steps to introduce changes to stamp duty to help incentivise the insulation of homes and buildings.

Mel Stride:

Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) was devolved to Scotland by the Scotland Act 2012 and subsequently replaced with the Land and Buildings Transaction Tax in April 2015.

In 2007, the then government introduced a relief from SDLT for zero-carbon homes intended to encourage greater energy efficiency in buildings.

However, the policy was found to be ineffective with a limited number of transactions taking up the relief and it was ended as planned in September 2012.

There are currently no plans to link SDLT on properties with their relative energy efficiency.

■ **Child Benefit**

Martyn Day:

[\[247129\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing the £50,000 and £60,000 thresholds for the high-income child benefit charge.

Elizabeth Truss:

The Government introduced the High Income Child Benefit Charge (HICBC) from January 2013 to ensure that support is targeted at those who need it most. It applies to anyone with an individual income over £50,000, who claims Child Benefit or whose partner claims it. The charge increases gradually for taxpayers with incomes between £50,000 and £60,000.

The Government believes these are currently the correct level for the HICBC thresholds, but as with all elements of tax policy this remains under review as part of its annual Budget process.

■ Children: Day Care

Mr Nigel Evans: [245642]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the Government's rationale was for the policy of introducing an income threshold on eligibility for tax-free childcare.

Mr Nigel Evans: [245643]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish his Department's analysis relating to the Government's decision to introduce an income cap on eligibility to tax-free childcare.

Mr Nigel Evans: [245644]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for what reasons his Department set the cap at an earnings threshold of £100,000 for eligibility to tax-free childcare.

Mr Nigel Evans: [246449]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will undertake a review of the level at which the earnings threshold cap has been set for the eligibility for tax-free childcare.

Elizabeth Truss:

Tax-Free Childcare is limited to families where parents earn under £100,000 per year. The £100,000 per parent cap on Tax-Free Childcare ensures that support is targeted at the working families who require the most support in order to return to work or work more.

The £100,000 limit was announced at Autumn Statement 2015 and legislated for in 2016 because it is simple for parents to understand their eligibility, and because it aligns to an existing boundary in the tax system. The government published its final impact assessment of the introduction of Tax-Free Childcare, including the setting of an upper income limit at £100,000 per parent, in March 2017 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/652939/Tax-free_childcare_Impact_Assessment-March_2017.pdf).

■ Consumer Credit Act 1974

Caroline Lucas: [245748]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer 8 April 2019 to Question 239222 on Consumer Credit Act 1974, if he will make it his policy to revise the rules in the Consumer Credit Act 1974 on the prescribed content of default and arrears notices; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) published the final report on the review of the retained provisions of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 (CCA) in March 2019. The FCA

concluded that the current framework of information requirements continues to provide important consumer protection, however, there are a number of issues that need further consideration.

On 25 March, the Government laid a Written Ministerial Statement (HCWS1442) in response to the FCA's review of the retained provisions of the CCA. In line with that statement, the Government is considering the findings of the FCA's final report, and will respond in due course.

■ Credit Cards: Fraud

Alex Sobel:

[\[245980\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to support victims of credit card fraud in rectifying their credit files.

John Glen:

Credit Reference Agencies (CRAs) provide an important service, by constructing credit files to help inform responsible lending decisions and it is important that the information included on credit files is accurate.

Where an individual has been the victim of credit card fraud, lenders will place a marker on their credit file while they investigate the issue, and then rectify the credit file once the fraud is established so that it does not negatively impact the individual.

Individuals can contact the relevant CRA if they have concerns about the accuracy of their credit files. CRAs are required to allow consumers to access their statutory credit report. The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) has published guidance explaining what consumers can do if the information on their credit report is incorrect, and how it can be corrected.

■ Housing: Insulation

Alan Brown:

[\[245863\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department plans to take to help support the National Infrastructure Commission's recommendation of increasing the rate of insulation measures installed in UK homes to 21,000 a week by 2020; and if he will make a statement.

Alan Brown:

[\[245864\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the amount of public funding required to achieve the National Infrastructure Commission's recommendation of increasing the rate of insulation measures installed in UK homes to 21,000 a week by 2020.

Alan Brown:

[\[245877\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what cost-benefit analysis his Department has made of the economic effect of (a) energy efficiency measures in homes and (b) other infrastructure projects.

Alan Brown:**[245884]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has plans to classify energy efficiency as a priority cross-Department matter in the forthcoming Spending Review.

Robert Jenrick:

The National Infrastructure Commission made over 50 recommendations to the government, in their National Infrastructure Assessment (NIA) published in July 2018. As announced at Budget 2018, the government will respond in full to the NIA through a National Infrastructure Strategy, including on the installation rate of energy efficiency measures in the building stock.

The government has already set out an ambitious aspiration on energy efficiency in the Clean Growth Strategy, for as many homes as possible to reach EPC Band C by 2035 where practical, cost-effective and affordable; and the Prime Minister has announced an Industrial Strategy mission to at least halve the energy use of new buildings by 2030. The government has a growing programme of ambitious policies to drive forward progress towards this aspiration, including extending the Energy Company Obligation from 2022 to 2028 to support more than £3bn of investment to upgrade the energy efficiency of around a million more homes, tightening the regulations on minimum energy efficiency standards in private rented homes, and announcing the introduction of a Future Homes Standard to ensure that all new homes are built with world-leading levels of energy efficiency and low-carbon heating. The government is further considering the detail of these policies, in order to unlock the necessary energy efficiency improvements for homes and businesses during the 2020s.

At Spring Statement, the Chancellor confirmed that the National Infrastructure Strategy will be published later in 2019, alongside the Spending Review and Autumn Budget. The Spending Review will determine the government's spending priorities going forward, assessing spending in the round against government priorities and a broad evidence base. As part of that evidence base, HM Treasury guidance in the Green Book sets out the methodology by which Departments should undertake cost-benefit analysis for all proposals that concern public spending and changes to regulations, including for energy efficiency and broader infrastructure requirements. These are scrutinised by Treasury spending teams to support decision making and ensure value for money. Impact Assessments associated with particular policy proposals are published online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>.

■ Insurance

Catherine McKinnell:**[246522]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government is taking to protect consumers from the loyalty penalty in the insurance market.

John Glen:

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) sets the conduct standards which insurance firms are required to meet so that consumers are treated fairly. The Government is

committed to ensure that the insurance industry functions well for everyone and welcomed the launch of the FCA's General Insurance Pricing Practices Market Study. We expect the FCA will report its interim findings in Autumn 2019. As part of this study, the FCA will consider all potential remedies that may be required to make the market work well for consumers. The Government is monitoring the outcomes of this Market Study closely and will engage with the FCA on the appropriate action that is required.

■ London Capital and Finance

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[246489\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 10 April 2019 to Question 240486 on London Capital and Finance, when he plans to publish the terms of the investigation; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

Further details of this investigation, including its terms, will be communicated in due course.

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[246490\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of establishing a compensation fund for investors who lost funds as a result of the collapse of London Capital and Finance; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

The administrators for London Capital & Finance (LCF) are currently estimating recoveries for investors affected by LCF's failure.

LCF's investors are unlikely to have access to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). However, this would be for the FSCS to determine as an independent body from both HM Treasury and the Financial Conduct Authority.

The FSCS is working closely with the administrators to understand more about LCF's activities. If there are circumstances that give rise to potentially valid claims, the FSCS will begin to accept claims against LCF and communicate this on their website.

■ Mortgages: Private Rented Housing

Ian Murray:

[\[247662\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of taxation and mortgage relief changes for buy to let property on the reported increase in the number of properties that are holiday lets; and if he will make a statement.

Mel Stride:

In Budget 2017 the Chancellor announced a restriction to the relief available for finance costs for residential landlords. The restriction is being phased in over 4 years and ensures that relief for finance costs is only available at the basic rate of income tax. The restriction makes the tax system fairer by ensuring landlords with higher incomes no longer receive the most generous tax treatment.

HMRC estimates that only one in five landlords will pay more tax as a result of this measure, once it is fully implemented. Self-assessment data for the relevant years is not yet available.

■ National Insurance Contributions

Anneliese Dodds: [\[247778\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 24 April 2019 to Question 244194, whether his Department makes an assessment of the national insurance contributions of SMEs; and if he will make a statement.

Mel Stride:

It is not possible to produce a timely estimate of the National Insurance Contributions of SMEs as the information is not readily available.

■ PAYE

Marion Fellows: [\[247732\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what legislative time conditions are in place for employers to report employees' earnings to HMRC; and what powers HMRC has to penalise employers who do not meet those conditions.

Mel Stride:

Employers are required to report to HMRC any relevant payments made to its employees and deductions made on their behalf, on or before the employee's payday, under Regulation 67B Income Tax (Pay As You Earn) Regulations 2003. There are some exceptions to this obligation, which are set out under Regulation 67D.

Late filed returns may be subject to penalties under Schedule 55 Finance Act 2009.

■ Personal Savings: Older People

Paul Farrelly: [\[246476\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to enable older people to (a) build and (b) maintain an adequate level of savings.

John Glen:

The Government is committed to supporting people of all incomes and at all stages of life to save.

Older people will continue to benefit from a number of measures the Government has introduced in recent years.

The Government has increased the amount that individuals, including older people and those of State Pension age, can earn or receive in savings interest before paying income tax to £12,500 per year. As a result, people can keep more of their income to invest as they choose.

The amount of money that people can save into their ISAs each year (the annual subscription allowance) has been increased to a record £20,000.

Since April 2016, individuals have also been able to benefit from a new Personal Savings Allowance of up to £1,000 for basic rate taxpayers and up to £500 for higher rate taxpayers.

As a result of these measures, over 95% of people with savings income pay no tax on that income.

■ Productivity

Dr Matthew Offord:

[245761]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the level of increased productivity in the economy.

Robert Jenrick:

In the long run, the only way to ensure sustainable growth, higher wages and increases in living standards is through raising productivity. The latest data showing an increase in the level of productivity is welcome, however productivity growth remains a key challenge.

The government is tackling this challenge head on; investing over half a trillion pounds in capital investment, cutting taxes for businesses, improving access to finance, increasing the National Productivity Investment Fund to £37bn at Budget 2018 and committing to reform technical education, such as the introduction of T-levels.

■ Public Works Loan Board

Chris Philp:

[247138]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the repayment terms are for loans made to local authorities through the Public Works Loan Board.

Elizabeth Truss:

The repayment terms for loans provided by Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) depend on the type of loan taken out by the local authority. Two types of loan are available from the Board: fixed rate and variable rate loans. Full details of the repayment terms of PWLB loans are available in the PWLB's lending arrangements circular: <https://www.dmo.gov.uk/media/15841/circular-160.pdf>.

■ Tax Avoidance

Peter Dowd:

[247724]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many promoters of tax avoidance schemes have complied with their obligations under the disclosure of tax avoidance scheme in each year since 2010.

Mel Stride:

Information about disclosures of tax avoidance schemes between 2010 and 2014 is available on GOV.UK. Data is recorded on a 'scheme' rather than promoter basis. Since 2014, over 60 schemes have been disclosed under DOTAS.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) DOTAS Taskforce was set up to ensure compliance with the DOTAS regime. The team review all intelligence information, taking appropriate action where avoidance risks are identified.

HMRC has taken litigation action against 10 businesses that it considers to be avoidance scheme promoters for failure to disclose under the DOTAS regime, with around 20 others deciding to disclose to avoid litigation. Of the 10 cases, 6 have been heard before a tribunal and in each of the 3 decisions received so far, all have confirmed HMRC's view that the schemes were disclosable, with decisions awaited in a further three cases. Further cases will be litigated in the year ahead.

■ Tax Avoidance: EU Law**Ronnie Cowan:**[\[245860\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the UK complies with the Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive.

Mel Stride:

The UK supports the EU Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive, which requires all Member States to adopt minimum standard rules that restrict the ability of large multinationals to artificially lower their tax bills.

The UK already had effective and comprehensive anti-avoidance rules in place, which met or exceeded most of the minimum standards set out by the Directive.

Finance Act 2019 introduced several technical changes which help ensure our existing rules will be fully compliant with the approach taken by the Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive.

■ Treasury: Equality**Anneliese Dodds:**[\[247779\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 24 April 2019 to Question 244196 on Treasury: Gender Impact Assessment, whether he will publish the guidance on equality impact assessments available on HMRC's intranet.

Mel Stride:

The guidance on equality impact assessments is intended for the internal HMRC use only and is there to assist policy and other HMRC staff to identify whether there are any equality issues to consider, including regarding gender. GOV.UK only contains guidance that is relevant to HMRC's customers for example, guidance relating to tax policy. As the guidance on equality impact assessments is not intended for, nor relevant to, customers, HMRC do not publish it on GOV.UK.

■ Treasury: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[245686\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department has taken to ensure the greatest economic benefit to the UK from his Department's (a) public procurement and (b) award of contracts.

Robert Jenrick:

Public spending is prioritised through the Spending Review process and established in departmental business plans. *Managing Public Money* provides guidance on the management and best use of public funds, a key requirement of which is achieving value for money.

The Treasury (HMT) works in partnership with key stakeholders to ensure that its procurement activity delivers value for money for the taxpayer, is compliant with its legal obligations and supports the delivery of policy objectives. Contracts are awarded to suppliers submitting the most economically advantageous tender demonstrating the delivery of value for money.

HMT is contributing to the Government's aim to spend £1 in every £3 with Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), directly or through the supply chain, by 2022. Since SMEs make up a significant part of the UK economy, supporting their growth aligns to HMT's responsibility for ensuring the economy grows sustainably.

■ UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Helen Hayes:

[\[247743\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the consultation on proposals for using and allocating the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be published.

Elizabeth Truss:

Further details on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be announced following the Spending Review and the Government will consult widely on the fund.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Age: Discrimination

Paul Farrelly:

[\[245681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent steps his Department has taken to reduce ageism in the workplace.

Alok Sharma:

The Equality Act 2010, provides strong protection against direct and indirect age discrimination in employment and makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against an employee or a job applicant because of their age, unless the employer can justify it as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Government has put in place a number of measures to support people of all ages to enter and remain in a workplace.

We have taken steps to support younger workers by introducing the Youth Obligation Support Programme, an intensive package of labour market support for 18-21 year-olds looking to get (back) into work. We are committed to providing targeted support for young people, so that everyone, no matter what their start in life, is given the very best chance of getting into work. In April 2019, Mentoring circles were rolled out nationally, which involve national employers offering specialised support to unemployed, young jobseekers to help build their confidence and raise their aspirations.

To support older workers to remain in or return to the labour market, the Government has removed the Default Retirement Age meaning most people can choose when to retire, and extended the right to request flexible working to all employees with 26 weeks' continuous service with their employer.

In February 2017, the UK Government published "Fuller Working Lives: a partnership approach" to set out the role employers, individuals and Government can play in supporting fuller working lives.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/587654/fuller-working-lives-a-partnership-approach.pdf

The Government has also appointed the Business In The Community (BITC) Age at Work leadership team as Business Champion for Older Workers. The BITC team of employers spearhead the Government's work to support employers to retain, retrain and recruit older workers. They actively promote the benefits of older workers to employers across England.

The number of older workers in employment is at a record high. There are now 10.4 million people aged 50 and over in the workforce.

■ Ceramics: North Staffordshire

Paul Farrelly:

[246952]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans she has to support potters in North Staffordshire facing redundancy.

Alok Sharma:

DWP organised and facilitated a support event on 16th April 2019 for those people affected by the redundancies at Dudson. We have built excellent links with the ceramic confederation, local authorities, Citizens Advice, ACAS, local providers and employers. As a result, the Department is in a position to provide tailored support to those who need it. This ensures they have the correct financial, pension, employment and up to date benefit advice as well as direct contact with employers who have expressed a keen interest in recruiting Dudson ex-employees. Following the event, all stakeholders are working together collectively to help the community in Stoke-on-Trent. People were assured that all the stakeholders in attendance were there to support them.

All Dudson ex-employees were invited through DWP and the administrator to the City Wide Jobs fair held at Stoke-on-Trent college on the 18th April 2019. Around 54 employers and partners were in attendance with an estimated 1,800 jobs available. 20 Job interviews were conducted on the day, with 15 job contracts being offered the following day.

BBC Radio Stoke reported live from the event encouraging people to come and be part of the day. They also interviewed a few ex-employees of Dudson who reported that it was a great opportunity to talk to employers in sectors they had not previously considered.

We have explained that help to claim support is available through Citizens Advice to ensure customers are making the appropriate claim.

In addition, we organised daily group sessions for the 3 days immediately following the announcement of redundancies from Dudson to manage the increased footfall and queries. 50 people attended these sessions where they were given advice regarding benefits, budgeting and CV's.

There are 54 people still employed by Dudson so over the next few weeks and months as other parts of the business close we may see additional claims within North Staffs. These people will also be offered the same support.

■ **Employment Guarantee Bill**

Frank Field:

[\[246450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what her Department's policy is on the potential merits of the Employment Guarantee Bill, presented to Parliament on 13 June 2018.

Alok Sharma:

The Department is committed to supporting people into work and Universal Credit supports those claimants who can work and cares for those who cannot, while being fair to the taxpayer. We know that claimants on Universal Credit move into work faster and spend more time looking for work than on legacy benefits and the Universal Credit Full Service Claimant Survey shows that 9 months into a Universal Credit claim 40 per cent of claimants are working for an employer in a paid role, as opposed to only 23 per cent at the start of their claim. This is because Universal Credit is designed to strengthen incentives to move into and progress in work by scrapping the 'cliff-edges' of the legacy system, which penalised people for working more than 16 hours a week and providing more help with childcare costs.

■ **Maternity Allowance**

Steve McCabe:

[\[245597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason women receiving maternity allowance do not qualify for the Sure Start maternity grant.

Will Quince:

The Sure Start Maternity Grant is a payment of £500 to provide important help for families with the costs of a new baby.

The grant is available to recipients, and partners of recipients, of a qualifying benefit or tax credit i.e Income Support, Pension Credit, JSA (income-based), Universal Credit, Support for Mortgage Interest, Child Tax Credit, or Working Tax Credit with a disability or severe disability element. A customer may also be eligible for a Sure Start Maternity Grant where one of the above benefits is being paid in addition to their Maternity Allowance.

By restricting the availability to those in receipt of income related benefits the Government is focussing the available resource where it is needed most.

■ **Maternity Payments****Steve McCabe:****[245599]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many women have received the Sure Start maternity grant in each year since 2010.

Will Quince:

The number of Sure Start Maternity Grant awards in Great Britain is reported annually in Appendix 1 of the Social Fund Annual Report:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-fund-annual-report-2017-to-2018>

The number of Sure Start Maternity Grant awards are provided in the table below.

NUMBER OF SURE START MATERNITY GRANT AWARDS, 2010/11 TO 2017/18

Year	Number of awards
2010/11	257,000
2011/12	89,000
2012/13	77,000
2013/14	73,000
2014/15	66,000
2015/16	59,000
2016/17	55,000
2017/18	50,500

As of 24 January 2011, Sure Start Maternity Grants are provided for the birth of the recipient's first child only. Previously it was payable for the birth of each child.

■ National Insurance Contributions

Frank Field:

[247595]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in each constituency have incomplete national insurance records for their pension because they have omitted to pay the contributions in past contributory years.

Guy Opperman:

Although the Government holds data on National Insurance records, it is based on a 1 per cent sample of the National Insurance and PAYE System (NPS) which is not sufficient to provide data at a constituency level. So the specific information requested is not available.

It is worth noting that over the course of someone's working life it is possible to have some gaps in their National Insurance record and still get the full amount of State Pension. For example, in the case of the new State Pension, if we assume around a 50 year working life, this allows for roughly 15 years of gaps.

■ Pensions: Internet

Chris Ruane:

[247596]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of times the online pensioner toolkit was accessed in each of the last six years.

Guy Opperman:

The Pension Credit toolkit is an on-line tool aimed at agencies and welfare rights organisations to help them encourage Pension Credit take-up. It can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit>

The toolkit contains resources for anyone working with pensioners and includes guides to Pension Credit. It also contains publicity material and guidance designed to help older people understand how they could get Pension Credit and help organisations support someone applying for Pension Credit as well as ideas for encouraging take-up. The toolkit also provides links to information about disability and carers benefits.

Information available on the number of times the Pension Credit toolkit was accessed is in the table below. For comparative purposes it includes data on the number of viewings of the Pension Credit overview page on GOV.UK, which is considered the most likely initial starting point for the public obtaining on line information about Pension Credit.

	PAGE VIEWS					
Page	2019 to 25 April	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Pension Credit toolkit:	1,466	2,078	3,399	4,133	4,527	12,909

PAGE VIEWS

landing page

Pension	5,791	9,884	18,336	21,363	27,644	10,755
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Credit toolkit:
advice and
guidance for
stakeholders

Pension	406,024	1,134,852	1,307,562	1,412,375	1,318,770	1,306,531
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Credit
guidance for
customers
overview
page

Notes:

1. Data is for calendar years
2. Data refers to the following webpages
 - toolkit landing page <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit>
 - advice and guidance for stakeholders
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit/pension-credit-toolkit-advice-and-guidance-for-stakeholders>
 - first page of the main Pension Credit guide for claimants
<https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit>
3. Data shows the number of times these webpages were accessed.

■ **Personal Independence Payment****Mrs Madeleine Moon:****[245705]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 1 February 2019 to Question 209776 on Personal Independence Payment, how many of the 56,920 claimants of personal independence payments who died within six months of their claim being registered received a payment claimed under (a) the normal rules and (b) the special rules for terminal illness process.

Justin Tomlinson:

Over 3.6 million applications to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) were made between April 2013 and 30th April 2018. 73,870 of these claimants died within 6 months of their claim being registered.

Under the Social Security (Notification of Deaths) Regulations 2012 and s125 of Social Security Administration Act 1992 date of death is provided to the Department for all registered deaths. Additionally, next of kin also provide information on the date of death of an individual and this information is used appropriately in the administration of Departmental benefits.

56,950* of the 73,870 claims have been credited with a payment. 16,520 and 40,430 of these claimants registered their PIP claim under Normal Rules and Special Rules for Terminal Illness respectively.

*This is a slight increase on the answer to Question **209776** (56,920) as payments continue to be credited.

There is no evidence in this data to suggest someone's reason for claiming PIP was the cause of their death and it would be misleading to suggest otherwise. People claim PIP for various reasons, the majority of which are non-life threatening.

Notes:

- These figures include claims made under both Normal Rules and Special Rules for Terminal Illness (SRTI) and include new claims and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to PIP reassessment claims.
- The point of application is taken as the day the claimant registered a claim to PIP as recorded on the PIP computer system.
- This is unpublished data from the PIP computer system's (PIP CS) management information. It should be used with caution and it may be subject to future revision.
- Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
- Figures cover claims made up to and including 30 th April 2018 and clearances up to and including 31 st October 2018.
- Data is as recorded on the PIP Computer System.
- GB only.

■ **Personal Independence Payment: Medical Examinations**

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[245709]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 18 March 2019 to Question 230077 on Personal Independence Payment, what steps she is taking to identify the reasons for claimants failing to attend assessments.

Justin Tomlinson:

If a claimant fails to attend an assessment the Assessment Provider shares any reasons provided by the claimant with DWP.

If the case is a New Claim no further enquiries are made unless where a case is disallowed a Mandatory Reconsideration is requested, in which case, further enquiries are made to establish if there was "good reason" for the claimant Failing to Attend.

If the case is a PIP Reassessment or an Award Review and the claimant fails to attend the case is referred to a Case Manager to consider the impact on benefit already in payment and further enquiries are made to establish reasons for non attendance.

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[245710]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 18 March 2019 to Question 230077, Personal Independence Payment, how any claimants failed to attend assessments as a result of (a) ill health, (b) death, (c) transport difficulties and (d) accessibility issues of the assessment centre.

Justin Tomlinson:

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

Question 230077 asked about claims made under special rules for terminal illness and reason for disallowance. It is possible for a PIP claim made under special rules for terminal illness to be rejected as a special rules case by the Assessment Provider for not satisfying the terminally ill definition. When this occurs the claim is subsequently referred back to the Department for Work and Pensions and the claim process will proceed under normal rules where a claimant may be required to attend an assessment. A claim can be disallowed for the claimant failing to attend an assessment under the normal rules process, even though the claimant originally registered under special rules.

Jessica Morden:

[247655]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the (a) average waiting time and (b) longest waiting time was for a mandatory reconsideration after a personal independence payment assessment in (i) the UK, (ii) Wales and (iii) Newport East constituency in each of the last seven years for which data is available.

Justin Tomlinson:

Information about the extremes of a distribution (e.g. the longest clearance times) risks being disclosive. We would not release this information publicly. Therefore we have presented information on the average clearance time and for the upper quartile of clearance times.

Measures to reduce the number of outstanding MRs include:

- Age profiles of outstanding work are managed at a national level to ensure that cases which have been outstanding for longest are actioned first.
- Resource levels dedicated to the clearance of MRs have been regularly reviewed with significant recruitment, training and redeployment undertaken to support reduced clearance times.

MR is a key element of the decision making process for both the Department and claimants, and whilst ensuring they make quality decisions, decision makers work hard to clear applications without delay. Gathering the right evidence is critical at the

MR stage if decisions are not to go to appeal; and we are reviewing our processes to not only obtain this, but to do so whilst continuing to make timely decisions.

The Northern Irish Assembly has devolved responsibility for social security benefits. The responsibility for statistics in Northern Ireland lies with the Department for Communities: <http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk>

Information on the median and upper quartile clearance times for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Mandatory Reconsiderations (MRs) are provided in the tables below.

TABLE 1: MEDIAN CLEARANCE TIMES, IN CALENDAR DAYS, FOR PIP MRs, NORMAL RULES, BY FINANCIAL YEAR OF MR CLEARANCE

FINANCIAL YEAR OF MR CLEARANCE	GREAT BRITAIN	WALES	NEWPORT EAST
2013/14	27	28	#
2014/15	33	29	31
2015/16	24	25	23
2016/17	33	33	29
2017/18	29	30	29
April 2018 - January 2019	37	38	38

TABLE 2: UPPER QUARTILE OF CLEARANCE TIMES, IN CALENDAR DAYS, FOR PIP MRs, NORMAL RULES, BY FINANCIAL YEAR OF MR CLEARANCE

Financial Year of MR Clearance	Great Britain	Wales	Newport East
2013/14	42	46	#
2014/15	54	43	43
2015/16	36	36	36
2016/17	50	47	44
2017/18	42	43	41
April 2018 - January 2019	51	55	57

The figures cover clearance times for all types of PIP MRs including those where the claimant was disallowed PIP for reasons other than failing the PIP assessment, such as disallowances pre-referral to an Assessment Provider due to non return of the PIP Part 2 form within the time limit, and disallowances post-referral to the Assessment Provider where the customer failed to attend the assessment.

This data on PIP MR clearance times is unpublished data. It should be used with caution and it may be subject to future revision.

denotes less than 50 MRs cleared in the time period.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Terminal Illnesses

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[245706]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 18 March 2019 to Question 230076 on Personal Independence Payment, how many claimants of personal independence payments over that period who applied under the special rules for terminal illness process and had their claim disallowed subsequently lived for longer than six months; what medical conditions those claimants had; and what reasons were given for their claims being disallowed.

Justin Tomlinson:

Table 1A shows the main disabling conditions of personal independence payment (PIP) claimants who registered a claim under special rules for terminal illness (SRTI) and were disallowed but had not died within 6 months of their claim being registered. The claim may have been disallowed under normal rules or special rules for terminal illness as claims can transition between the two as the claim progresses. The Department only records a claimant's disability at assessment so does not hold this information where a claimant was disallowed prior to attending an assessment.

Table 1A: Disability Category of claimants who registered a claim under SRTI and were disallowed and had not died within 6 months of registration. Registrations to 30th April 2018 and Clearances to 31st October 2018.

DISABILITY	NUMBER OF OUTCOMES
Autoimmune disease (connective tissue disorders)	30
Cardiovascular disease	250
Diseases of the immune system	-
Diseases of the liver, gallbladder, biliary tract	110
Endocrine disease	110

DISABILITY	NUMBER OF OUTCOMES
Gastrointestinal disease	110
Genitourinary disease	140
Haematological Disease	30
Hearing disorders	30
Infectious disease	90
Malignant disease	1,070
Metabolic disease	-
Musculoskeletal disease (general)	290
Musculoskeletal disease (regional)	420
Neurological disease	350
Psychiatric disorders	820
Respiratory disease	280
Skin disease	50
Unknown or missing	2,610
Visual disease	30
Total (ALL)	6,830

***The Department only records a claimant's disability at assessment so does not hold this information where a claimant was disallowed prior to attending an assessment.**

Table 1B shows the first outcomes at the initial assessment of PIP claimants who had registered a claim under SRTI but were disallowed and had not died within 6 months of their claim being registered.

It is possible for a PIP claim made under special rules for terminal illness to be rejected as a special rules case by the Assessment Provider for not satisfying the terminally ill definition. When this occurs the claim is subsequently referred back to the Department for Work and Pensions and the claim process will proceed under normal rules. A claim can be disallowed for the claimant failing to return the PIP2 form or attend an assessment under the normal rules process, even though the claimant originally registered under special rules.

Table 1B: Outcome of claimants who had not died 6 months after registration: Registrations to 30th April 2018 and Clearances to 31st October 2018.

OUTCOME	NUMBER OF OUTCOMES
Disallowed pre-referral to the AP	440
Disallowed pre-referral to the AP - due to non return of Part 2 within the time limit	1,450
Disallowed post-referral to the AP - Failed Assessment	4,160
Disallowed post-referral to the AP - FTA	780
Total	6,830

Source: PIP ADS

Notes:

- These figures include claims made under SRTI and include new claims and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to PIP reassessment claims.
- The Normal Rules and Special Rules indicator is taken at the point of registration. It's possible during the claim to move between Special Rules and Normal Rules and vice- versa as the claim progresses. This may mean that someone who registers under Special Rules moves to Normal Rules during the process and is invited to an assessment but is marked as Special Rules here.
- Data is based on primary disabling condition as recorded on the PIP and DLA computer systems. Claimants may often have multiple disabling conditions upon which the decision is based but only the primary condition is shown in these statistics.
- The point of application is taken as the day the claimant registered a claim to PIP as recorded on the PIP computer system.
- The outcome is the first DWP decision recorded on the PIP Computer system. This does not take into account any mandatory reconsideration or Appeal action so some of these claimants may have subsequently been awarded PIP. Some cases do not have a decision recorded.
- This is unpublished data from the PIP computer system's (PIP CS) management information. It should be used with caution and it may be subject to future revision.
- Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
- Data is as recorded on the PIP Computer System.
- Components may not sum to the whole.
- Figures cover claims made up to and including 30th April 2018 and clearances up to and including 31st October 2018.

- Figures cover claimant deaths up to and including 31 st October 2018.
- “#” indicates fewer than 5 cases
- GB only.

Under the Social Security (Notification of Deaths) Regulations 2012 and s125 of Social Security Administration Act 1992 date of death is provided to the Department for all registered deaths. Additionally, next of kin also provide information on the date of death of an individual and this information is used appropriately in the administration of Departmental benefits.

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[245707]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 18 March 2019 to Question 230077 on Personal Independence Payment, which team is responsible for making decisions to disallow claims under special rules for the terminally ill prior to a referral to the assessment provider.

Justin Tomlinson:

Cases under Special Rules for the Terminally Ill are routinely referred to the Assessment Provider for a decision and not disallowed by DWP staff. The exception to this would only be when a claim is made by a customer outside of the age restrictions or where there is no recourse to public funds e.g. fails to meet nationality requirements.

Previous Question 230077 asked about claims made under special rules for terminal illness and reason for disallowance. It is possible for a PIP claim made under special rules for terminal illness to be rejected as a special rules case by the Assessment Provider for not satisfying the terminally ill definition. When this occurs the claim is subsequently referred back to the Department for Work and Pensions and the claim process will proceed under normal rules. A claim can be disallowed for the claimant failing to return the PIP2 form or failing to attend an assessment under the normal rules process, even though the claimant originally registered under special rules.

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[245708]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 18 March 2019 to Question 230077 on Personal Independence Payment, whether it is a requirement to complete and return Part 2 of the Personal Independence Payment application form for claims made under special rules for the terminally ill.

Justin Tomlinson:

There is no requirement for a claimant claiming under Special Rules for the Terminally Ill to complete Part 2 of the Personal Independence Payment application form. Where an Assessment Provider believes that a claimant does not satisfy the criteria to claim under Special Rules for the Terminally Ill and the claim is to progress under normal rules then a part 2 would need to be completed.

■ Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

Marsha De Cordova: [244198]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 19 March 2019 to Question 232109 on Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations, whether she plans to publish findings from the Proof of Concept.

Marsha De Cordova: [244199]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 19 March 2019 to Question 232109 on Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations, whether her Department plans to collect data on the number of disabled people participating in the Proof of Concept who are subsequently found to have Limited Capability for Work and Work Related Activity.

Marsha De Cordova: [244200]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 19 March 2019 to Question 232109 on Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations, whether the design of the proof of concept will take account of the potential effect of reducing conditionality requirements on the Department's ability to avoid sanctions.

Marsha De Cordova: [244201]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 19 March 2019 to Question 232109 on Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations, whether the design of the proof of concept will take account of the potential effect of reducing conditionality requirements on the Department's ability to safeguard vulnerable claimants.

Alok Sharma:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 4 April 2019 to Questions [239290](#), [239291](#) & [239292](#).

Small numbers of participants involved may limit the ability to breakdown the data by specific groups.

■ State Retirement Pensions: British Nationals Abroad

Mr George Howarth: [245661]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Government plans to maintain annual increases to pensions of UK citizens residing in the Republic of Ireland in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Guy Opperman:

The UK and Ireland have signed a reciprocal agreement which will protect the social security rights of UK and Irish nationals living and/or working in each other's state when the UK leaves the EU. The agreement, at the link below, allows for the payment of uprated state pensions to recipients living in Ireland.

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/622/pdfs/ukxi_20190622_en.pdf

■ State Retirement Pensions: Females

Patrick Grady:

[\[247728\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish a response to EDM 2296 on providing financial restitution to born in the 1950s women.

Guy Opperman:

The approach of Labour, Conservative and the Coalition governments for the last 24 years since the 1995 pensions Act is the same. This Government's position on the changes to State Pension age (SPa) remains clear and consistent.

The legislative changes to women's SPa address the longstanding inequalities that had previously existed between men and women's SPa. If State Pension age had not been equalised, women would be spending over 40 per cent of their adult life in retirement and this proportion would be continuing to increase. Even after equalising women's State Pension age with men's, women will spend on average around two years more in receipt of their State Pension because of their longer life expectancy.

The overall trend in the percentage of pensioners living in poverty is a dramatic fall over several decades. We are forecast to spend over £120 billion on benefits for pensioners, including £99 billion on the State Pension (2019/2020). In 2019/20 we are spending £3.1 billion to increase benefit and pension rates for pensioners.

The welfare system continues to provide a safety-net for those experiencing hardship, including that caused by unemployment, disability, and coping with caring responsibilities which affect those unable to work and therefore most in need in the run up to their State Pension age. Women who have had their State Pension age increased have the same eligibility to working age in-work, out-of-work and disability benefits as a man with the same date of birth.

This matter has been comprehensively debated on many occasions in Parliament, and any amendment to the current legislation which creates a new inequality between men and women would be highly dubious as a matter of law. The Government does not respond to individual EDMs.

■ Universal Credit

Steve McCabe:

[\[245596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason universal credit classifies maternity allowance as income and statutory maternity allowance as earnings.

Will Quince:

Universal Credit is a means tested system of support. Where claimants have income available to meet their everyday living costs, such as maternity allowance, it is right that their entitlement to UC is adjusted accordingly (as currently is the case with other DWP legacy means tested working age benefits).

Statutory maternity pay is paid by an employer and is therefore a form of earnings subject to the work allowance and tapering within Universal Credit, as are other earnings.

Steve McCabe:

[245598]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason her Department does not inform automatically Healthy Start on the eligibility of claimants of universal credit.

Will Quince:

Responsibility for the Healthy Start scheme, including eligibility for it, lies with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). In support of that, upon request, DWP provides DHSC with confirmation of whether people applying for Healthy Start are getting Universal Credit and if so, whether their earnings are below the threshold set by DHSC.

Neil Gray:

[245810]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the proportion is of universal credit claimants who receive an advance payment; what the average value of the advance payment is; and what percentage of claimants have received 100 per cent of the value of their first universal credit payment in the most recent month for which data is available.

Alok Sharma:

Around 60 per cent of new claims take up an advance. Subject to some fluctuation, this rate of advance take-up has been broadly consistent over the last 12 months. This shows that claimants are being made aware of advances and are using it where they need this help.

The average advance amount for new claims is around £400.

Our latest published data shows that consistently around 85% of new claimants are being paid in full and on time. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/universal-credit-statistics>. In many cases where full payment is not made on time, it is due to unresolved issues such as: claimants not accepting their Claimant Commitment or passing identity checks, or having outstanding verification issues, such as housing costs and self-employed earnings. In order to support claimants to claim, we have taken steps to improve verification processes. For example, we have listened to feedback and built processes into the system to make it easier and quicker for people to verify their housing costs, for example through the landlord portal.

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[247576]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of the time applicants wait for their first payment of universal credit; and if she will make a statement.

Alok Sharma:

Our latest published data shows that around 85% of new claimants are being paid in full and on time. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/universal-credit-29-april-2013-to-14-february-2019>

In many cases where full payment is not made on time, it may be due to unresolved issues such as: claimants not accepting their Claimant Commitment or passing identity checks; or having outstanding verification issues, such as housing costs and self-employed earnings. In order to support claimants to claim, we have taken steps to improve verification processes. For example, we have listened to feedback and built processes into the system to make it easier and quicker for people to verify their housing costs, for example through the landlord portal.

From 1 April 2019 Citizens Advice (England and Wales) and Citizens Advice Scotland are delivering the new 'Help to Claim' support to claimants making a new Universal Credit (UC) claim or moving from a legacy benefit to UC because of a change of circumstances. The Citizens Advice Help to Claim offers tailored, practical support to help people make a UC claim up to receiving their first full correct payment on time. It will be available online, through web-chat, through a Freephone number and face to face through local Citizens Advice services.

New claimants can also apply for a UC advance and can receive payment within a day if needed. The Department has previously increased the maximum amount available for advances from 50 per cent to 100 per cent of the claimant's total indicative award, and have increased the repayment period from 6 months to 12 months.

Marion Fellows:

[247733]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effects on universal credit claimants of her Department calculating universal credit entitlement using income from earnings reported by an employer (a) paid during an assessment period in which they were not earned and (b) as a single payment but which were paid as a multiple payment.

Alok Sharma:

Entitlement to Universal Credit is calculated in monthly assessment periods. The amount of Universal Credit paid reflects, as closely as possible, the actual circumstances of a household each assessment period, including any earnings reported by the employer during that assessment period. Monthly reporting allows the award to be adjusted on a monthly basis, which ensures that if a claimant's income falls, they will not have to wait several months for a rise in their Universal Credit.

Wherever possible, employed earnings are received through the Real Time Information (RTI) system used by employers to report Pay As You Earn (PAYE) data to HMRC. RTI enables a claimant's award to be automatically adjusted to reflect their earnings, which eases the reporting burden on claimants.

Marion Fellows:

[247734]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions she has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on employers reporting employees' income to HMRC (a) late and (b) in the wrong assessment period for universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

The Department has been working closely with HMRC since Universal Credit went live in 2014, to support and inform employers who report earnings to emphasise the importance of timely reporting on a Universal Credit payment.

HMRC have recently updated their guidance to reiterate to employers the importance of reporting accurate dates and the impact on payment cycles.

Guidance on payment cycles and their interaction with Universal Credit for claimants is available online through the GOV.UK pages on Universal Credit and on the DWP "Understanding Universal Credit" pages.

■ Universal Credit: Disability

Jessica Morden: [\[247654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the timeframe is to bring forward legislative proposals for regulations for compensatory payments for people that have moved to universal credit and lost legacy benefit severe disability premium payments.

Justin Tomlinson:

Draft Universal Credit (Managed Migration Pilot and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 were laid in Parliament on 14 January 2019, to introduce provision for those claimants who were in receipt of the Severe Disability Premium (SDP) and who moved on to Universal Credit following a change in their circumstances. These regulations will provide both an on-going monthly payment to eligible claimants who have already lost the SDP as a consequence of moving to Universal Credit, and an additional lump sum payment to cover the period since they moved. These regulations are subject to parliamentary debate and approval before they come in to force.

■ Welfare State: Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: [\[244038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an assessment of the effect of the continued absence of a functioning Northern Ireland Assembly on the welfare system in Northern Ireland.

Alok Sharma:

Social security matters are the responsibility of the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland. However, in the absence of the Northern Ireland Assembly, DWP continues to make certain social security legislation at Westminster on behalf of the Department for Communities to ensure parity is maintained.

■ Work Capability Assessment

John McNally:

[\[245839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 4 April 2019 to Question 237797 on Work Capability Assessments, what performance is monitored at assessment-centre level; and what proportion of SC12 and SC13 targets were met for each year that Maximus held the contract.

Justin Tomlinson:

The department monitors Assessment Centre level performance on waiting times (SC12), claimants sent home unseen (SC13) and recent performance trends. Whilst we are able to produce much longer performance trends, the information required to do so is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

The proportion of SC12 and SC13 targets that were met for each year that Maximus has held the contract are shown in the table below: -

CONTRACT PERIOD	NUMBER OF MONTHS TARGET WAS MET IN EACH YEAR	
	SC12	SC13
Year 1 (Mar 2015- Feb 2016)	10	4
Year 2 (Mar 2016- Feb 2017)	3	6
Year 3 (Mar 2017- Feb 2018)	1	1
Year 4 (Mar 2018- Feb 2019)	1	7

****Data extracted from the monthly Performance Monitoring reports**

The attached annex (annex A) contains a breakdown of each contract year, showing for each month whether target SC12 and SC13 were met.

We are continuing to work closely with the supplier to improve waiting times for more claimants.

Attachments:

1. annex A [Annex A.docx]

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Business Update

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility (Kelly Tolhurst): [\[HCWS1529\]](#)

The Pubs Code and Pubs Code Adjudicator

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will today begin the statutory review of the Pubs Code (the Code) and the Pubs Code Adjudicator (PCA) through the launch of an invitation to all those with an interest to feed in their views and experiences of the operation of Code and the effectiveness of the PCA.

Pubs are a vital part of communities across the country. The Government has been supporting them through freezing beer duty, cutting business rates for many pubs and supporting community pubs through changes to planning law and by funding Pub is the Hub's pub diversification work.

The establishment of the Pubs Code was provided for by the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 ("the Act") and is set out in the Pubs Code etc. Regulations 2016. The Code governs the relationship between large pub owning businesses and their tied tenants, giving tenants certain rights, including the right at certain times to exercise a "Market Rent Only" option, under which their rent is set at the market level and they are no longer required to buy products from their pub owning business.

The Pubs Code Adjudicator ("PCA") was established by the Act and is appointed by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The role of the PCA includes giving advice and guidance; the investigation of non-compliance with the Code; where non-compliance is found, requiring publication of information, imposing financial penalties or making enforceable recommendations; and arbitrating disputes under the Code.

Section 46 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to review periodically the operation of the Pubs Code and section 65 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to review periodically the Adjudicator's performance. The review will look at the period from the establishment of the Code and the PCA to 31 March 2019.

The invitation to submit comments and evidence will run for 12 weeks and can be accessed through Gov.uk (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/pubs-code-and-pubs-code-adjudicator-statutory-review>). Stakeholders have until 22 July 2019 to respond. Following this, BEIS will analyse the responses and other evidence as set out in the terms of reference. A report on the findings of the review will then be published as soon as practicable and laid before Parliament by the Secretary of State.

The Terms of Reference for the Pubs Code and PCA Reviews will today be placed in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ British Indian Ocean Territory**

Minister of State for Europe and the Americas (Sir Alan Duncan):

[\[HCWS1528\]](#)

Further to my Written Statement of 26 June 2017 (HCWS10), on 25 February the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an Advisory Opinion on the Legal Consequences of the Separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965. We were disappointed that this matter was referred to the International Court of Justice, contrary to the principle that the Court should not consider bilateral disputes without the consent of both States concerned. Nevertheless, the United Kingdom respects the ICJ and participated fully in the ICJ process at every stage and in good faith. An Advisory Opinion is advice provided to the United Nations General Assembly at its request; it is not a legally binding judgment. The Government has considered the content of the Opinion carefully, however we do not share the Court's approach.

As outlined in the previous Written Ministerial Statement, we have no doubt about our sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, which has been under continuous British sovereignty since 1814. Mauritius has never held sovereignty over the Archipelago and we do not recognise its claim. We have, however, made a long-standing commitment since 1965 to cede sovereignty of the territory to Mauritius when it is no longer required for defence purposes. We stand by that commitment.

The joint United Kingdom – United States defence facility on Diego Garcia helps to keep people in Britain and around the world safe. For nearly 40 years the facility has helped the United Kingdom, United States, other allies and our regional partners, including Mauritius, combat some of the most challenging threats to international peace and security, including those from terrorism, organised crime and piracy. The facility also remains ready for a rapid and impactful response in times of humanitarian crisis in the region. These functions are only possible under the sovereignty of the United Kingdom.

As the Foreign Secretary confirmed to PM Jugnauth on 27 April 2019, Mauritius is a valued friend, trading partner and member of the Commonwealth. We are fully committed to our bilateral relationship and also want to deepen and intensify engagement with Mauritius. With regard to the very important matter of the Chagossians we are continuing our work to design a support package worth approximately £40m, to improve Chagossian livelihoods in the communities in Mauritius, the Seychelles and the UK where they now live.

I have placed a copy of the Advisory Opinion in the libraries of both Houses.

Attachments:

1. ICJ Advisory Opinion [BIOT.pdf]

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Infected Blood Support Scheme**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Mental Health, Inequalities and Suicide Prevention (Jackie Doyle-Price): [\[HCWS1527\]](#)

Today the Government has announced its intention to increase the financial support for beneficiaries of the infected blood support scheme in England, administered by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA).

This follows a meeting on 21 January 2019 between myself, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Infected Blood Inquiry secretariat and affected beneficiaries where I committed to looking at where further improvements might be made to the support provided by the existing infected blood scheme.

In this announcement, we have set out our plans for a major uplift in the financial support available to infected and affected beneficiaries of the infected blood support scheme in England. The current annual cost of the scheme is estimated at £46.3m per annum and we expect this will increase to over £75m to provide for these uplifted payments.

The level of support provided to infected beneficiaries will increase. In addition, the upper threshold level of household income currently used to means-test support provided for the bereaved will also be substantially raised allowing more bereaved beneficiaries to be eligible for additional support from the scheme.

All beneficiaries will be sent a letter by NHSBSA this week setting out the details of the changes and the impact they will have on them. This detailed payment information will also be made available on NHSBSA's website. All new payments will be backdated to 1 April 2019.

I have also announced my intention to reach out to the devolved administrations to look at how we might provide greater parity of support across the United Kingdom. I will update Hon. Members on these conversations in due course.

Today's announcement reconfirms the Government's commitment to providing those affected by the infected blood tragedy of the 1970s and 1980s with a fair and transparent support scheme, one which focusses on their welfare and long-term independence.

It also reaffirms the Prime Minister's support for the Infected Blood Inquiry, which she ordered in 2017, and which specifically asked for the support given to those affected by infected blood be looked at again. The Government will continue to listen to and co-operate fully with the Inquiry.