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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements	1
Written Answers.....	9

[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Stowell of Beeston	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
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Baroness Anelay of St Johns	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Whip
Lord Astor of Hever	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Bates	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
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Lord Freud	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Whip
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Lord Popat	Whip
Baroness Randerson	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Wales Office
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Verma	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Energy and Climate Change
Lord Wallace of Saltaire	Whip
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Whip

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Written Statements

Tuesday, 16 December 2014

Annual Reports (Home Office)

[HLWS109]

Lord Bates: I am pleased to announce that today I am publishing the annual reports of the Biometrics Commissioner, National DNA Database Strategy Board and the Surveillance Camera Commissioner.

Mr Alastair MacGregor, the Biometrics Commissioner appointed under Section 20 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 on 4 March 2013 has presented his first annual report to the Home Secretary. The report of the Biometrics Commissioner is a statutory requirement of section 21 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

Chief Constable Chris Simms, current chair of the National DNA Strategy Board has presented the annual report of the National DNA Strategy Board to the Home Secretary. This report has been made a statutory requirement of section 24 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

Mr Tony Porter, the Surveillance Camera Commissioner appointed under Section 34 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 on 10 March 2014 has presented his first annual report to the Home Secretary. The report of the Surveillance Camera Commissioner is a statutory requirement of section 35 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

Together, these reports provide evidence of progress made in the implementation of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. We are grateful to the Commissioners and to the National DNA Strategy Board for their commitment to fulfilling their statutory functions and are considering their reports.

Copies of the reports will be available from the Vote Office.

Armed Forces Covenant

[HLWS117]

Lord Astor of Haver: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Michael Fallon) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Armed Forces Covenant was launched in recognition of the obligation and debt that the Government and the Nation owe to those who serve, or have served, and to their families. Its two key principles are that members of the Armed Forces Community should not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services; and that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most, such as the injured and the bereaved.

It is entirely right that we should do this for those who give so much in support of their Country. The Armed Forces Act 2011 enshrined the Armed Forces Covenant

into law, placing an obligation on the Defence Secretary to report to Parliament annually, on the effects of membership of the Armed Forces on serving personnel, veterans and their families. Today the Government has published its third Annual Report on the Armed Forces Covenant and I am laying it the House today.

The report sets out the action that has been taken to meet the commitments of the covenant, not only in the key legislative areas of healthcare, education, accommodation and the operation of inquests, but in all the other areas where we have an obligation to support our people.

Over the last 12 months we have:

- changed our policy so that, from April next year, Service widows, widowers and surviving civil partners will be able to retain their pensions for life, including if they subsequently remarry;
- completed the £138M Midlands Medical Accommodation project, a world class centre for excellence for the training and delivery of Defence Medical Services;
- provided a further £20M from LIBOR fines to improve the infrastructure in support of childcare provision for Service families;
- allocated £17.4M, through the Department of Education to support the needs of some 58,000 pupils from Service families;
- increased the MOD Education Support Fund to £6M per year and extended the fund's timeline to 2017-18 to help schools who support children from Service families as personnel drawdown from Germany and rebasing takes place in the UK;
- introduced the Forces Help To Buy Scheme to make it easier for Armed Forces personnel to get on-to or stay on the property ladder. The scheme has already allocated around £29M to help over 1,900 Service Personnel;
- committed £40M to support 16 new accommodation projects that will help veterans across Great Britain;
- achieved a 100% sign up to the Community Covenant by all 407 mainland Great Britain Local Authorities, who have pledged to work to bring the civilian and Armed Forces communities closer together;
- continued to grow the Corporate Covenant to over 370 organisations, including major names such as Tesco, Virgin Media and Liverpool FC, who have declared their support for members of the Armed Forces Community who work for and use their services;
- sponsored career assistance programmes designed for Service partners which have already supported over 250 spouses;
- implemented, with other Government Departments, the majority of the recommendations of Lord Ashcroft's review of the Armed Forces transition process, and continued to strengthen the Veterans support network, including: the development of a shared vision for veterans; and the setting up of a 24 hour veterans helpline;

- for Reserve personnel, we now provide better protection in civilian employment; we have also made changes to their Terms and Conditions of Service including: granting an entitlement to paid annual leave, and enhanced occupational healthcare; and including them in the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Programme when they are mobilised and if they are injured during training;

- £21M from re-directed Libor fines the Chancellor announced recently in his Autumn Statement.

Looking ahead to next year, the Report makes a number of commitments. We will:

- launch a new £10 million consolidated Armed Forces Covenant grant scheme;

- make further announcements on the award of funding for Veterans Accommodation projects;

- implement the majority of the healthcare infrastructure improvements recommended by the Care Quality Commission;

- develop a system to transfer medical records between Defence Medical Services and the UK Health Services;

- report on how LIBOR money has been distributed to support childcare provision for Service Families;

- work with the National Foundation For Educational Research to produce some quantitative and qualitative data on Service Pupil Premium use and improve understanding on its impact;

- introduce a new, improved charging system for Service Family Accommodation, coupled with a commitment only to allocate properties that meet Decent Homes Standards on introduction;

- improve MOD Governance and work closely with the organisations who have signed the Corporate Covenant to ensure they deliver on the pledges they have made;

- work with the financial services sector to address potential disadvantage associated with Service overseas;

- continue working to improve healthcare for Reservists when not mobilised;

- and provide a defined contribution to the future Armed Forces Pension scheme for all paid service in the Reserve Forces.

The Report has been compiled in consultation with the Covenant Reference Group, which brings together representatives from Government departments, the Devolved Governments in Scotland and Wales, and from external members, including the three Families Federations, the Confederation of Service Charities, the Royal British Legion, SSAFA, the War Widows Association and Professor Hew Strachan of Oxford University. As in previous years, observations by the external members of the Covenant Reference Group are published as part of the Report itself. I am most grateful to all external members for their continued involvement and assistance.

Banking Act 2009

[HLWS116]

Lord Deighton: My honourable friend the Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Andrea Leadsom) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Treasury has laid before the House of Commons a report required under section 231 of the Banking Act 2009 covering the period from 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014. Copies of the document are available in the Vote Office and the Printed Paper Office.

Counter-Terrorist Asset Freezing Regime

[HLWS115]

Lord Deighton: Under the Terrorist Asset-Freezing etc. Act 2010 ("TFAFA 2010"), the Treasury is required to report to Parliament, quarterly, on its operation of the UK's asset freezing regime mandated by UN Security Council Resolution 1373.

This is the fourteenth report under the Act and it covers the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 September 2014. This report also covers the UK implementation of the UN Al-Qaida asset freezing regime and the operation of the EU asset freezing regime in the UK under EU Regulation (EC) 2580/2001 which implements UNSCR 1373 against external terrorist threats to the EU. Under the UN Al-Qaida asset freezing regime, the UN has responsibility for designations and the Treasury has responsibility for licensing and compliance with the regime in the UK under the Al-Qaida (Asset-Freezing) Regulations 2011. Under EU Regulation 2580/2001, the EU has responsibility for designations and the Treasury has responsibility for licensing and compliance with the regime in the UK under Part 1 of TFAFA 2010.

Annexes A and B to this statement provide a breakdown, by name, of all those designated by the UK and the EU in pursuance of UN Security Council Resolution 1373. The two individuals subject to restricted designations under Section 3 of the Act are denoted by A and B.

The following table sets out the key asset-freezing activity in the UK during the quarter ending 30 September 2014:

	TAFAs 2010	EU Reg(EC) 2580/2001	Al-Qaida regime UNSCR 1989		TAFAs 2010	EU Reg(EC) 2580/2001	Al-Qaida regime UNSCR 1989
Assets frozen (as at 30/09/2014)	£50,000	£11,000[1]	£55,000[2]	(ii) Amended	(ii) 0		
				(iii) Revoked	(iii) 0		
Number of accounts frozen in UK (at 30/09/2014)	49	10	25	Specific Licences			
				(i) Issued in Q3	6	0	2
New accounts frozen (during Q3 2014)	5	0	2	(ii) Amended	0	0	0
				(iii) Expired	1	0	0
Accounts unfrozen(during Q3 2014)	2	0	0	(iv) Refused	0	0	0
Total number of designations (at 30/09/2014)	33	35[3]	287	Legal Proceedings			
Number of designations that were confidential	1	0	0	1. The damages claim brought by Gulam MASTAFA against a number of government departments including the Treasury, remains stayed.			
(i) New designations (during Q3 2014)	4	0	8	2. The damages claim brought by Zana RAHIM continues to progress towards completion.			
(ii) Delistings (during Q3 2014)	1	0	1	3. An individual previously designated under TAFAs 2010 has challenged the Treasury's decision to renew their designation. This case is listed for hearing in December 2014.			
(iii) Individuals in custody in UK (at 30/09/2014)	4	0	0	4. In the quarter to 30 September 2014, no criminal proceedings were initiated in respect of breaches of asset freezes made under TAFAs 2010 or under the Al-Qaida (Asset-Freezing) Regulations 2011.			
(iv) Individuals in UK, not in custody (at 30/09/2014)	3	0	3	[1] This does not duplicate funds frozen under TAFAs.			
(v) Individuals overseas (at 30/09/2014)	18	10[4]	217	[2] This figure reflects the most up-to-date account balances available and includes approximately \$64,000 of funds frozen in the UK. This has been converted using exchange rates as of 30/09/2014. Additionally the figures reflect an updating of balances of accounts for certain individuals during the quarter, depleted through licensed activity.			
(vi) Groups	8 (0 in UK)	25 (1 in UK)	67	[3] This figure is based on ex-designations where the UK freeze forms the prior competent authority decision for the EU freeze.			
Individuals by Nationality				[4] There was an EU delisting in Q2 (FAHAS) that was not reflected in the Q2 report. This is now corrected.			
(i) UK Nationals[5]	11	n/a	n/a	[5] Based on information held by the Treasury, some of these individuals hold dual nationality.			
(ii) Non UK Nationals	14	n/a	n/a	Annex A: Designated persons under TAFAs 2010 by name [1]			
Renewal of designation (during Q3 2014)	5	n/a	n/a	INDIVIDUALS			
General Licences				1. Hamed ABDOLLAHI			
(i) Issued in Q3	(i) 0			2. Bilal Talal ABDULLAH			
				3. Imad Khalil AL-ALAMI			
				4. Abdelkarim Hussein AL-NASSER			
				5. Ibrahim Salih AL-YACIOUB			
				6. Ruhul AMIN			
				7. Manssor ARBABSAR			
				8. Moazzam BEGG			

9. Usama HAMDAN
10. Nur Idiris HASSAN NUR
11. Nabeel HUSSAIN
12. Hasan IZZ-AL-DIN
13. Mohammed KHALED
14. Parviz KHAN
15. Reyaad KHAN
16. Musa Abu MARZOUK
17. Khalid MISHAAL
18. Khalid Shaikh MOHAMMED
19. Sultan MUHAMMAD
20. Nasser MUTHANA
21. Abdul Reza SHAHLAI
22. Ali Gholam SHAKURI
23. Qasem SOLEIMANI
24. A
25. B

ENTITIES

1. BASQUE FATHERLAND AND LIBERTY (ETA)
2. EJERCITO DE LIBERACION NACIONAL (ELN)
3. FUERZAS ARMADAS REVOLUCIONARIAS DE COLOMBIA (FARC)
4. HIZBALLAH MILITARY WING, INCLUDING EXTERNAL SECURITY ORGANISATION
5. HOLY LAND FOUNDATION FOR RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT
6. POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE - GENERAL COMMAND (PFLP-GC)
7. POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE (PFLP)
8. SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL)

Annex B: Persons designated by the EU under Council Regulation (EC)2580/2001[2]

PERSONS

1. Hamed ABDOLLAHI*
2. Abdelkarim Hussein AL-NASSER*
3. Ibrahim Salih AL YACOB*
4. Manssor ARBABSIA*
5. Mohammed BOUYERI
6. Sofiane Yacine FAHAS
7. Hasan IZZ-AL-DIN*
8. Khalid Shaikh MOHAMMED*
9. Abdul Reza SHAHLAI*
10. Ali Gholam SHAKURI*
11. Qasem SOLEIMANI*

GROUPS AND ENTITIES

1. ABU NIDAL ORGANISATION (ANO)
2. AL-AQSA E.V.
3. AL-AQSA MARTYRS' BRIGADE
4. AL-TAKFIR AND AL-HIJRA
5. BABBAR KHALSA
6. COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES, INCLUDING NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY (NPA), PHILIPPINES
7. DEVRIMCI HALK KURTULU PARTISI-CEPHESE — DHKP/C (REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S 1. LIBERATION ARMY/FRONT/PARTY)

1. EJÉRCITO DE LIBERACIÓN NACIONAL (NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY)*
 2. FUERZAS ARMADAS REVOLUCIONARIAS DE COLOMBIA (FARC)*
 3. GAMA'A AL-ISLAMIYYA (A.K.A. AL-GAMA'A AL-ISLAMIYYA) (ISLAMIC GROUP — IG)
 4. HAMAS, INCLUDING HAMAS-IZZ AL-DIN AL-QASSEM
 5. HIZBALLAH MILITARY WING, INCLUDING EXTERNAL SECURITY ORGANISATION
 6. HIZBUL MUJAHIDEEN (HM)
 7. HOFSTADGROEP
 8. HOLY LAND FOUNDATION FOR RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT*
 9. INTERNATIONAL SIKH YOUTH FEDERATION (ISYF)
 10. İSLAMI BÜYÜK DOĞU AKINCILAR CEPHESE (IBDA-C) (GREAT ISLAMIC EASTERN WARRIORS FRONT)
 11. KHALISTAN ZINDABAD FORCE (KZF)
 12. KURDISTAN WORKERS PARTY (PKK) (A.K.A. KONGRA-GEL)
 13. LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM (LTTE)
 14. PALESTINIAN ISLAMIC JIHAD (PIJ)
 15. POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE — GENERAL COMMAND (PFLP-GC)*
 16. POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE (PFLP)*
 17. SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) (SHINING PATH)*
 18. TEYRBAZEN AZADIYA KURDISTAN (TAK)
- [1] For full listing details please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/current-list-of-designated-persons-terrorism-and-terrorist-financing>
- [2] For full listing details please refer to www.gov.uk
- * EU listing rests on UK designation under TFA 2010

ECOFIN

[HLWS112]

Lord Deighton: My right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (George Osborne) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

A meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council was held in Brussels on 9 December 2014. Ministers discussed the following items:

Financial Transactions Tax

The Presidency provided a state of play update on the Financial Transactions Tax, outlining work which will be taken forward under the next Presidency. The UK is not taking part.

Current Legislative Proposals

The Presidency provided an update on the status of current legislative files.

Single Resolution Mechanism- Single Resolution Fund contributions

The Presidency presented ECOFIN with an amended proposal for an implementing act specifying how

contributions to the Single Resolution Fund should be calculated.

Measures in support of investment

Ministers discussed measures to support investment ahead of discussion at December European Council.

Review of the Europe 2020 Strategy

The Council held a follow-up discussion on the Europe 2020 review ahead of General Affairs Council.

Economic Governance

Ahead of discussion at December European Council, the Commission presented a suite of documents, including the Annual Growth Survey 2015, the Alert Mechanism Report 2015 and a communication on the Six-Pack and Two-Pack review. Ministers then held an exchange of views on these items.

Annual Report of the Court of Auditors on Budget Implementation

The President of the European Court of Auditors presented the Court's annual report on the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2013.

Code of Conduct (Business taxation)

The Council endorsed the report on the progress of the Code of Conduct group during the Italian Presidency.

Letter by Finance Ministers Sapin, Schaeuble and Padoa-Schioppa to Commissioner Moscovici

Ministers received an update on a letter from France, Germany and Italy to Commissioner Moscovici outlining views on ways forward to tackle tax avoidance.

Employment Intermediaries: Temporary workers

[HLWS113]

Lord Deighton: My honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (David Gauke) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

At Autumn Statement 2014 the Government announced that it would review the increasing use of overarching contracts of employment by employment intermediaries such as 'umbrella companies'. These arrangements enable workers to obtain tax relief for home to work travel that would not ordinarily be available.

The Government are today publishing a discussion paper inviting representations from interested parties to inform potential future action on this issue. The discussion document can be found on the gov.uk website

EU Energy Council

[HLWS107]

Baroness Verma: My right honourable friend the Minister of State for Energy (Matthew Hancock) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement today.

I am writing to report discussions at the Energy Council in Brussels on 9 December. The UK was represented by the Deputy Permanent Representative, UKREP.

The Council discussed the governance of the 2030 climate and energy framework. The Commission emphasised the importance of regional cooperation as well as a streamlined reporting process and noted that it will bring forward proposals on governance during the course of 2015. A number of Member States emphasised specifically the importance of reaching the EU-wide renewable energy target. The UK and others argued that the governance framework should allow Member States the flexibility in meeting their climate targets consistent with the agreement on the 2030 climate and energy framework as reached at the October European Council. In particular, they argued that there was no need for a new renewable energy Directive. The UK also noted that it would be helpful for the governance framework to ensure that all Member States developed long-term plans for greenhouse gas reductions. All Member States emphasised the need to streamline reporting requirements.

The Council then adopted Conclusions on the completion of the internal energy market. The Commission reaffirmed the need to adopt network codes and guidelines quickly and to tackle continued market fragmentation. The Commission also noted that it would be issuing a Communication on retail markets in the light of the need to give consumers real and transparent choices.

The Presidency reported on progress in reaching 2020 energy and climate targets as part of the mid-term assessment of the 'Europe 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth' and noted the importance of energy and climate measures for growth and jobs. The Commission and some Member States emphasised the importance of concrete targets for renewable energy and energy efficiency set at national level. The UK emphasised that the economic reform strategy should remain focused on growth and employment and that climate and energy should be kept on a separate track for 2030 to avoid duplication.

The Presidency then reported on developments in external energy relations over the last six months, including the US-EU Energy Council, the Euro-Mediterranean Energy Dialogue, and agreement on the terms of winter gas supplies between Russia and Ukraine, facilitated by the EU. The Commission noted the cancellation of the South Stream project and emphasised that European laws had to be respected. Alternative options for diversifying supply routes to Central and Eastern European countries had to be explored.

Under 'Any Other Business', Slovakia highlighted a letter to the Commission on behalf of the Visegrad Four countries (Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland), requesting that the European Nuclear Energy Forum (ENEF) should be maintained and not subsumed into another wider forum. The UK and a number of other Member States supported the letter and the role of nuclear energy as part of a low carbon mix. The Commission replied that its focus was on improving rather than ending ENEF.

Finally, the Latvian delegation presented their energy priorities for their Presidency in the first half of 2015: developing the Energy Union concept; supporting the development of the 2030 governance process; and continuing discussions of energy security.

House Building

[HLWS118]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My hon Friend the Minister of State for Housing and Planning (Brandon Lewis) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

New Homes Bonus allocations

My Department is announcing today £1.2 billion of provisional New Homes Bonus funding for local authorities in England. The New Homes Bonus rewards the delivery of additional homes and is a powerful, simple and transparent incentive for housing growth.

The Bonus ensures that local authorities who promote and welcome growth can share in its economic benefits, and build the communities in which people want to live and work. Councils are free to spend the Bonus as they choose, including on front-line services and keeping council tax low.

The Bonus is based on the council tax of additional homes (net of demolitions) and long-term empty homes brought back into use in the 12-month qualifying period, with an additional premium for affordable homes.

These allocations bring the total amount of funding awarded under the New Homes Bonus since it began in April 2011 to almost £3.4 billion. This total recognises delivery of over 700,000 homes, plus over 100,000 long-term empty properties brought back into use. The increase for 2015-16 relates to 154,000 homes and 10,000 long-term empty properties brought back into use. The affordable homes premium is £15 million in respect of 42,790 affordable homes.

In keeping with our determination to protect those authorities who suffered from flooding last winter, we have ensured that any properties which have become long-term empty as a result of those floods will not be penalised by the Bonus.

In London, boroughs will pool a proportion of their 2015-16 Bonus allocation to the London Enterprise Panel, the local enterprise partnership for London. Pooled funds will be spent in borough areas in support of London Growth Deal priorities.

There are many good examples of local authorities using the Bonus in a variety of ways. For example, Braintree Council have allocated £750,000 of their Bonus to affordable housing, and are investing £5 million in major infrastructure projects and projects which could stimulate housing growth, such as improvements to the A120. South Gloucestershire Council give grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations and town and parish councils to support them with their projects. And Sheffield City Council have used part of

their New Homes Bonus to give a £1.6 million loan, allowing the development of six housing sites totalling 500 homes to be brought forward sooner than originally planned. Many other councils are simply using the funding to support frontline services and keep council tax down – there is no prescriptive approach set by Whitehall.

Local authorities will have until 14 January 2015 to make representations on their provisional allocations. The Department has written to local authorities with details for making representations on their authority's provisional allocations. Final allocations are due later in the New Year.

The incentive of the New Homes Bonus is complemented by the local retention of business rates and the Community Infrastructure Levy, to ensure that local communities can share the benefits of new development.

New Homes Bonus evaluation

Alongside the allocations, my Department is also publishing today an evaluation report on the New Homes Bonus to date. It considers the effect of the Bonus on the attitudes and behaviours of key figures, the financial impact of the Bonus on local authorities, how Bonus receipts are being used and other issues. The evaluation finds that

- Almost 50% of planning officers agreed the Bonus was a powerful incentive for supporting housing growth.
- The Bonus is seen to be delivering to its stated principles of being simple, transparent and flexible.
- In 2014-15, 75% of local authorities are net gainers from the New Homes Bonus policy.
- The New Homes Bonus is largely matching the distribution of housing need.
- The policy is particularly helping to reduce the number of empty homes.
- It has strengthened the links between housing, planning and finance for councils.
- The Bonus is contributing to a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to housing provision within authorities and is one of a number of factors encouraging and supporting a more proactive approach to house building.
- The policy was supporting more positive attitudes towards new homes. The financial incentive and positive impact on attitudes is expected to further rise in time as the policy works its way through local plan-making.

Notwithstanding, the evaluation also found evidence that many local authorities could go further in raising awareness of the Bonus within their communities, and communicating what activities the Bonus is being spent on. In response to this we will set out proposals for improving the transparency of New Homes Bonus payments and usage early in the New Year. I would like to place on record my thanks to the external technical advisory group set up to help inform the work of the review.

In addition to the evaluation we are publishing today, there have been several other expressions of support for

the Bonus from the local government sector itself. The District Councils' Network have said that "New Homes Bonus has been effective at incentivising growth and housing delivery" and "Districts have used this to support communities, invest in regeneration and keep council tax low". The annual PwC survey of local authority chief executives and leaders found the Bonus was the most popular government initiative with 59% of respondents saying it had had a positive impact.

According to our latest analysis of Glenigan data, the number of planning permissions for new homes in England has now risen to 240,000 in the twelve months to September 2014 – showing that our locally-led planning system and incentives like the New Homes Bonus are working well.

Fundamentally, the New Homes Bonus reverses the perverse situation under the last Labour Government, where councils were effectively penalised for building new homes; councils with a larger council tax base from house building found that the amount of formula grant they received from central government was reduced during the equalisation process. Indeed, the evaluation report notes that our broad local government finance reforms from the local retention of business rates have further enhanced the financial benefit from building new homes, on top of the New Homes Bonus. By contrast, by opposing the New Homes Bonus, I observe that HM Opposition are still wedded to a policy position where councils which build homes would be penalised.

Starter Homes

Yesterday, the Prime Minister announced a new Starter Homes scheme which will free up the planning system to deliver more low cost, high quality homes for first time buyers without burdening the tax payer.

The new Starter Homes exception site planning policy will enable Starter Homes to be built on under-used or unviable brownfield sites that would not otherwise be released for housing, on both public and private sector land. Starter Homes will be available to first time buyers under 40 years old at a minimum 20% below open market value.

My Department has now launched a consultation document to support the announcement, and take forward this new policy which will deliver more homes for first-time buyers, as part of our broader package of programmes to support local house building.

Details of the associated documents with these publications, including a breakdown of local allocations, have been placed in the Library of the House.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

15-16 NHB allocations [141216 Total payment (provisional 15-16) for House.xlsx]

cumulative NHB delivery for the 5 years of the bon [141216 Cumulative figures years 1 to 5 for House.xlsx]

the NHB evaluation [20141110 NHB Evaluation FINAL report ISBN.pdf]

the starter homes consultation [141215_starter_homes_final.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2014-12-16/HLWS118/>

Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council

[HLWS111]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: My Honourable Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (James Duddridge) has made the following written Ministerial statement:

I chaired the third meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council in London on Tuesday 2 and Wednesday 3 December. The key theme of this year's Council was building the prosperity and economic development of the Territories. The Council was attended by political leaders and representatives from Anguilla; Ascension Island; Bermuda; the British Virgin Islands; the Cayman Islands; the Falkland Islands; Gibraltar; Montserrat; Pitcairn; St Helena; Tristan da Cunha and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

In addition to prosperity and economic development, UK Ministers and Overseas Territory leaders also discussed financial services, defence and security, policing and criminal justice, the role of the environment in delivering prosperity, migration, passports and border security, health, and pensions. The Council agreed a communiqué which identified priorities and set out a clear road map for joint work in the year ahead. A copy of this communiqué has been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses. The communiqué reflects the commitment of the governments of the Overseas Territories and the UK to continue to work together in partnership to achieve the vision set out in the June 2012 White Paper *The Overseas Territories: Security Success and Sustainability*.

In line with our commitment in the White Paper we will continue to report to Parliament on progress in implementing the commitments in the communiqué by Territory governments and UK Government departments. We have also deposited in the Libraries of both Houses a report on progress made in meeting the commitments in the communiqué from the Joint Ministerial Council in 2013. The communiqué, UK progress report and reports by the Territories are available for viewing on the website: www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/overseas-territories-joint-ministerial-council.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

2014 JMC Communiqué [2014 JMC Communiqué.pdf]

Progress Report [JMC 2013 Progress on Implementation of Agreed Actions.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2014-12-16/HLWS111/>

Palace of Westminster Restoration and Renewal Programme

[HLWS114]

Lord Sewel: Following their consideration of the Pre-Feasibility Study on the Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster in October 2012, the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee agreed that a more detailed study should be carried out by an independent third party and that it should focus on the costs and technical issues associated with the range of options for carrying out the work.

In December 2013, the contract for an independent options appraisal (IOA) was awarded to a consortium led by Deloitte Real Estate and including AECOM and HOK. This followed a rigorous evaluation and selection process. The contract value was £2.02 million.

The full report containing the findings will be published in June/July 2015. It will form the basis for consultation and engagement in the next parliament, with a decision on a preferred way forward expected by spring 2016.

Other major public projects consistently demonstrate that effort put into early planning is rewarded later with financial savings. While the IOA will provide detailed information to help the two Houses make a broad decision in principle, further studies are also required to support the more detailed planning and design process that must follow that decision.

The additional studies include a re-assessment of the risk of plant failure (on completion of the Mechanical and Electrical Medium-Term Programme which has been addressing areas at greatest immediate risk), planning how the service infrastructure of the Palace will relate to the rest of the Parliamentary Estate, and further developing Parliament's requirements in areas such as security and visitor management. These studies are being commenced now to ensure that Parliament is ready to commission design work once a decision has been made,

which in turn will keep the programme on track for a potential 2020/21 start date without anticipating the selection of a particular scenario.

The next phase of studies and reports is expected to cost £5.8m, shared between the two Houses and spread over financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16.

The work is being carried out by Deloitte Real Estate, HOK and AECOM following agreement to extend the contract under which the consortium prepared the IOA. As additional services were envisaged under this contract, which was procured in accordance with public procurement rules, retendering is not required.

Post Office Card Account

[HLWS108]

Lord Freud: My Right Honourable Friend The Minister for Pensions (Steve Webb MP) has made the following Written Statement.

I shall be making a statement to the House, about a new contract for the Post Office card account, later today.

Prisons (Interception of Communications)

[HLWS110]

Lord Faulks: My right honourable friend the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Chris Grayling) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

"On 11 November 2014, I announced that HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMCIP) would undertake an independent investigation, which will, by early 2015, report in full on the facts and make recommendations. On 30 November, HMCIP provided me with his interim report, which provides an initial assessment of the initial measures put in place and makes a small number of recommendations, which the National Offender Management Service have begun to address.

I am pleased to report that HMCIP has indicated that the interim measures that were taken have, to a large degree, addressed the immediate concern of confidential communication being inadvertently monitored.

The report is available online at <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/inspections/>. I will also place a copy in the House Library."

Written Answers

Tuesday, 16 December 2014

23andMe

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what contact the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency had with the US Food and Drug Administration prior to its approval of 23andMe. [[HL3343](#)]

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the US Food and Drug Administration provided the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency with information about the status of its ban on 23andMe; and whether it was likely to change its position. [[HL3344](#)]

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they will give to patients about the reliability of information received from tests by 23andMe; and whether any indication of a health condition should lead patients to seek National Health Service treatment. [[HL3345](#)]

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the minimum standards required for a personal genome service to be approved by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency. [[HL3346](#)]

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the difference in the reliance that individuals can place on what they learn from a medical product regulated by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency compared to an information product. [[HL3347](#)]

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency has made of the additional costs or benefits to the National Health Service of the use of 23andMe. [[HL3348](#)]

Earl Howe: Products used in direct-to-consumer testing services providing health-related information are regulated as in vitro diagnostic medical devices and are subject to European Union legislation that sets out minimum standards of safety and quality. The testing service itself is not subject to this legislation, only the products.

Manufacturers of in vitro diagnostic medical devices are required to register with the competent authority in the country where they are placing the device on the market. In the United Kingdom this is the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). In this registration a manufacturer declares that their devices are

safe and meet all of the relevant requirements of the legislation including having evidence to support their performance claims. For some higher risk devices a manufacturer has to have its product checked before it is placed on the market. Such checks are undertaken by third-party conformity assessment bodies called notified bodies.

The role of the MHRA is to ensure that all medical devices placed on the UK market are compliant with the relevant legislation and to enforce this legislation on behalf of the Secretary of State. The MHRA fulfils this role by monitoring notified bodies (for higher risk devices) and operating the UK medical device vigilance system, which involves assessing and responding to safety concerns involving devices.

The MHRA does not have a role in assessing the additional costs or benefits of devices to the National Health Service and so has not done so in the case of the service offered by 23andMe.

Furthermore, under existing EU legislation, testing services are regulated in the country where the test is being performed. The tests offered by 23andMe are performed in laboratories that are based in the United States of America and as such are covered by US legislation.

The Government has advised that no test will be 100% reliable, that 23andMe should be used with caution and that the information provided by 23andMe should not lead consumers to make any changes of medical significance, such as changes to medication, without first consulting their healthcare professional. If consumers need more information about the conditions listed in their results then they can visit the NHS Choices website for more information.

The MHRA discussed the 23andMe Personal Genome Service with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and shared information under the confidentiality commitment that is in place between the two agencies.

The MHRA also held discussions with 23andMe prior to them launching their product in the UK. In those discussions, 23andMe explained that the product being offered in the UK is different to their US product in that many of the drug responses, inherited conditions and genetic health risks that were of concern to the FDA have been removed. 23andMe also presented results of surveys with UK-based consumers of their existing service that demonstrated that 4% of people had a specific conversation with their general practitioner (GP) as a result of their test results but it is not known how many GP visits led to National Health Service treatment.

In the context of those discussions, the MHRA also agreed with 23andMe that they would take part in an enhanced surveillance program. Such a program involves regular sharing of safety information that might not otherwise meet the threshold for reporting to the competent authority. This will allow the MHRA to have a more in depth look at the performance of the test in use

and if this highlights any regulatory or safety issues then they will consider further action.

Acts of Supremacy

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Acts of Supremacy 1534 and 1558 remain extant. [HL3533]

Lord Faulks: Based on the recommendations of the Law Commission, the Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1969 repealed the Act of Supremacy 1558 except for section 8. Section 8 vested spiritual jurisdiction to the Crown.

The Supremacy Act 1534 has been wholly repealed.

Aircraft Carriers

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether new money has been provided from the contingency funds of HM Treasury or the Ministry of Defence to run the second aircraft carrier or whether the Royal Navy has been told to do so within present funding boundaries. [HL3612]

Lord Astor of Hever: The cost associated with the operation of a second aircraft carrier is the subject of future planning rounds.

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what size of fixed wing airgroup will be embarked, as a standard, by the operational Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers. [HL3674]

Lord Astor of Hever: We plan to have a squadron of UK F35Bs available at Initial Operating Capability. The exact number of aircraft embarked at any time will be dependent on the mission being undertaken.

Arts: Secondary Education

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Lord Nash on 27 November (HL Deb, col 1094), (1) what is the source of the figures about key stage 4 examination entries; (2) what is the numerical breakdown of entries for each subject; and (3) for (a) music, (b) art and design, and (c) drama, which examinations are included in the category "all key stage 4 exams". [HL3402]

Lord Nash: The source of the key stage 4 (KS4) examination entries is the 2012/13 KS4 performance tables data. The numerical breakdown for each subject is as follows:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	% change 2010-2013
Art and Design	194,276	192,542	196,202	202,091	4%
Drama	113,479	113,130	112,790	116,414	3%
Music	53,471	54,866	56,204	57,205	7%

Entry level, GCSE, vocational GCSE, iGCSE, national vocational qualifications (NVQ), vocationally related qualifications (VRQ), Business and Technical Education (BTEC) and OCR national qualifications are included in the "all key stage 4 examinations" category.

The 2014 figures relating specifically to GCSEs, quoted at the end of my answer, were based on data which was published by Ofqual ^[1] in May 2014.

[1]

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141031163546/http://ofqual.gov.uk/standards/statistics/provisional-gcse-igcse-entries/>

Asylum: Finance

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what help they are providing, or planning to provide, for asylum applicants who lose financial support when their initial application is rejected but who nevertheless wish to appeal or to submit a new application. [HL3485]

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for providing help for asylum seekers who lose financial support when their initial application is rejected but who wish to appeal or submit a new application in cases where they had no legal advice for their initial application. [HL3486]

Lord Bates: Asylum seekers are supported by the Home Office if they are destitute under Section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. This support continues until all appeal rights have been exhausted and the asylum seeker is either granted leave or the asylum claim refused.

Failed asylum seekers are not usually entitled to support, but where there is a legal or practical obstacle that prevents them from leaving the United Kingdom support is provided under section 4 of the 1999 Act. This includes cases where the person has lodged further submissions which they have asked to be considered as fresh asylum claims.

Borders: Personal Records

Asked by Lord Marlesford

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 21 July (HL1039), whether they can now give a figure for the total cost to date of the e-Borders system, showing separately the cost awarded under the binding

arbitration following the termination of the contract with Raytheon Systems Ltd. [HL3561]

Lord Bates: Further to the answer we provided to your earlier question of 10 July 2014, Official Report, column WA 212, I must advise you that I am still not in a position to provide the information you have requested. On 18 August the Home Secretary wrote to the Chairman of the Home Affairs Select Committee with an update on the Tribunal process. A copy of the letter is available in the Library of the House.

British Nationals Abroad: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the recommendations in the pamphlet "Western Foreign Fighters", recently published by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue; and in particular whether they will make use of the experience of Germany and Denmark in supporting families and coping with the needs of returning fighters. [HL3487]

Lord Bates: We actively and regularly engage with our European partners to share expertise and best practise in tackling extremism and radicalisation. These relationships are vital if we are to reduce this shared threat.

The importance of a balanced counter-terrorism strategy is clear and is laid out in the UK's CONTEST strategy, in which preventing terrorism is one of four essential pillars. Prevent aims to stop people becoming terrorists or extremists, or supporting terrorism. It deals with all kinds of terrorist threats to the UK, and includes non-violent extremism. Many of the recommendations in the report reflect initiatives already in place.

Prevent includes work to challenge extremist ideology (including disrupting extremist speakers and removing terrorist and extremist material online) and to intervene and stop people being radicalised. In the context of Syria it includes work to dissuade people from travelling to Syria and to intervene when they return.

We have seen a significant rise in referrals to the Channel programme, which provides tailored support to people identified as at risk of radicalisation. The Association of Chief Police Officers reported a 58% increase in the past year. Since April 2012 there have been over 2000 referrals. Hundreds of individuals have been offered support.

In the 2013/14 financial year Prevent local authority co-ordinators in our 30 Prevent priority areas worked with over 250 mosques, 50 faith groups and 70 community groups.

As referenced in the report, our Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit has a key role to play in taking down unlawful terrorist-related content. Since February 2010, the CTIRU has taken down more than 65,000 pieces of unlawful terrorist-related content which encourages or glorifies acts of terrorism. Over 46,000 of these have been removed since December 2013.

Children: Marriage

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect girls who come to the United Kingdom already in under-age marriages. [HL3558]

Lord Nash: Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. A belief that a girl may have been involved in an under-age marriage should lead to such an assessment.

Where a local authority encounters concerns about a child's welfare that constitute, or may constitute, an offence against a child, social workers should discuss the case with the police at the earliest opportunity. Offences may have been committed by the girl's parents, or by her 'husband'. Legislation that came into force earlier in 2014 means that forced marriage is now a criminal offence.

Statutory guidance on multi-agency working to safeguard children from harm is contained in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children',^[1] which the Government published in 2013 and updated in June 2014. Statutory guidance and multi-agency practice guidelines on forced marriage,^[2] also updated in June 2014, provides information and advice for all relevant services, including schools, who are advised to make referrals to children's social care or the police if they have any concerns about a girl being affected by forced marriage.

[1]

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281368/Working_together_to_safeguard_children.pdf

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage>

Churches: Repairs and Maintenance

Asked by Lord Avebury

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many court cases have been brought by parochial church councils to recover chancel repair liability since the Aston Cantlow judgment by the House of Lords in 2003. [HL3304]

Lord Faulks: The decision of the House of Lords in the case of Parochial Church Council of the Parish of Aston Cantlow and Wilmcote with Billesley, Warwickshire v. Wallbank and another [2003] UKHL 37 confirmed that chancel repair liability was a valid and enforceable property right. Before 13 October 2013 the liability did not have to be entered on the land register to bind buyers of registered land. Now buyers can be certain whether a property may be subject to the liability before they buy, helping them to make informed decisions.

Information as to the number of cases parochial church councils have brought since June 2003 to recover chancel repair liability is not available and could only be obtained from court records at disproportionate expense. The Government is however aware that not all parochial

church councils decided to register their entitlement to the benefit of the liability.

Climate Change

Asked by Lord Krebs

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord De Mauley on 18 November (HL2662), what proportion of the £1.6 million spent by the Environment Agency's Climate Ready Programme is allocated to communicating to the wider public, as opposed to organisations, the risks, opportunities and impacts of climate change on the well-being and economy of the United Kingdom. [HL3378]

Lord De Mauley: The Environment Agency's Climate Ready support service focuses on the priority risks and sectors in the National Adaptation Programme report, published by the Government in July 2013 and, therefore, targets organisations rather than the general public.

The service provides advice and support to help businesses, public sector and other organisations to adapt and build resilience to climate change. Support service work is available directly to the public, including the Climate Ready bulletin that is produced on a monthly basis and sent out to anyone who has registered to receive it. These bulletins publicise the events and information that the service and its partners continue to make available.

Corporation Tax

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the devolution of corporation tax is proposed for (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, and (3) Northern Ireland. [HL3238]

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they consider that the devolution of corporation tax to Scotland, Wales, or Northern Ireland would cause a reduction in the block grant under the Barnett Formula to any of those devolved administrations. [HL3239]

Lord Deighton: The Smith Commission reported on 27 November and the Government has announced it will now prepare draft legislative clauses to implement the Heads of Agreement by the end of January. The Smith Commission did not agree that corporation tax would be devolved to Scotland.

The Wales Bill, currently in Parliament, provides the legislative framework to support the implementation of the recommendations made in the first report of the Commission on Devolution in Wales (Silk Commission). The Wales Bill does not feature any devolution of corporation tax powers to Wales.

At Autumn Statement 2014, the Government announced that the devolution of a corporation tax rate-setting power to Northern Ireland could be implemented provided that the Northern Ireland Executive is able to

manage the financial implications. The parties in the Northern Ireland Executive are continuing talks aimed at resolving a number of issues including agreeing budgets for 2015-16 and putting the Executive's finances on a sustainable footing for the future.

Northern Ireland faces unique cross-border challenges from the very low corporation tax rate in the Republic, significant over-reliance on public sector employment and the challenging legacy of the Troubles. The devolution of corporation tax to Northern Ireland recognises those factors and is consistent with the UK's asymmetrical approach to devolution.

Any devolution of tax powers, such as corporation tax rate-setting powers, would require a corresponding reduction in the block grant to reflect the tax revenues that the UK Government would forego.

Cyprus

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the United Kingdom is still a guarantor power of Cyprus; what assessment they have made of whether Turkish-Cypriot property in Vasiliko is being confiscated to facilitate oil and gas exploitation in the south of Cyprus; and whether they have made any representations to the government of that country regarding the matter. [HL3342]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK continues to be one of the three Guarantor powers set out in the Treaty of Guarantee (1960). We are aware of media reports suggesting that confiscations are planned in the Vasiliko area. We have made no assessment of the potential impact of the proposed developments there on Turkish Cypriot-owned property, nor have we discussed this particular issue with the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. The UK strongly supports the UN-facilitated process for a comprehensive settlement, which remains the best way to address the complex issues related to the division of Cyprus.

Diabetes

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government which organisations are primarily responsible for raising diabetes awareness; and who is responsible for raising awareness of diabetes at (1) a national level, and (2) a regional level. [HL3395]

Earl Howe: Public Health England (PHE), NHS England and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence play a key role in raising awareness of diabetes at national level, while locally this is shared between public health, clinical commissioning groups and individual practitioners. Strategic Clinical Networks (SCNs) also have an important role to play in ensuring appropriate clinical advice to local commissioners and disseminating evidence about effectiveness.

Organisations such as Diabetes UK, Silver Star Diabetes, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the Association of British Clinical Diabetologists, also play a valuable and important part in raising the awareness of diabetes.

Disabled Students' Allowances

Asked by Lord Addington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of Disabled Students' Allowance is provided for (1) computers and assistive technology, and (2) training to use that technology. [HL3441]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Information on Disabled Students' Allowance expenditure is not available at the level requested.

A breakdown of Disabled Students' Allowance expenditure by allowance type was presented in 'Disabled Students' Allowance: Equality Analysis', which was published in October 2014." The publication can be found at the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364182/bis-14-1108-higher-education-disabled-students-allowances-equality-analysis.pdf

Asked by Lord Addington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of the Disabled Students' Allowance is provided as one-to-one support for students. [HL3442]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Information on Disabled Students' Allowance expenditure is not available at the level requested.

A breakdown of Disabled Students' Allowance expenditure by allowance type was presented in 'Disabled Students' Allowance: Equality Analysis', which was published in October 2014." The publication can be found at the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364182/bis-14-1108-higher-education-disabled-students-allowances-equality-analysis.pdf

Asked by Lord Addington

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to remove the automatic eligibility for any disabled student to the Disabled Students' Allowance. [HL3526]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: There is no automatic eligibility for Disabled Students Allowances. Students must satisfy certain personal and course eligibility conditions and must also provide evidence that they have a disability in order to be eligible for Disabled Students Allowances. That will continue.

DNA: Screening

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of personal DNA testing kits. [HL3336]

Earl Howe: The issues raised by personal genome testing kits were considered by the Human Genetics Commission's 2010 publication on the Common Framework of Principles for Direct to Consumer Testing Services. These principles were endorsed by the Department of Health as providing advice to companies who were considering marketing such services to United Kingdom customers.

Products used in direct-to-consumer testing services providing health-related information are regulated as in vitro diagnostic medical devices and are subject to European Union legislation that sets out minimum standards of safety and quality.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is the UK competent authority for medical devices. The MHRA does not have a role in assessing in vitro diagnostic medical devices before they come onto the market.

The role of the MHRA is to ensure that all medical devices placed on the UK market are compliant with the relevant legislation and to enforce this legislation on behalf of the Secretary of State. The MHRA fulfils this role by monitoring notified bodies and operating the UK medical device vigilance system, which involves assessing and responding to safety concerns involving devices.

Energy: Meters

Asked by Lord Tope

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with the energy industry concerning efficiency savings that could be made by sharing procurement, assets and information during the nationwide smart meter rollout. [HL3583]

Baroness Verma: The Government does not object to industry parties co-ordinating their activities in accordance with the rules of competition law. It has developed a governance structure for the Smart Metering Programme that enables the Government, industry and other parties to share information and discuss a range of potential improvements to the efficiency of industry-wide processes and practices. This includes the establishment of groups dedicated to technical and business processes and industry-wide installation and safety issues.

Asked by Lord Tope

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they will monitor efficiency savings made by the energy industry through sharing procurement, assets and information during the nationwide smart meter roll out. [HL3584]

Baroness Verma: The smart meter roll-out is being led by energy suppliers, who operate in a competitive market. This is expected to deliver the roll-out in the most cost-effective way. Government is developing a reporting framework which will be used to monitor efficiency savings made during the roll-out.

Asked by Lord Tope

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the following data in relation to smart meters will be made publicly available after the scheme roll out starts in 2015: (1) the average cost charged to consumers for a gas smart meter installation visit, (2) the average cost charged to consumers for an electricity smart meter installation visit, (3) the average cost charged to consumers for a gas smart meter, and (4) the average cost charged to consumers for an electricity smart meter. [HL3586]

Baroness Verma: Costs will not be charged upfront to consumers for either the installation visit or the smart meter. Industry costs, net of efficiency savings, will be recovered over the lifetime of the equipment via energy tariffs, as is the case now for traditional metering equipment. DECC has already committed to report on the costs and benefits of the roll out and is developing arrangements for this ahead of the main installation phase.

Entry Clearances: Israel

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the United Kingdom has a visa waiver agreement with Israel when the United States does not. [HL3641]

Lord Bates: The UK sets its visa regimes in light of immigration, crime and security risks, amongst other factors, and keeps these regimes under regular review. These risks and other factors vary between countries who set visa regimes, so it is quite natural that the United States and the UK will have different visa requirements for the same set of foreign nationals. The UK has no 'visa waiver agreement' with Israel.

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the admission into the United Kingdom to speak publicly of Professor Mordechai Kedar of Bar-Ilan University in Israel, and his reported remarks that the sisters and mothers of terrorists should be raped as a deterrent, whether they intend to reconsider the retention of the visa waiver agreement with Israel. [HL3642]

Lord Bates: The Home Office does not routinely comment on individual cases. This is because the Home Office has obligations in law to protect this information. The UK does not require Israeli citizens to hold a visa to visit the UK. Nevertheless, the Home Secretary can, in individual cases, decide whether a person should be excluded from the UK regardless of whether they require a visa to come to the UK or not. The UK sets its visa

regimes in light of immigration, crime and security risks, amongst other factors, and keeps these regimes under regular review. The UK has no 'visa waiver agreement' with Israel.

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the visa waiver agreement with Israel permits individuals undertaking, permitting or financing illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories to travel freely between Israel and the United Kingdom. [HL3643]

Lord Bates: In the same way as any other person admitted or granted entry to the UK, an Israeli citizen is expected to comply with the conditions of their stay in the UK and to abide by UK laws. Furthermore, watch list checks at the UK border identify persons who present a potential threat to the UK. The UK has no 'visa waiver agreement' with Israel.

European Union

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 4 December (HL3130), whether they will now answer the question asked rather than making a statement not related to the question originally asked, namely "whether they will consider recommending withdrawal from the European Union if their objectives cannot be met through negotiations". [HL3536]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: I refer the noble Lord to my answers of 20 November and 4 December. The Government's position remains the same: the European Union must reform to become more competitive, democratically accountable and fair for those inside and outside the Eurozone.

Flood Control

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the timescale for planned flood defence infrastructure improvement works. [HL3339]

Lord De Mauley: The Environment Agency manages a rolling programme of flood and coastal erosion risk management improvement projects.

More than 1,400 schemes announced on 2 December are scheduled to enter the development or construction programme between April 2015 and March 2021.

Details of the expected construction start dates for each of the projects is provided on GOV.UK.

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the reasoning behind the sums promised to each flood defence project. [HL3340]

Lord De Mauley: The Government's capital funding for flood and coastal erosion risk management projects is based on the economic benefits of schemes in terms of the damages of flooding or coastal erosion avoided and the number of households better protected. The funding formula used can be found on the GOV.UK website.

Fraud

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many prosecutions for phone scamming offences there were in each year from 2010. [HL3437]

Lord Wallace of Tankerness: The Crown Prosecution Service maintains a central record of the number of prosecutions it conducts for fraud and/or forgery offences; however, it is not possible to identify which of these offences were conducted, in whole or in part, through the telephone. To obtain this information would require a manual file examination which would incur a disproportionate cost.

Freedom of Expression

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend that under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill the Home Secretary will have the power to define what is and what is not acceptable speech in the United Kingdom. [HL3569]

Lord Bates: The Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill will not give the Home Secretary the power to define what is or is not acceptable speech in the UK.

Government Departments: Disabled Staff

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they have taken following the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Diversity and Equality Report (April 2014), which showed that staff with a disability reported higher experiences of discrimination, bullying or harassment than overall averages. [HL3335]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Following the 2013 Staff Survey results, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)'s Human Resources Committee formed a Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination (BHD) Action Group (chaired by a Director General, and made up of representatives from Human Resources, staff associations and Posts overseas). This group has worked towards developing a better working culture, encouraging staff to tackle or raise a concern as soon as possible and dispelling any perception that concerns will not be taken seriously and acted upon. We will continue to reinforce the message that managers are required to treat seriously all concerns raised; to be initially neutral; and to take action as appropriate. Advice on our Intranet has been streamlined, made more user-friendly, and is accessible to

all staff. There is also a 'Respect Toolkit' offering further guidance on BHD issues, and we are developing the role of our global network of 'First Response Officers' who can help support and advise individuals over BHD related concerns. These actions are not specific to staff with disabilities but cover all staff raising concerns about BHD. The 2014 staff survey results are currently being analysed and we will again act on the outcomes of that analysis.

The FCO's Human Resources Directorate has a dedicated Disability Support Team. This team is responsible for providing advice and support to disabled colleagues and their line managers, and for raising disability awareness and confidence across our organisation. The Team work with contracted experts who help to raise awareness and provide support materials across the disability spectrum. This includes providing one-to-one support, and support at team and departmental level as required. Currently we are also running a number of regular "all staff drop-in awareness sessions" which each have a focus on an individual disability. We are also working closely with Civil Service colleagues on a more joined up approach to disability support across the Civil Service.

Green Belt

Asked by Lord Marlesford

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list those green belts in which they are considering the removal of existing green belt protection from development. [HL3562]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As pledged in the collation Agreement, this Government has safeguarded national Green Belt protection. We have abolished the top-down Regional Strategies of the last Administration which sought to delete the Green Belt in and around 30 towns and cities.

In recent months, we have published waste planning policy which increases protection of the Green Belt; issued planning guidance which re-affirms the importance of the Green Belt during Local Plan preparation; and have consulted on proposed changes to planning policy on traveller sites to further increase Green Belt safeguards.

Health Professions

Asked by Lord Willis of Knaresborough

To ask Her Majesty's Government which health professions have retained a national research unit to collect data on the profession; and what is the current annual budget for each. [HL3360]

Earl Howe: The Department's Policy Research Programme (PRP) funds research in three main ways:

- long term programmes of research in academic policy research units, designed to meet the longer-term research needs of the Department as well as to provide a rapid response function;

- large-scale initiatives, comprising linked groups of studies, providing a range of empirical evidence on a key policy area or issue; and

- single projects and literature or scoping reviews.

A PRP contract with the National Nursing Research Unit at King's College London ended in December 2012. This funded a programme of policy-relevant nursing research including research based on analysis of new and existing datasets. The PRP does not currently fund research units in any specific health professions. The PRP will continue to fund new high quality research into policy and practice in nursing or other health professions using its policy research units and programme or other mechanisms as necessary. Details of research units and other research funded by the PRP is available on the website of the PRP Central Commissioning Facility:

<http://www.prp-ccf.org.uk/PRPFiles/Commissioned%20Projects%20-%20Nov%202014LaySummaries.pdf>

Homelessness

Asked by Lord Ouseley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the implications for family life for those households considered as being at risk of becoming homeless, in the light of the recent report from Shelter. [HL3508]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: This Government is committed to preventing and tackling homelessness. England has one of the strongest safety nets in the world that remains in place – protected in law – to ensure that homeless families always have a roof over their heads, and we have increased spending on schemes to prevent homelessness, making over £500 million available to help the most vulnerable in society.

Repossession rates are 31 per cent lower than this time last year and are predicted to fall even further. County court mortgage possession claims continue to fall to their lowest point in a decade. This is thanks to our work to tackle the deficit and keep interest rates low, helping more families to stay in their hard earned homes.

We are making home ownership an affordable and accessible prospect through Help to Buy and our work to get Britain building. In the last year alone planning permissions have been granted on 230,000 new homes and we have delivered 200,000 affordable homes since 2010.

And we are introducing measures to ensure tenants can be confident they will get a fair deal. Our How to Rent guide helps tenants know their rights and responsibilities, and letting agents are now required to belong to a redress scheme so landlords and tenants have somewhere to go if they get a raw deal.

Housing: Taxation

Asked by Lord Ashcroft

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there has been any decline in stamp duty receipts on higher priced properties since public talk of a "mansion" tax began. [HL3324]

Lord Deighton: Statistics on Stamp Duty Land Tax receipts by consideration band can be found in Table 3.1 of the 'UK Stamp Tax Statistics 2013-14' publication. The following table provides data, from that publication, for the estimated yield attributable to residential property within the £1 million to £2 million and above £2 million consideration bands for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014:

	£1,000,001- £2,000,000	Above £2,000,000	
			Non-corporate bodies Corporate bodies
2012-2013	585	800	70
2013-2014	805	1,010	70

Amounts: £ million. Figures may not sum due to rounding conventions

Human Papillomavirus: Vaccination

Asked by The Countess of Mar

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many adverse reactions to Cervarix, Gardasil and unbranded human papilloma virus vaccines have been reported to the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency up to the most recent date; how many of those reports are of serious adverse reactions for each category; and what is the age specific rate that these figures represent. [HL3381]

Earl Howe: A total of 7947 suspected adverse reaction reports with human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccines have been reported to the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) via the Yellow Card Scheme up to 3 December 2014. It is important to note that a Yellow Card report is not proof of a side effect occurring, but a suspicion by the reporter that the vaccine may have been the cause. The frequency of known side effects is listed in the product information (the Summary of Product Characteristics for health professionals and the Patient Information Leaflet) which are provided with the vaccines.

The following table provides a breakdown of these reports by brand and seriousness.

Vaccine Brand	Total number of reports	Number of serious reports (% of total)
Cervarix	6,260	1,762 (28%)
Gardasil	1,200	459 (38%)
HPV Brand unspecified	488	308 (63%)
Total	7,948*	2529 (32%)

Note:

*The total number of reports received will not equal the total in the table above as some reports may have more than one suspect vaccine.

The MHRA does not hold data on age-specific usage therefore we are unable to provide the age-specific rate that these figures represent. The MHRA continually reviews safety of the vaccine and, following administration of over 7 million doses in the UK alone, no serious new risks have been identified. The benefits in protecting against HPV-related disease far outweigh any possible side effects of the vaccine.

Immigration Controls

Asked by Lord Morrow

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bates on 20 November (HL2506), in respect of persons with a conviction for sex offences, violent conduct, and manslaughter or murder who have been permitted entry to the United Kingdom, (1) what public protection arrangements are instigated and whether they are a mandatory condition of entry, and (2) in respect of sex offences, what additional protection is in place for monitoring, sex-offender registering and prohibition from working with children and vulnerable adults, in line with arrangements for United Kingdom citizens convicted of the same offences. [HL3300]

Lord Bates: Foreign nationals who are convicted of such offences in the United Kingdom will be subject to the same monitoring and public protection arrangements as British nationals. Those sent to prison will also be considered for deportation. Furthermore, where a foreign national is in the United Kingdom and has been identified as having been convicted of a serious sexual or violent offence abroad, for example after a police check on foreign convictions following an arrest, the case will be referred to the Home Office to consider if deportation is appropriate.

Where previous foreign convictions for sexual offences are known, the police can apply to a magistrates' court for a notification order which makes the individual subject to the same notification requirements as if they had been convicted in the UK (i.e. they are put on the "sex offenders' register"). Similarly, where there exists a foreign conviction for specified violent offences, including murder and manslaughter, and where the individual poses a risk of serious violent harm to the public the police may apply for a violent offender order

under the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008, as amended by section 119 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014. Serious sexual and violent offences committed overseas which are known to our authorities may be included on Disclosure and Barring Service disclosures. They may also be taken into account in deciding whether to bar an individual from working with children or vulnerable adults.

Immigration: Poland

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bates on 19 November (HL2693), whether they regard the current level of immigration from Poland to the United Kingdom to be sustainable. [HL3409]

Lord Bates: The UK is open to the brightest and best, but immigration must be controlled in the national interest. Across government, we are working hard to bring net migration down and address the factors which draw people to Britain for the wrong reasons. Our reforms have cut net migration from outside the EU by nearly a quarter since 2010 - close to levels not seen since the late 1990s.

We have introduced tough domestic reforms to ensure that our controls on accessing benefits and services, including the NHS and social housing, are amongst the tightest in Europe. These include measures to prevent EU job seekers and involuntarily unemployed EU workers from claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for longer than three months unless they have a genuine prospect of work. We have also introduced measures to ensure that new EU job seekers will be unable to access Jobseeker's Allowance, or Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit, until they have been resident in the UK for three months.

The Prime Minister has made clear that further steps are needed to address immigration from the European Union. We have given specific consideration to the sustainability of levels of migration from Poland.

In Vitro Fertilisation

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Earl Howe on 30 October 2013 (WA 259), 26 November 2013 (WA 263), 3 December 2013 (WA 36) and 3 December 2014 (HL3158), whether they can provide specific examples of internationally authoritative sources using terms like "genetic modification," "GM" and "germline" in "rather mixed and odd ways"; and what assessment they have made of the consistency of such use compared to the consistency of their definition with sources they consider to be authoritative. [HL3461]

Earl Howe: As the noble Lord is aware, there is no universally agreed definition of genetic modification or "GM" in humans.

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's report of its public dialogue exercise referred to the mitochondrial donation techniques as "germ-line modification", and the Nuffield Council on Bioethics' review of Novel Techniques for the Prevention of Mitochondrial DNA Disorders referred to them as a form of "germ line gene therapy". As the purpose of mitochondrial donation would be to prevent the transmission of serious mitochondrial disease from mother to child, we agree with this.

Income Tax: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people resident in each parliamentary constituency in Northern Ireland were employed in the Republic of Ireland and were liable for United Kingdom income tax in (1) 2011–12, (2) 2012–13, and (3) 2013–14. [HL3358]

Lord Deighton: The information requested is not held by HM Revenue & Customs.

Israel

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman's recent suggestion that Israel should offer economic incentives to encourage the transfer of Israeli Arabs to a Palestinian state. [HL3349]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The British Government has not made an assessment of this suggestion. We are clear with the Israeli authorities that we believe it is important that all Israeli citizens receive equal rights and treatment under Israeli law, including the Arab-Israeli minority.

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 21 November (HL2860), what representations they will make to the government of Israel to hold a full and transparent investigation into the death of Youssef al Ramouni. [HL3407]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We are not planning to make any representations to the Israeli authorities on the issue of the death of Youssef al Ramouni, as the Israeli police have concluded their investigation.

Local Government: Pensions

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the current level of the Local Government Pension Scheme deficit. [HL3479]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Scheme conducts an actuarial valuation every three years. The 2013 valuation

estimated that the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales had a funding level of 79% and a deficit of £47 billion.

The shadow Scheme Advisory Board has also brought together the funds' triennial valuation reports to provide a view of the Scheme's overall position (<http://www.lgpsboard.org/index.php/schemedata/scheme-valuation>). The Government has asked the shadow Board to identify and assess alternative ways to address the deficit and looks forward to receiving their proposals.

In addition, the Government introduced a reformed Local Government Pension Scheme from 1 April 2014, which will help the funds to reduce this deficit and ensure the scheme remains affordable in the long term and fair to both scheme members and taxpayers. Furthermore, the Government's consultation Opportunities for collaboration, cost savings and efficiencies set out how the funds could reduce their investment costs by a further £660 million each year by working together and investing more efficiently.

The consultation is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-pension-scheme-opportunities-for-collaboration-cost-savings-and-efficiencies>

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they estimate that savings could be made to the administration of the Local Government Pension Scheme and the operation of its sub-funds if the management of the funds were moved from active managers to tracker funds; and if so, to what extent. [HL3480]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The consultation Opportunities for collaboration, cost savings and efficiencies set out how the Local Government Pension Scheme could deliver annual savings of £660 million by reforming the way the funds make their investments. Advice commissioned by the Minister for the Cabinet Office and the Minister for Local Government using the Contestable Policy Fund was used to inform the consultation. Of the £660 million savings identified, the analysis showed that £420 million could be found by using passive, rather than active management of listed assets such as bonds and equities. Over 200 consultation responses were received and a Government response will be published early in 2015.

Both the consultation and supporting analysis are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-pension-scheme-opportunities-for-collaboration-cost-savings-and-efficiencies>

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what the performance of active fund managers has been over the last six years in the 89 sub-funds of the Local Government Pension Scheme. [HL3481]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Department does not hold data on the performance of active fund managers working Local Government Pension Scheme funds.

The consultation Opportunities for collaboration, cost savings and efficiencies was developed using analysis provided to the Minister for the Cabinet Office and the Minister for Local Government using the Contestable Policy Fund. The analysis examined the investment returns of the Scheme as a whole in each of the major equity markets as well as for bonds and gilts. The evidence demonstrated that over the ten years to 31 March 2013, regardless of whether active or passive fund managers were used, the aggregate performance of the Scheme had been in line with each market index.

Both the consultation and supporting analysis are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-pension-scheme-opportunities-for-collaboration-cost-savings-and-efficiencies>

M4

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether documentation held by the Highways Agency on the M4 junctions smart motorway proposals includes any reference to the charging of motorists within those junctions. [HL3597]

Baroness Kramer: In order to make sure that the local community and road users have the opportunity to understand and comment on our proposals for the M4 Junctions 3 to 12 smart motorway scheme, we are undertaking a public consultation which will end on 21 December 2014.

The proposals do not include any reference to the charging of motorists, and therefore is not included in any of the documentation.

Mental Health Services

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of progress by the National Health Service and other local agencies in implementing the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat. [HL3328]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many local health and care areas have implemented the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat. [HL3329]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what role Health and Well-Being Boards will have in overseeing progress on implementing the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat. [HL3330]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government which local body is accountable to NHS England and Ministers for the implementation of the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat. [HL3331]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what arrangements they have established to monitor progress on the implementation of the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat. [HL3332]

Earl Howe: The national Crisis Care Concordat was published in February to improve service responses to people in mental health crisis. There is a specific emphasis on delivering improved outcomes for people in crisis at a local level. Partner organisations are expected to demonstrate their commitments by signing up to a local declaration and agreeing a joint action plan to bring about the improvements needed.

We are asking every area to develop a shared action plan and commit to review, monitor and track improvements. In particular, we have asked for a commitment from all areas to reduce the use of police stations as places of safety.

The particular focus on Local Crisis Declarations is designed to enable each partnership to understand the issues in their area and develop solutions.

All localities are working to have their declarations agreed by all the relevant local agencies by the end of the year. We are working closely with the mental health charity Mind to support the work in localities.

Declarations have already been made by London, Portsmouth, Wiltshire, Kent, Hertfordshire, Gloucestershire, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, Durham and Darlington, Bedfordshire & Luton, North Yorkshire & York, Cheshire, Oxfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Doncaster, Norfolk, Suffolk, Devon & Cornwall and Nottinghamshire. Plans are in place for all other local areas to agree their local declarations by the end of the year.

Signed local declarations and the agreed action plans have been made available on a national website to demonstrate coverage across England. This is available at: www.crisiscareconcordat.org.uk

The Concordat does not specify which organisation should lead this work locally. As part of Operational Resilience and Capacity Planning for 2014-15 NHS England is asking for evidence of sign up to local mental health crisis care concordat arrangements as part of local plans.

Health and wellbeing boards have a pivotal role in delivery by bringing together health and social care commissioners, the local community and wider partners. Through the board, these partners work together to identify the health and wellbeing needs of their local population. Some areas have managed, and are managing,

the agreement of their local crisis declaration through their Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Department has commissioned an evaluation of the impact of the national Concordat.

Middle East

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to discourage incitement to violence and to promote religious tolerance in Jerusalem. [[HL3406](#)]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We have urged both Israeli and Palestinian leaders to exert their influence to discourage incitement and promote religious tolerance in Jerusalem. It is vital that the longstanding status quo in respect of access to and governance of the Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif be preserved.

Mordechai Kedar

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any attempt was made to prevent Professor Mordechai Kedar from entering the United Kingdom in order to speak to the Zionist Federation and Sussex Friends of Israel in Brighton on 8 December, in the light of his reported comments in respect of raping the wives and mothers of Hamas militants. [[HL3496](#)]

Lord Bates: The Home Office does not routinely comment on individual cases. This is because the Home Office has obligations in law to protect this information.

The Government takes very seriously any suggestion that the presence of a particular person in this country might not be conducive to the public good.

When such cases are brought to our attention, the Home Office will investigate and take action where appropriate.

Mortality Rates

*Asked by **Baroness Greengross***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the indicators measuring under-75 mortality rates in (1) the NHS Outcomes Framework, and (2) the Clinical Commissioning Groups Outcomes Indicator Set, are compatible with the obligations against age discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. [[HL3377](#)]

Earl Howe: One of the underpinning principles of the NHS Outcomes Framework is to ensure that it encourages the promotion of equality in line with the Equality Act 2010.

The Domain 1 premature mortality indicators in the NHS Outcomes Framework and Clinical Commissioning Groups Outcomes Indicator Set are capped at age 75 because the attribution of the cause of death is more vexed for older people, who often have co-morbidities. Therefore, including those aged 75 and above could lead these indicators to become misleading.

However, to ensure all age groups are covered equally, 'Life Expectancy at 75' is an overarching indicator in Domain 1 of the NHS Outcomes Framework. This indicator captures ages 75 and over and all conditions.

The above information is contained in the NHS Outcomes Framework 2011-12 Equalities Impact Assessment and the NHS Outcomes Framework 2011-12, both of which have already been placed in the Library.

NHS: Finance

*Asked by **Lord Mawson***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money they have redirected from acute services to community services in England, for example through community provision for people with severe learning difficulties; and how much money is flowing in the opposite direction. [[HL3310](#)]

Earl Howe: Local National Health Service clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for funding the majority of acute and community services. NHS England sets CCG funding allocations but does not direct CCGs in how those funds should be applied between different services. The in-year reporting of CCG expenditure does not provide the fine detail on movements in expenditure between acute services and community services. However, the NHS does produce programme budgeting data on historical expenditure which provides information on expenditure by major health condition as well as, for last three years, a breakdown by care-setting. The data on expenditure by care-settings is relatively new and is not yet considered robust enough to make comparisons of expenditure by care-setting. The 2013-14 data will be available in 2015, under a revised format.

NHS: Standards

*Asked by **Baroness Suttie***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the review of the National Peer Review Programme's priorities will be reported; and what plans there are to continue that programme's review of children and young people's paediatric diabetes services in 2015 and 2016. [[HL3333](#)]

Earl Howe: We are advised that NHS England is currently reviewing the national peer review programme with a view to considering how its success might be extended into other new areas of specialised commissioning.

Regardless of the outcome of this review, cancer peer review will continue to play a critical part of any broader peer review programme NHS England may look to introduce. NHS England is currently building co-commissioning arrangements with Clinical Commissioning Groups and future programmes of work could be agreed - these may include Paediatric Diabetes.

Northern Ireland Government

Asked by Lord Maginnis of Drumglass

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the roles played by Lord Trimble, Lord Kilclooney, Lord Empey and Lord Maginnis of Drumglass during the talks that led to the 1998 Belfast Agreement, when the Prime Minister or the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland last consulted them; and whether they intend to do so before attending the proposed final talks this week. [HL3564]

Baroness Randerson: The cross-party talks are ultimately a process owned by the political parties. It is the parties' responsibility to decide which of their representatives should be participants in the talks. The Government is doing all it can to move the process forward towards a shared future in Northern Ireland. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland provides regular briefings for Peers.

Nurses

Asked by Lord Willis of Knaresborough

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the National Research Unit for Nursing was disbanded; and which organisation was given responsibility for collecting statistics concerning the nursing profession. [HL3359]

Earl Howe: The Department's Policy Research Programme (PRP) funds research in three main ways:

- long term programmes of research in academic policy research units, designed to meet the longer-term research needs of the Department as well as to provide a rapid response function;
- large-scale initiatives, comprising linked groups of studies, providing a range of empirical evidence on a key policy area or issue; and
- single projects and literature or scoping reviews.

A PRP contract with the National Nursing Research Unit at King's College London ended in December 2012. This funded a programme of policy-relevant nursing research including research based on analysis of new and existing datasets. The PRP does not currently fund research units in any specific health professions. The PRP will continue to fund new high quality research into policy and practice in nursing or other health professions using its policy research units and programme or other mechanisms as necessary. Details of research units and other research funded by the PRP is available on the website of the PRP Central Commissioning Facility:

<http://www.prp-ccf.org.uk/PRPFiles/Commissioned%20Projects%20-%20Nov%202014LaySummaries.pdf>

Nurses: Student Wastage

Asked by Lord Willis of Knaresborough

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current attrition rate in numbers and percentage for student nurses in each year of their training at each higher education institute for each of the past three years. [HL3361]

Earl Howe: Health Education England (HEE) took responsibility for commissioning pre-registration nurse education on 1 April 2013 and has a mandate deliverable to reduce attrition over the coming years. To replace the Department's national data collection exercise, HEE has undertaken a data collection exercise to identify training output as a percentage of reported starters. The figures for the output, as a percentage of starters expressed as a projected attrition rate, in each of the last three years for which information is available are in the following table.

Attrition as a percentage of reported starters:

Year course started	Projected attrition
2010-11	24.3%
2011-12	22.1%
2012-13	20.9%

Source: Health Education England

HEE is determined to ensure that there is a year on year reduction in levels of attrition and will be working with universities to deliver this, including ensuring a single definition of attrition and how it is managed.

Offences against Children: Internet

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what date the Australian referrals of paedophile activity were made to the National Crime Agency. [HL3570]

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of the 110 named persons referred by the Australian authorities to the National Crime Agency have been (1) the subject of an investigation, (2) the subject of a charge, (3) prosecuted, and (4) the subject of treatment. [HL3571]

Lord Bates: The National Crime Agency (NCA) does not recognise the figure of 110 referrals highlighted in the question. As is the case with all referrals from law enforcement agencies, the intelligence is assessed by the NCA. Where appropriate, the referral is developed and disseminated to UK police forces.

Offences against Children: Rotherham

Asked by Lord Ahmed

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Director of Public Prosecutions has any plans to bring cases against persons other than the five men convicted in respect of child sexual exploitation in Rotherham. [HL3371]

Lord Wallace of Tankerness: South Yorkshire Police are currently conducting investigations relating to child sexual exploitation in Rotherham. As these are ongoing it would be inappropriate to make further comment. The Crown Prosecution Service will consider all potential offences referred to it by the police in accordance with the two-stage test set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

Outdoor Education

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have assessed the evidence of the impact of learning outside the classroom on (1) attainment, and (2) social skills. [HL3538]

Lord Nash: The Department for Education has assessed the evidence of the impact of learning outside the classroom on attainment, social skills and other outcomes. In 2008, Ofsted reported that good quality education outside the classroom led to improved outcomes for pupils, including better achievement, standards, motivation, personal development and behaviour. This report is published online at:

www.ofsted.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/survey-s-and-good-practice/1/Learning%20outside%20the%20classroom.pdf

In addition, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), which is funded by the Department, found that outdoor adventure learning^[1] interventions consistently show positive benefits on academic attainment and wider outcomes such as self-confidence. The research found that, on average, pupils who participate in adventure learning interventions appear to make approximately three months additional progress over the course of the year.

[1] <http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning/>

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many schools have dedicated learning outside the classroom coordinators. [HL3540]

Lord Nash: The Department for Education does not collect information regarding schools who have dedicated learning outside the classroom co-ordinators.

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in the revised curricula for GCSE and GCE Geography, Science and Biology, practical fieldwork is an essential, assessed component. [HL3541]

Lord Nash: Fieldwork is an essential component of geography. The new reformed GCSE in geography will require pupils to undertake at least two fieldwork activities in contrasting environments. We recently consulted on new content for geography A level, based on recommendations from the A level Content Advisory Board. The proposed content requires A level students to undertake one independent student investigation involving fieldwork. AS students are also required to undertake fieldwork.

The new content for combined science and biology GCSEs sets clear expectations that students should undertake fieldwork. The content for A level biology sets out the practical skills and techniques needed for biology, including a specific reference to using sampling techniques in fieldwork.

Assessment arrangements are a matter for Ofqual, the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation and I have asked its Chief Regulator, Glenys Stacey, to write directly to Baroness Miller. A copy of her reply will be placed in the House Library.

Pakistan

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the role and activities of Khatm-e-Nubuwwat and in particular its role in the prosecution in Pakistan of Mrs Asia Bibi on charges of blasphemy. [HL3460]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We are aware of the role of Khatm-e-Nubuwwat in Pakistan and the support it provides to the prosecution team in the Asia Bibi case. We remain concerned about the case of Asia Bibi and the court's decision to uphold the imposition of the death penalty for blasphemy. We hope the verdict will be overturned on appeal. We trust the courts in Pakistan will ensure a fair and swift hearing of her appeal in the Supreme Court.

Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel concerning the United Nations report on the number of patients in Gaza waiting to leave for critical treatment; and what progress the European Union has made in respect of ending the blockade. [HL3351]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We have not raised this UN report with the Israeli authorities, but are working with them to ensure continued smooth access to Gaza for UK medical professionals as part of the Department for International Development's Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) programme. The EU continues to urge the parties to fully implement the temporary mechanism for monitoring and verification of reconstruction materials negotiated by the UN, Palestinian Authority and Israel, as

an important step towards the necessary urgent opening of all crossing points. The EU continues to stress the importance of a change of the Israeli policy, allowing Gaza to trade normally and on a permanent basis.

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to encourage the Geneva Convention summit to discuss the situation in Palestine and human rights. [HL3405]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK is firmly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights and compliance with international law. We are considering our position on the conference. It is important that any conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions takes a balanced and non politicised approach. It should consider any violations, including attacks emanating from the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and action by all parties (i.e. Israel, Hamas and other militant groups).

Parliament

*Asked by **Lord Tebbit***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total cost to the Exchequer of the operations of Parliament in (1) 2013–14, and (2) 1983–84. [HL3338]

Lord Deighton: Although the costs of operations are met from the Exchequer, the House of Commons and House of Lords are not government departments and their budgets are a matter for each House rather than the government. The Clerk of the House of Commons and the Clerk of the Parliaments in the House of Lords, as the respective Accounting Officers, account for the expenditure of each House.

For reference, the costs attributable to the operations of Parliament were £358.2 million in 2013/14 (on an accruals basis); and £22.9 million in 1983/84 (on a cash basis). It should be noted, however, that the latter amount does not include services, such as printing and works, paid for at the time out of government departmental budgets. This, along with the different basis of the two figures, means they are not comparable.

Pensioners: Health Services

*Asked by **Lord Laird***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the latest year for which figures are available, how many registered United Kingdom state pensioners for whom the United Kingdom is responsible for health costs were living in each of the other European Economic Area countries, and vice versa; and how much was paid and received by and from each country. [HL3430]

*Asked by **Lord Laird***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the annual reduction in the United Kingdom payments to

the Republic of Ireland of 1.13 per cent for pensioner healthcare costs will continue beyond 2013–14; if not, what new arrangements are being made; what were the most recent annual payments made and received from that state; and whether they will place the relevant correspondence on the current reduction process in the Library of the House. [HL3431]

Earl Howe: Information about how many registered United Kingdom state pensioners for whom the UK is responsible for health costs were living in each of the other European Economic Area countries, and vice versa; and how much was paid and received by and from each country is provided in the following tables.

Live 5 December 2014, UK responsible for		Live 5 December 2014, Foreign Authorities (FA) responsible for	
Registration UK	S1 & E121	Registration FA	S1 & E121
Austria	592	Austria	42
Belgium	500	Belgium	133
Bulgaria	610	Bulgaria	8
Croatia	23	Croatia	0
Czech Republic	132	Czech Republic	4
Denmark	28	Denmark	50
Estonia	27	Estonia	3
Finland	53	Finland	0
France	43,421	France	121
Germany	2,987	Germany	365
Greece	2,428	Greece	5
Hungary	412	Hungary	3
Iceland	6	Iceland	1
Ireland	37,442*	Ireland	1,323*
Italy	2,905	Italy	11
Latvia	37	Latvia	1
Liechtenstein	0	Liechtenstein	0
Lithuania	29	Lithuania	4
Luxembourg	50	Luxembourg	6
Malta	2,646	Malta	2

Norway	46	Norway	98	Liechtenstein	0	0
Poland	458	Poland	108	Lithuania	10,341	10,868
Portugal	3,668	Portugal	6	Luxembourg	320,396	12,730
Romania	26	Romania	2	Malta (Waiver) ³	N/A	N/A
Slovakia	21	Slovakia	3	Netherlands	1,142,037	2,533,415
Slovenia	75	Slovenia	2	Norway (Waiver) ²	0	0
Spain	73,028	Spain	24	Poland	358,835	190,376
Sweden	148	Sweden	100	Portugal	3,912,765	14,491
Switzerland	351	Switzerland	21	Romania	2,048	0
The Netherlands	253	The Netherlands	1,029	Slovakia	9,212	3,321
The Rep of Cyprus	12,236	The Rep of Cyprus	0	Slovenia	57,255	0
Total	184,638	Total	3,475	Spain	208,654,883	72,172
Source: MedBens systemNotes: *Based on the formula calculation for 2013				Sweden	422,315	321,365
<i>European Economic Area (EEA) Medical Costs Claims by EEA Member States Against UK (by Article) Resource Outturn Totals: 2013-14 Pensioner Activity</i>				Switzerland	1,308,223	65,812
Country	£ Paid by UK	£ Paid to UK		Total	580,491,287	12,190,802
Austria	1,814,008	180,715		Source: Resource Accounting and Budgeting exercise. Totals are based on estimates of the costs of EEA healthcare claims made annually for the purposes of provisions made in the Department accounts in accordance with Treasury resource accounting rules.		
Belgium	2,179,591	478,212		Notes:		
Bulgaria	37,499	14,207		1 Denmark – Full Waiver		
Cyprus	10,890,351	0		2 Estonia and Norway – Waiver, excepting former Article 22.1c (patient referral) and Article 55.1c (industrial injury) claims.		
Czech Republic	116,251	10,513		3 Finland, Hungary and Malta – Waiver, excepting former Article 22.1c (patient referral) claims.		
Denmark (Waiver) ¹	N/A	N/A		I refer the noble Lord to HL3094 and the extract from the letter of 11 July 2011 included in that reply. In that extract, it sets out that for the period of the current arrangement, 2010-2013, UK liability would fall by 1.13% a year, starting at 40% and resulting in a UK liability of 35.48% in 2013. The 1.13% reduction was agreed after both parties agreed this figure as the average downward trend in UK liability for pensioners since the start of the bilateral agreement in 1971.		
Estonia (Waiver) ²	N/A	0		Discussions on new arrangements to determine respective pensioner numbers for 2015-16 onwards are continuing. Subject to formal confirmation we expect that the previously agreed 1.13% reduction will continue to apply for 2014-15.		
Finland (Waiver) ³	0	0		The UK's pensioner payments to Ireland for 2013 were €211 million. This represents a payment on account, which is 80% of the estimated total payment due and settled that will be finalised following publication of Ireland's average costs for that year. The pensioner payments from Ireland to the UK for 2013 were £5.9 million.		
France	112,221,440	340,119				
Germany	3,182,712	1,196,524				
Greece	6,181,850	13,639				
Hungary (Waiver) ³	0	0				
Iceland	0	0				
Ireland	223,761,423	6,707,569				
Italy	3,889,593	24,755				
Latvia	18,256	0				

Pensions: Taxation

Asked by Lord Beecham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the estimated annual cost to the Exchequer of the proposals to dispense with the 55 per cent charge or inheritance tax on lump sums derived from drawdown or other pensions. [HL3423]

Lord Deighton: This government believes that people who work hard and save all their lives should be able to pass on their pension pot to the next generation.

From April 2015, individuals will be able to pass on their unused defined contribution pension savings to any nominated beneficiary when they die, instead of paying the 55 per cent charge which currently applies. If the individual dies before age 75, the beneficiary will pay no tax on the funds. If they die after age 75, the beneficiary will pay their marginal rate of Income Tax, or 45 per cent if the funds are taken as a lump sum payment. From April 2016, lump sum payments will also be taxed at the recipient's marginal rate. Additionally, from April 2015, any future payments from joint life and guaranteed term annuities will be tax free for beneficiaries of any individuals who die under the age of 75.

The forecast Exchequer cost of these changes is £50 million in 2015-16 rising to £185 million in 2019-20. This has been published on page 46 of the 'Autumn Statement 2014 policy costings' document with the relevant table copied below:

Exchequer impact (£m)	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Defined Benefit Transfers	0	+95	+180	+255	+325	+295
Reduced Annual Allowance and Small Pots Rules	0	+15	-50	-115	-120	-120
Death Benefits and Joint Life Guaranteed Annuities	0	-50	-155	-165	-175	-185
Total	0	+60	-25	-25	+30	-10

Personal Income

Asked by Lord McAvoy

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the report by the London School of Economics and the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex on changes to benefits, income tax and income distribution. [HL3388]

Lord Deighton: The distributional analysis published alongside Autumn Statement 2014, and at every fiscal

event since the government came into office, represents the most complete, rigorous and detailed record of the impact of this government's policies on households. Unlike other analyses, it looks not only at the effect of direct tax and welfare decisions, but also the impact of changes to indirect tax (such as the freeze to fuel duty) and changes to spending on public services.

This analysis clearly shows that the richest households have made the largest contribution towards reducing the deficit. In fact, by 2015-16 the net cash contribution to reducing the deficit of the richest 20 per cent will be larger than the net contribution of the remaining 80 per cent put together.

Postgraduate Education

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to Master's degree funding opportunities. [HL3385]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: At Autumn Statement 2014 the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the Government's intention to introduce an income contingent postgraduate loan of up to £10,000 for those students aged under 30 studying for a 1 year full-time, or 2 year part-time, Master's course. BIS will launch a public consultation in the New Year on the loan terms and eligibility criteria, before finalising the design of the scheme.

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what the repayment terms for the proposed postgraduate student loan system will be. [HL3436]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Repayment terms for taught postgraduate loans announced at Autumn Statement have not been finalised. The Government will launch a consultation early in the New Year to inform the design and terms of the loan before final decisions are taken.

Postgraduate taught loans will be designed so that most individuals will repay in full, in recognition of the high private return to individuals, but they will beat commercial rates. One way of doing this is to charge an interest rate of RPI+3%, with repayments of 9% of income above a threshold of £21,000, frozen for 5 years, repaid concurrently with undergraduate loans.

Radicalism

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what they consider to constitute "extremist" speech. [HL3567]

Lord Bates: The Government's definition of extremism, as set out in the 2011 Prevent Strategy, is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This includes calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. The Home Office now has responsibility for a new counter-extremism strategy to tackle extremism in all its forms, which will be published next year.

Shipping: Exhaust Emissions

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they supported the creation of European Union rules requiring shipping companies to use more low emission fuel; and what assessment they have made of the estimate by P&O Ferries that it will result in increases in fares from £160 to £210 for a family of four travelling from Dover to Calais by sea. [[HL3535](#)]

Baroness Kramer: The rules concerning low emission fuel to which the Noble Lord refers are part of the International Maritime Organization's MARPOL Convention, a treaty to which the UK is a party. The UK supported the development of these standards when they were negotiated in the International Maritime Organization. The Government also supported these standards, but not any 'gold-plating' of them, in the subsequent negotiations on an EU Directive covering sulphur emissions from ships. The shipping industry has known that it would need to comply with these international rules ever since they were adopted by the International Maritime Organisation in October 2008.

The Government's aim is to implement the sulphur limits in a way that minimises the economic impact on the industry. We have not made a detailed assessment of the costs to P&O Ferries which have been reported in the media. We recognise that ticket prices may have to increase to cover the cost of low sulphur fuel, but falling oil prices should offset at least some of this increase. We are looking at ways of helping industry meet the new regulatory requirements. We have already been successful in 2014 in supporting shipowners and ports who applied for EU assistance under the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) programme to help purchase innovative technologies. We propose to take matters further and identify additional options for financial assistance to affected parts of the UK shipping and ports industries.

Smith Commission

Asked by Lord Christopher

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to publish impact and risk assessments on the Smith Commission's recommendations. [[HL3594](#)]

Lord Wallace of Tankerness: The Government has committed to producing draft clauses by Burns' Night, 25 January 2015. Individual parties have made commitments to introduce legislation to Parliament following the General Election in May 2015. It is expected that formal introduction of legislation will be accompanied by supporting documents in the usual way, including Impact Assessments.

Sudan

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Sudan about religious freedom in that country and reports of police persecution of the Khartoum Bahri Evangelical Church. [[HL3433](#)]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We raise our concerns about freedom of religion with the Government of Sudan as part of our regular engagement on human rights issues. Officials from our Embassy in Khartoum most recently raised this issue with the External Affairs Secretariat of the National Congress Party (the ruling party in Sudan) and the government's National Human Rights Commission. We have highlighted our concerns about the case involving Khartoum Bahri Evangelical Church and are seeking a meeting with the Government of Sudan.

Telecommunications

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to introduce a communications data bill in this Parliament. [[HL3589](#)]

Lord Bates: The Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill, which is currently before Parliament, includes provisions for data to be retained to enable the resolution of IP addresses.

The provisions in the Bill will not bridge all of the gaps we face in our communications data capabilities, including, in particular, those relating to so-called "weblogs". This is something that will need to be addressed in the next Parliament.

Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support services are currently available to victims and survivors of Northern Ireland-related acts of terrorism in Great Britain. [[HL3355](#)]

Lord Faulks: Individual victims and survivors of Northern Ireland related acts of terrorism who are resident in England and Wales are able to apply for funding from the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) in Northern Ireland. The VSS is the main funder of victims' groups in Northern Ireland and provides a tailored package to meet the individual needs of victims and survivors including

counselling, physiotherapy and the purchase of equipment such as wheelchairs.

Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own devolved arrangements for supporting victims of crime.

Thailand

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether British Embassy officials are attending the trials in Thailand of British citizen Andy Hall. [HL3323]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Officials from our Embassy in Bangkok attended three days of Mr Hall's recent criminal defamation trial, including the opening and closing day, in order to observe proceedings. We also encouraged officials from other EU Member States to attend. We are pleased to note that one case of criminal defamation against Mr Hall has been dismissed.

Officials, both in Bangkok and London, are in regular contact with Mr Hall, and will continue to monitor Mr Hall's case closely, ensuring that his case is raised with the Thai authorities where appropriate and reminding the authorities of their obligations to ensure international human rights standards are upheld.

Tobacco: Packaging

Asked by Lord Palmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the results of the consultation on the standardised packaging of tobacco products. [I] [HL3444]

Earl Howe: A consultation on the introduction of regulations for standardised packaging of tobacco products closed on 7 August 2014.

A summary report of this consultation will be published in due course.

Asked by Lord Palmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of indications that the introduction of plain packaging of tobacco products in other countries may have led to an increase in the consumption of cigarettes; and how they plan to take such findings into account before deciding whether to introduce such a policy in the United Kingdom. [I] [HL3445]

Asked by Lord Palmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of indications that the adult smoking rate in other countries may have increased following the introduction of plain packaging of tobacco products; and how they plan to take such findings into account before deciding whether to introduce such a policy in the United Kingdom. [I] [HL3446]

Asked by Lord Palmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of indications that youth smoking rates in other countries may have increased following the introduction of plain packaging of tobacco products; and how they plan to take such findings into account before deciding whether to introduce such a policy in the United Kingdom. [I] [HL3447]

Asked by Lord Palmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of indications that there has been an increase in the consumption of illegal tobacco in countries which may have introduced plain packaging of tobacco products; and how they plan to take such findings into account before deciding whether to introduce such a policy in the United Kingdom. [I] [HL3448]

Earl Howe: The Government continues to consider carefully all issues relevant to the introduction of standardised packaging of tobacco products, including emerging evidence from Australia. No final decision has been made on whether to introduce regulations to require standardised packaging of tobacco products.

UK Membership of EU

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Livingston of Parkhead on 19 November (HL2689), what research they have conducted since 1992 to determine the impact on United Kingdom trade of the free trade agreements negotiated on the United Kingdom's behalf by the European Commission. [HL3676]

Lord Livingston of Parkhead: The Department conducts Impact Assessments of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) between the European Union (EU) and other major economies, including, as far as possible, impacts on United Kingdom (UK) trade. Impact Assessments have been published on the FTAs between the European Union and Korea; and between the EU and the Andean countries (Colombia and Peru). These are available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukia/2010/328/pdfs/ukia_20100328_en.pdf and http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukia/2013/151/pdfs/ukia_20130151_en.pdf.

The Department published research into the potential impact on the UK of an FTA between the EU and the United States (US) in 2013. This research has informed the Government's approach to the Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership (TTIP), currently under negotiation. This research estimates a long-term permanent annual increase in bilateral trade between the UK and US of around £38 billion. The study is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/198115/bis-13-869-economic-

[impact-on-uk-of-transatlantic-trade-and-investment-partnership-between-eu-and-us.pdf](#).

To assess the impacts of other FTAs on the UK, the Department draws on analysis conducted by the European Commission. The European Commission has conducted research into the estimated impact on the EU of FTAs it has negotiated and is negotiating on the UK's behalf. The studies also consider the impact of FTAs on bilateral trade. These Impact Assessments are available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/policy-making/analysis/sustainability-impact-assessments/assessments/>

The European Commission has also commissioned an evaluation of the impact on EU trade of several Free Trade Agreements concluded since 1992, including with Chile and South Africa. This found that the FTA with Chile had increased the EU's exports to Chile by 148% and the FTA with South Africa had increased the EU's exports to South Africa by 63% compared to what would have been without the FTAs. This study is available at: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2011/may/tradoc_147905.pdf.

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....	1	Government Departments: Disabled Staff.....	15
Annual Reports (Home Office)	1	Green Belt.....	15
Armed Forces Covenant	1	Health Professions	15
Banking Act 2009.....	2	Homelessness.....	16
Counter-Terrorist Asset Freezing Regime.....	2	Housing: Taxation	16
ECOFIN.....	4	Human Papillomavirus: Vaccination.....	16
Employment Intermediaries: Temporary workers	5	Immigration Controls	17
EU Energy Council.....	5	Immigration: Poland	17
House Building.....	6	In Vitro Fertilisation	17
Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council.....	7	Income Tax: Northern Ireland	18
Palace of Westminster Restoration and Renewal Programme	8	Israel	18
Post Office Card Account.....	8	Local Government: Pensions.....	18
Prisons (Interception of Communications).....	8	M4.....	19
Written Answers.....	9	Mental Health Services.....	19
23andMe.....	9	Middle East.....	20
Acts of Supremacy	10	Mordechai Kedar	20
Aircraft Carriers.....	10	Mortality Rates	20
Arts: Secondary Education	10	NHS: Finance	20
Asylum: Finance.....	10	NHS: Standards	20
Borders: Personal Records	10	Northern Ireland Government.....	21
British Nationals Abroad: Armed Conflict.....	11	Nurses	21
Children: Marriage	11	Nurses: Student Wastage	21
Churches: Repairs and Maintenance	11	Offences against Children: Internet.....	21
Climate Change	12	Offences against Children: Rotherham.....	22
Corporation Tax.....	12	Outdoor Education.....	22
Cyprus	12	Pakistan.....	22
Diabetes	12	Palestinians	22
Disabled Students' Allowances	13	Parliament.....	23
DNA: Screening	13	Pensioners: Health Services.....	23
Energy: Meters	13	Pensions: Taxation.....	25
Entry Clearances: Israel.....	14	Personal Income	25
European Union.....	14	Postgraduate Education	25
Flood Control	14	Radicalism	25
Fraud.....	15	Shipping: Exhaust Emissions	26
Freedom of Expression.....	15	Smith Commission	26
		Sudan	26

Index to Statements and Answers

Telecommunications.....	26
Terrorism: Northern Ireland	26
Thailand.....	27
Tobacco: Packaging.....	27
UK Membership of EU	27