



Daily Report

Monday, 18 February 2019

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 18 February 2019 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:39 P.M., 18 February 2019). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Attorney General: Brexit

Gareth Thomas:

[\[219252\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, which EU agencies his Department plans to seek continued membership of after the UK has left the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Robert Buckland:

During the Implementation Period, the terms of the UK's participation in EU agencies and bodies will be as set out in Article 128 of the Withdrawal Agreement.

Following our exit from the European Union, we are committed to maintaining a close and collaborative relationship with the EU. Our future partnership is a matter for the next phase of negotiations and we look forward to constructive discussions with the EU.

■ Attorney General: Data Protection

Mr George Howarth:

[\[220098\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, prior to the formal notification to the Information Commissioner's Office of Paul Woods' appointment as the Data Protection Officer in his Department, who else was appointed to that role; and for what periods of time those appointments were made.

Robert Buckland:

Data Protection compliance at the Attorney General's Office was managed as part of a wider role in the office and was in place from April 2015. There were no DPOs required before May 2018.

Mr George Howarth:

[\[220099\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, on what date Paul Woods, the Departmental Records Officer and FOI/DPA coordinator in the Government Legal Department, became the Data Protection Officer for his Department; and (a) when and (b) how that appointment was notified to the (i) Information Commissioner's Office, (ii) Ministers of his Department, (iii) staff of his Department and (iv) Treasury Solicitor.

Robert Buckland:

The Appointment was confirmed on 22 May 2018 and the Attorney General's Office was informed that day. The ICO, GLD Staff and the Treasury Solicitor were notified 25 May 2018.

■ Crown Prosecution Service

Steve McCabe:

[\[220059\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, pursuant to the Answer of 11 of February 2019 to Question 217439 on Crown Prosecution Service: West Midlands, for each Principle Offence type, what estimate he has made of the number of cases pursued by the Crown Prosecution Service which did not result in a trial in (a) England and (b) the West Midlands in each year since 2010; and if he will publish the reasons for each of those cases not resulting in a trial.

Robert Buckland:

The number of cases which did not result in a trial can be broken down into a number of categories. Guilty pleas and Proved in Absence prosecutions result in a conviction while Dropped and Administratively Finalised prosecutions result in a non-conviction. The four tables in Annex A provide the Guilty pleas and Proved in Absence prosecutions together with the Dropped and Administratively Finalised prosecutions for both England and CPS West Midlands.

The definition for each category of prosecution is provided in the notes in Annex A. The notes provide an explanation as to why these case types did not proceed to trial.

Attachments:

1. Annex A [220059 - Annex A.docx]

■ Crown Prosecution Service: Staff

Steve McCabe:

[\[220762\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many staff the Crown Prosecution Service employed (a) in each region and (b) at CPS Direct in each year from 2010.

Robert Buckland:

The number of staff employed by the Crown Prosecution Service in each Region and in CPS Direct in each year from 2010 (As at 31 December of each year) is listed in the table below:

CPS REGION	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Central Casework	620	472	592	564	662	633	661	704	707
CPS Direct	155	135	171	302	286	260	244	210	183
CPS Headquarters	482	413	443	434	414	432	390	444	500
Cymru Wales	432	403	381	321	296	275	284	278	275
East Midlands	526	477	426	355	330	310	308	316	311

CPS REGION	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Eastern	408	385	366	325	284	257	251	254	266
London	1203	1233	1047	955	937	876	924	-	-
London North	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	463	463
London South	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	474	466
Merseyside & Cheshire	358	338	282	233	223	205	217	224	240
North East	422	391	368	320	293	256	270	264	260
North West Group	769	687	688	614	560	510	516	494	458
South East	404	373	370	291	287	242	246	250	250
South West	338	313	281	256	219	212	210	223	217
Thames & Chiltern	430	396	412	342	332	282	271	288	275
Wessex	348	330	317	264	265	233	231	221	229
West Midlands Group	775	698	617	520	489	457	449	435	424
Yorkshire & Humberside Group	674	628	612	537	507	482	482	447	422
Total	8344	7672	7373	6633	6384	5922	5954	5989	5946

*Note: Following an organisational restructure in 2011 some CPS commands were changed from Groups to single Areas under the leadership of a single Chief Crown Prosecutor.

Data Source: Trent HR Database February 2019.

■ Duchy of Cornwall and Duchy of Lancaster: Intestacy

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[\[219365\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many estates of people that die without (a) known entitled relatives and (b) leaving a will in the Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall were referred to the law firm Farrer and Co. Solicitors in each year since 2012.

Robert Buckland:

The Treasury Solicitor is appointed by Royal Warrant to administer the estates of persons domiciled in England & Wales who die without leaving a will or entitled relatives (known as 'bona vacantia') but this explicitly excludes the Duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster.

The bona vacantia estates of persons domiciled in Cornwall and Lancaster are administered by Farrer & Co Solicitors on behalf of the Dukes of Cornwall and Lancaster and are referred directly to them.

The Treasury Solicitor does not hold any information about the numbers of estates which are referred to Farrer & Co.

■ Intestacy

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[\[219364\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many estates of people that die without (a) known entitled relatives and (b) leaving a will were referred to the Bona Vacantia Division of the Government Legal Department in each year since 2012.

Robert Buckland:

The number of estates referred to the Bona Vacantia Division of the Government Legal Department in each financial year since 2012 is:

2012/13	1794
2013/14	2027
2014/15	1855
2015/16	1914
2016/17	1639
2017/18	1698
2018/19	1455*

*to date

■ Road Traffic Offences: Prosecutions

Steve McCabe:

[\[220060\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, pursuant to the Answer of 11 of February 2019 to Question 217439 on Crown Prosecution Service: West Midlands and with reference to the finding that there was a 67 percent reduction in the number of minor motoring cases in that area with a similar fall reflected across England, how many minor motoring cases there were in (a) the West Midlands and (b) England in each year since 2010.

Robert Buckland:

The tables below show the number of finalised prosecution outcomes with the Principal Offence Category of Motoring and the Mode of Trial recorded as Summary-Only during each year from 2010-11 to 2017-18 in the West Midlands CPS Area and in England.

During the period in question, the percentage reduction in caseload was 67.4% in the West Midlands and 67.1% in England.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
West Midlands	28,770	24,720	24,039	19,202	9,377	10,833	11,149	9,392
England	269,129	239,581	208,235	150,565	94,424	97,441	93,031	88,469

■ Serious Fraud Office

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[220767\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what steps his Department has taken to minimise disruption to the work of the Serious Fraud Office in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Robert Buckland:

The SFO has already put contingency plans in place to ensure minimal disruption to its casework in the event of no deal. This includes delivering training and awareness sessions and reviewing cases that are using or will use EU tools and measures. In addition an exercise is underway to recruit six additional staff members to support case teams when the UK exits the EU.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Energy

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[220066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps his Department has taken to prepare the energy sector for the effects of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Claire Perry:

Leaving the EU with a deal remains the Government's top priority. This has not changed. The Government has accelerated no deal preparations to ensure the country is prepared for every eventuality.

The Government has recommended that all businesses ensure they are prepared, enacting their own 'no deal' plans as they judge necessary. The Government has published eight Technical Notices related to energy policy, as well as further guidance of relevance to the energy sector. Businesses are advised to visit gov.uk/euexit for latest guidance.

Alex Norris:[\[221015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that gas and energy (a) interconnectors, (b) import export routes and (c) infrastructure mechanisms will remain fully functional after the UK leaves the EU.

Claire Perry:

As set out in our Technical Notice the Government is working closely with Ofgem, interconnectors and wider industry on the steps needed to maintain continued cross-border energy trading. This includes supporting engagement with EU Member State authorities. The Government does not anticipate changes to non-EU import export routes for gas by EU exit and there are no non-EU import export routes for electricity.

■ Energy: UK Trade with EU**Peter Kyle:**[\[220984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the UK will seek continued participation in the European Internal Energy Market after the UK leaves the EU.

Claire Perry:

The Government has been clear that we want to secure broad energy co-operation with the EU. This includes an economic partnership that facilitates technical cooperation and ensures security of supply and efficient trade over interconnectors over different timeframes.

■ EU Emissions Trading Scheme**Ian Murray:**[\[220855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government plans to leave the EU's emissions trading scheme; and what steps the Government is taking to maintain its commitment to cut carbon emissions after the UK leaves the EU.

Claire Perry:

Under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement after the UK leaves the EU on 29 March 2019, the UK's participation in the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS)

will continue until the end of the Implementation Period. This aligns with the end of Phase III (December 2020) of the EU ETS.

The Political Declaration sets out that the UK and the EU have agreed to consider cooperating on carbon pricing through linking a UK national greenhouse gas emissions trading system with the EU ETS. The details of these arrangements will be a matter for the next phase of the negotiations. The Government will consult on our future approach to carbon pricing in due course.

In the event that the UK leaves without a deal in 2019, the UK would cease to participate in the EU ETS. To ensure stability and to meet the UK's legally binding carbon reduction commitments under the Climate Change Act, a Carbon Emissions Tax would be introduced from 1 April 2019.

The Government is committed to tackling climate change. We are making strong progress towards our legally binding targets established in the world-leading Climate Change Act. Between 1990 and 2017, the UK reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by over 40% while growing the economy by more than two thirds - the best performance in the G7 on a per person basis.

We recognise the need to go further and the Clean Growth Strategy sets out our plans through to 2032, to build on our successes to date. It includes ambitious proposals on housing, business, transport, the natural environment and green finance.

■ Industry: Exchange Rates

Jo Stevens:

[\[220937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government has any plans to review its industrial strategy as a result of recent changes in the value of pound sterling.

Richard Harrington:

The Industrial Strategy is a long term plan to boost productivity by backing businesses to create high-quality, well paid jobs throughout the United Kingdom, with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure. The Government uses a combination of measures to evaluate economic prosperity as a whole, which can effectively inform the delivery of our long term strategy. Furthermore, since the Government published the Strategy in 2017 we have continued to develop our approach and delivered responsive policy, such as those announced in the 2018 Autumn Budget.

■ Land Registry: Cybercrime

Eddie Hughes:

[\[221007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to Answer of 15 June 2018 to Question 151096 on Land Registry: Cybercrime, what the outcomes relating to the use of (a) blockchain and (b) artificial intelligence are of the HM Land Registry's Digital Street project.

Richard Harrington:

The HM Land Registry's research and development 'Digital Street' project is ongoing. The findings of the project are incorporated into HM Land Registry's forward strategy on a continuing basis.

■ Manufacturing Industries: EU Countries**Emma Reynolds:**[\[220894\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of the UK leaving the EU without a deal on the ability of UK-based (a) automotive and (b) aerospace companies to source parts from the EU 27 in a timely manner.

Richard Harrington:

Both the UK and the EU share a strong commercial interest in preserving the integrated supply chains of the aerospace and automotive sectors, including those that support the Just in Time processes that ensure the UK's manufacturing plants remain competitive.

The UK has sought to work constructively with the EU to get the best deal for business. The Political Declaration sets out an ambitious plan for a new free trade area for goods, including no tariffs, with ambitious customs arrangements and deep regulatory cooperation. This will be the first such agreement between an advanced economy and the EU, and would ensure parts can be sourced from the EU in a timely manner. The only way to ensure that the UK's automotive and aerospace industries can remain competitive is to agree a deal that provides for tariff free trade and protected access to these vital supply chains.

BEIS Ministers and officials meet regularly with industry through the Automotive Council and the Aerospace Growth Partnership. Through this engagement we encourage companies to engage proactively with their supply chain to prepare for potential no deal scenarios. We are aware that companies in both sectors are stockpiling essential parts to try and minimise disruption in a no deal scenario.

■ Professions: EU Countries**Chi Onwurah:**[\[220900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2019 to Question 216357, whether there are UK professionals who have not had their professional qualifications officially recognised but are currently providing services under temporary recognition arrangements in the EU, who will lose their ability to do so in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal if there is a no deal Brexit; and what measures he is taking to identify those professionals.

Richard Harrington:

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal, UK nationals will no longer have access to the EU's reciprocal system of professional qualification recognition, including its mechanism for facilitation of temporary and occasional service provision. In that

scenario, UK nationals providing temporary and occasional professional services in an EU Member State will be subject to the host State's laws.

The Government is continuing to engage with regulators, businesses and professionals on these issues.

■ Professions: Qualifications

Mr John Baron:

[\[220110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether professional qualifications and registrations will continue to be mutually recognised between the UK and the EU in the event that the UK leaves the EU with no deal.

Richard Harrington:

In the event that the UK leaves the EU with no deal, professionals from the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland who have had their qualifications formally recognised in the UK before exit will continue to be able to rely on those recognition decisions to practice their profession in the UK. Similarly, recognition decisions for UK professional qualifications awarded in the EEA and Switzerland before exit will remain valid.

In the event that the UK leaves the EU with no deal, new applications for recognition of EEA and Swiss qualifications in the UK made after exit could be recognised if the qualifications are of an equivalent standard to UK qualifications in scope, content and level. UK nationals seeking recognition to practice regulated professions in the EU would have to check the national policies and rules of the relevant Member State in which they intend to practice.

■ Radioactive Waste: Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon:

[\[220112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it remains his Department's policy not to dispose of nuclear waste in Northern Ireland.

Richard Harrington:

Policy on the management of radioactive waste is devolved. I understand that there are no plans for nuclear or radioactive waste disposal facilities in Northern Ireland.

■ Solar Power

Jo Stevens:

[\[220938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of trends in the size of the UK solar industry since 2010.

Claire Perry:

The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) published a report: The Size and Performance of the UK Low Carbon, which contains data on trends in the size of the UK low carbon economy for 2010 to 2013, including the UK solar sector. This

report can be viewed online at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416240/bis-15-206-size-and-performance-of-uk-low-carbon-economy.pdf.

The Department commissioned the Office for National Statistics to collect and publish data on trends in the low carbon and renewable energy sector, which includes the UK solar sector, in the form of their Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy Survey (LCREE) covering 2014 to 2017. This can be found online at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/finalestimates/previousreleases>.

Due to differences in methodology, drawing comparisons between data contained in the report published by BIS and data contained in the LCREE may produce misleading conclusions. Comparing estimates from 2014 with estimates from later years of the LCREE survey may also produce misleading conclusions due to changes in the sample methodology that have taken place since.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Brexit

Hilary Benn:

[173517]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he publish the terms of reference of Operation Yellowhammer.

Mr David Lidington:

Operation Yellowhammer is the randomly selected programme name for some elements of the contingency planning being undertaken by departments to mitigate the potential impacts of leaving the EU without a deal.

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat is coordinating Operation Yellowhammer contingency planning across government. Officials are working with the Devolved Administrations, Overseas Territories, Crown Dependencies and Local Resilience Forums. Departments are also leading engagement with key industry partners.

Jonathan Edwards:

[219381]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the Government's Project After plans to improve the economy in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Mr David Lidington:

The Government continues to prepare for a range of possible scenarios to maintain continuity of existing trading relationships, including one in which we do not reach an agreement with the EU on the terms of our withdrawal. As the Chancellor said to the Treasury Select Committee, should there be no deal, we would react to that in the usual way and support the economy through whatever transition is needed to get to a new, appropriate equilibrium.

Jonathan Edwards:

[219387]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which Departments are drawing up plans to strengthen the UK economy in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Mr David Lidington:

While leaving the EU with a deal remains the Government's top priority, the Government is accelerating no deal preparations to ensure the country is prepared for every eventuality. This work involves the whole of Government working together to ensure the UK is prepared for all scenarios on and after exit day

Tom Brake:

[220051]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 5th February to Question 213879 on Department for Exiting the European Union: Brexit, what the cost to the public purse has been of the Government's Prepare for EU Exit public information campaign.

Mr David Lidington:

The Cabinet Office is leading and coordinating the cross-departmental Prepare for EU Exit public information campaign to help fulfil the Government's duty to inform citizens and businesses about how leaving the EU might affect them, and to advise them on the steps they may need to take to prepare. In the coming weeks and months, we plan to use a range of paid-for and no-cost channels to direct citizens and businesses to a dedicated area on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/euexit) at Gov.uk/euexit.

On 8 January 2019, we launched a series of three radio adverts - to citizens, businesses and travellers - across UK-wide commercial stations, encouraging listeners to visit the website.

The Cabinet Office has undertaken to publish information relating to ongoing expenditure on the public information campaign as part of the department's monthly data transparency releases. The latest release is available at (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-spend-data>)

■ **Cabinet Office: Brexit**

Gareth Thomas:

[219263]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which EU agencies his Department plans to seek continued membership of after the UK has left the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Lidington:

During the Implementation Period, the terms of the UK's participation in EU agencies and bodies will be as set out in Article 128 of the Withdrawal Agreement.

Following our exit from the European Union, we are committed to maintaining a close and collaborative relationship with the EU. Our future partnership is a matter for the next phase of negotiations and we look forward to constructive discussions with the EU.

■ Cabinet Office: Staff

Jon Trickett: [220785]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many civil servants work in each of the groups and committees in his Department that have strategic responsibility for national security concerns and constitutional issues, as outlined in the National Audit Office publication Departmental Overview: Cabinet Office 2017-18.

Chloe Smith:

Information about the number of civil servants working in the Cabinet Office broken down by Operating Segment was published in the 2017/18 Cabinet Office Annual Report & Accounts which is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-annual-report-and-accounts-2017-to-2018> (see page 43, Average number of persons employed).

Jon Trickett: [220786]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many civil servants working in his Department are responsible for supporting the delivery of the Government's programme and the Prime Minister's priorities, as outlined in the National Audit Office publication Departmental Overview: Cabinet Office 2017-18.

Chloe Smith:

Information about the number of civil servants working in the Cabinet Office broken down by Operating Segment was published in the 2017/18 Cabinet Office Annual Report & Accounts which is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-annual-report-and-accounts-2017-to-2018> (see page 43, Average number of persons employed).

Jon Trickett: [220787]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the National Audit Office publication Departmental Overview: Cabinet Office 2017-18, how many civil servants work in each of the groups and units in his Department responsible for improving the efficiency of government.

Chloe Smith:

Information about the number of civil servants working in the Cabinet Office broken down by Operating Segment was published in the 2017/18 Cabinet Office Annual Report & Accounts which is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-annual-report-and-accounts-2017-to-2018> (see page 43, Average number of persons employed).

Jon Trickett: [220788]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many civil servants work in each of the 19 public bodies and agencies that work (a) in and (b) with the Cabinet Office.

Oliver Dowden:

The Prime Minister's Office, Office of the Leader of the House of Commons, Office of the Leader of the House of Lords, Boundary Commission for England, Infrastructure

and Projects Authority, Office of the Registrar of Consultant Lobbyists, and Privy Council Office are business units within the Cabinet Office. At 31st January 2019, 354 civil servants were employed in these areas.

The Crown Commercial Service, Government Property Agency, Civil Service Commission,

Advisory Committee on Business Appointments, House of Lords Appointments Commission, Commissioner for Public Appointments, Boundary Commission for Wales, Committee on Standards in Public Life, Security Vetting Appeals Panel, Senior Salaries Review Body, and Government Estates Management are separate organisations that have connections to the Cabinet Office. At 31st January 2019, 758 civil servants were employed in and/or providing support to these organisations.

Of the above organisations, Civil Service support to:

- the Security Vetting Appeals Panel is provided staff employed by the Cabinet Office
- the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments, House of Lords Appointments Commission, and the Commissioner for Public Appointments is provided by staff employed by the Civil Service Commission

the Senior Salaries Review Body is provided by staff employed in BEIS

■ Civil Servants

Jon Trickett:

[\[220086\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many civil servants have been transferred from direct employment by government departments to employment with government contractors in the last 12 months.

Oliver Dowden:

The Cabinet Office does not hold this information centrally.

■ Civil Service: Pensions

Marion Fellows:

[\[220281\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will take steps to change the premium deduction in the (a) widows, (b) widowers and (c) civil partners pension provisions of the 1972 Section of the Civil Service pension arrangement so that when a member remains (i) unmarried or (ii) not in a civil partnership their surviving children receive the premium deduction refund.

Oliver Dowden:

The premium deduction is there to protect the Civil Service Pension Scheme against the specific risk of a member marrying or entering a civil partnership after retiring and then pre-deceasing their spouse/civil partner. The amount of the premium is set at a level that takes account of the likelihood of this happening.

If the premium were to be repaid to the member's estate should they subsequently die without marrying or entering a civil partnership, the amount of the premium would need to be significantly higher as it would only be retained by the scheme in circumstances where a spouse/civil partner's pension was payable.

The Government does not consider that a change to the current arrangements is justified.

■ Crime

Steve McCabe: [\[220061\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many reported offences of each crime type there were in (a) the West Midlands and (b) England and Wales in each year since 2010.

Chloe Smith:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ 220061 & 220062 - Uploaded (1).pdf]

■ Crime: West Midlands

Steve McCabe: [\[220062\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many reported (a) homicides, (b) instances of fraud and forgery and (c) sexual offences there have been in the West Midlands police force area in each year since 2010.

Chloe Smith:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ 220061 & 220062 - Uploaded (1).pdf]

■ Elections: Proof of Identity

Cat Smith: [\[220946\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much funding his Department has allocated for the 2019 voter ID pilot schemes.

Chloe Smith:

I refer the member to my letter to PACAC of 17 December 2018, on parliament website.

■ Electronic Warfare: Public Sector

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:

[219495]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government is taking to support public sector agencies in dealing with hybrid and non-kinetic threats.

Mr David Lidington:

Public Sector agencies can access a full range of guidance and support on a wide range of threats from the UK's national technical authorities: the National Cyber Security Centre for cyber security, the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) for physical and personnel security and UKNACE for counter eavesdropping.

Alongside this support public sector agencies benefit from protection against certain threats, for example through the Active Cyber Defence measures provided free of charge to the public sector as detailed in the NCSC's recent annual review.

■ Electronic Warfare: Scotland

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:

[219494]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what discussions he has had with the Scottish Government on countering non-kinetic threats.

Mr David Lidington:

My officials have regular discussions with the Scottish Government on a range of issues, including and relating to countering non-kinetic threats.

■ Equal Pay

Jess Phillips:

[219471]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will provide the gender pay gap data for 2018 by (a) disability, (b) ethnicity and (c) age.

Chloe Smith:

The most recent information about the gender pay gap in the Cabinet Office is available at <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/Employer/FukQqIAW>.

In 2017, the Government introduced legislation that made it statutory for all organisations with 250 or more employees to report annually on their gender pay gap. Employers must report the mean and median hourly pay gap, the mean and median gender bonus gaps, the proportion of males and females who received a bonus and the proportions of male and female employees in each pay quartile.

Data on disability, ethnicity or age within this is not held.

■ Visas**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[220296\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what method his Department uses to record multinational intra-company transfers.

Chloe Smith:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ220269 - Uploaded.pdf]

DEFENCE**■ Armed Forces Compensation Scheme: Age****Patrick Grady:** [\[220940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reasons the age limit for priority cases for access to the Veterans UK Armed Forces Compensation Scheme has been set at 90 years of age.

Patrick Grady: [\[220941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of lowering the age limit for priority cases for the Veterans UK Armed Forces Compensation Scheme from 90 years of age.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

There is no age-based priority afforded to claimants under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme. This is because the rules of the Scheme normally require a claim to be submitted within seven years of an illness or injury attributable to Service occurring.

As there are no time limitations attached to when a claim can be made under the War Pension Scheme, priority is afforded to claimants aged 90 or over in recognition of their advanced age, thereby allowing compensation claims to be completed as quickly as possible.

■ Arms Trade**Sir Nicholas Soames:** [\[220721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what proportion of GDP is accounted for by (a) UK and (b) overseas defence sales.

Stuart Andrew:

Defence plays a significant role in providing a secure and stable environment, which is the foundation of the UK's economic growth. This was recognised by the right hon. Member for Ludlow's independent report 'Growing the Contribution of Defence to UK Prosperity'.

National economic data is not sufficiently detailed to identify the amount of GDP that is supported by defence sales as defence-related activities are captured in other data categories, such as different types of manufacturing activity, and some goods used by Defence are also used for civilian purposes. In 2017-18 Ministry of Defence's expenditure with UK industry and commerce was just under £19 billion; and in 2017 the UK won defence exports orders worth £9 billion. Over a rolling ten-year period the UK remains the world second largest global defence exporter.

■ Army: Deployment

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[220722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he next proposes to deploy a largely fully formed and supported Division into the Field for Divisional movement and manoeuvre training.

Mark Lancaster:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my noble Friend, the Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Earl Howe) on 8 January 2019 in the House of Lords (Official Report, column 2118).

Attachments:

1. Army Divisional Movement and Manoeuvre Training
[20190108_Earl_Atlee_Divisional_movement_and_manoeuvre_training.docx]

■ Civil Disorder

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[220847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans his Department has to use troops to control potential civil unrest in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Mark Lancaster:

The maintenance of public order is the responsibility of the police. There are no plans to utilise military personnel for public order in the event of a no-deal Brexit.

■ Defence: Procurement

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[220764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department has taken to minimise disruption to military procurement in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Stuart Andrew:

The Defence and Security Public Contracts (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 have been laid before Parliament to allow the legal framework for defence procurement to continue to function in the event of a 'no-deal' exit from the EU. This statutory instrument will correct deficiencies to ensure the law continues to function properly and remove any reciprocal obligations that are no longer appropriate from exit day. This measure will provide the continuity and legal certainty required by public procurers and suppliers.

More broadly, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) continues to engage with Government Departments and with key suppliers to identify risks and opportunities that may arise should the UK leave the EU without a deal. This includes extensive work on MOD supply chains and preparations for any emerging contract issues.

■ **Iraq: Islamic State**

Nigel Dodds:

[\[220814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Department for International Development's press release entitled UK aid removing Daesh explosives and helping Iraqis return home, published in January 2019, what personnel deployment is part of the extra £5 million allocated by the Government to assist with clearing Daesh explosives in Iraq.

Mark Lancaster:

The extra £5 million allocated by the Department for International Development in January to demining is all going to the UN Mine Action Service, who will work with contractors to clear explosive devices in Iraq. This work is humanitarian in nature, with the focus being on the removal of mines from hospitals, schools and people's homes. No military personnel are therefore deployed to this task. However, UK forces are training the Iraqi Security Forces in countering improvised explosive devices (IED) in a military context. This training increases the capabilities of the Iraqi forces to deal with the ongoing threat the country faces from Daesh IEDs.

■ **Military Aid**

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[220846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the need for having troops on standby to deal with contingencies in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Mark Lancaster:

Whilst there have been no formal requests for military support in the event of a no deal Brexit, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) has engaged with other Government Departments and local authorities. This engagement, including at Cabinet level, has resulted in the development of a package of 3,500 regular and reserve personnel put on standby to support the implementation of 'no deal' contingency plans. These personnel are in addition to existing MOD plans to respond to incidents in the UK under the Military Aid to the Civil Authorities policy.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Brexit**

Gareth Thomas:

[\[219254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which EU agencies his Department plans to seek continued membership of after the UK has left the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Lancaster:

During the Implementation Period, the terms of the UK's participation in EU agencies and bodies will be as set out in Article 128 of the Withdrawal Agreement.

Following our exit from the European Union, we are committed to maintaining a close and collaborative relationship with the EU. Our future partnership is a matter for the next phase of negotiations and we look forward to constructive discussions with the EU.

Ministry of Defence: Living Wage**Frank Field:**[\[220803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he will match the commitment made by his Department to staff based in London by setting the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation as a minimum hourly rate for staff based outside London.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has not formally signed up to the National Living Wage rates, as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. While the Secretary of State exceptionally agreed as part of the 2015 pay deal to match the Living Wage Foundation's London Living Wage rate, this did not extend to other staff as the levels of pay for staff outside London were considered appropriate. The Department continues to review all salaries and the position taken in 2015 has not changed.

I can confirm that the MOD continues to pay above the Government's National Living Wage and that arrangements are in place to increase salaries when the hourly rate announced by the Chancellor in his November 2018 Autumn Statement is increased to £8.21 with effect from 1 April 2019.

Navy: Shipping**Jamie Stone:**[\[221001\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of (a) repairing and (b) retrofitting (i) ferries and (ii) container vessels retired from commercial service to make them operable for the Royal Navy.

Stuart Andrew:

During the pre-concept and concept phase for any ship procurement programme the widest possible range of options is considered for satisfying the capability requirement, the costs for which would be specific to the particular requirement.

Jamie Stone:[\[221002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the expected lifespan of refurbished commercial vessels is compared to newly constructed warships.

Stuart Andrew:

The expected lifespan of refurbished commercial vessels would be dependent on the age of the vessel being converted and the role that it is expected to fill. In general, the lifespan would be less than for newly constructed warships.

■ Warships: Procurement

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[220113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department's contract to build the planned Future Littoral Strike Ship will be subject to an international competition.

Stuart Andrew:

The procurement strategy for the Littoral Strike Ship is yet to be determined, but it will be subject to the policies articulated in the National Shipbuilding Strategy.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Commonwealth Games 2022**

Liam Byrne: [\[220808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what guidance he has issued and in what format to anyone connected to the Birmingham Commonwealth Games Organising Committee on becoming accredited by the Living Wage Foundation as a living wage employer.

Mims Davies:

Guidance on accreditation as a Living Wage Employer will be considered as part of work to agree appropriate contractor policies and pay for the Organising Committee and other Games delivery partners.

■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Assets

Frank Field: [\[220097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will provide a breakdown on how the £55 million raised from dormant assets has been allocated.

Mims Davies:

Last year, the Government committed £55 million from dormant assets to tackle financial exclusion and problem debt. In the Civil Society Strategy, the government announced that this funding would be directed to a new, independent organisation, with a remit to address this social issue. The Founding Chair of this new organisation is being appointed by a nomination panel independent of government, and their decision will be announced in due course.

■ Mobile Phones: Foreign Companies

Mr Alistair Carmichael: [\[909279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential risk to national security of state-owned mobile network providers operating in UK markets.

Margot James:

The security of our telecoms is of paramount importance and Government will take appropriate action to address any national security risk arising in the telecoms sector.

There are currently no state-owned mobile network providers in the UK market.

■ Voluntary Work: Young People**Cat Smith:**[\[220945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much and what proportion of the total budget of the National Citizen Service was spent on advertising and marketing in each year since 2011.

Mims Davies:

The Office for Civil Society funds the NCS Trust through an annual agreement. This provides a budget to cover NCS provider payments and a budget to cover NCS Trust's operating costs.

NCS Trust was incorporated on 1 October 2012 and its first annual accounts were published on 31 March 2014. A summary of NCS marketing as a proportion of total budget has been provided below.

PROGRAMME YEAR	MARKETING SPEND	TOTAL BUDGET	MARKETING AS % BUDGET
2014-15	£4,075,751	£117,000,000	3.48%
2015-16	£7,422,841	£155,000,000	4.79%
2016-17	£11,036,607	£181,000,000	6.10%
2017-18	£9,949,813	£181,000,000	5.50%
2018-19	£7,696,034	£178,000,000	4.32%

An independent evaluation of the NCS programme commissioned from Kantar Public by DCMS in 2016 found that for every £1 spent, NCS's programmes delivered up to £2.42 of benefits back to society.

EDUCATION**■ Apprentices: Taxation****Emma Reynolds:**[\[220896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much money his Department estimates is dormant in apprenticeship levy accounts.

Anne Milton:

Employers who pay the apprenticeship levy are able to create an apprenticeship service account to access levy funds, which will be held for 2 years after entering their account. We apply a 24-month expiry period on funds after they enter an account to encourage employers to plan and spend funds in good time. Any unspent funds from apprenticeship service accounts after the 24-month expiry period will be used to pay for apprenticeship training for non-levy paying employers. We do not therefore consider funds held in apprenticeships service accounts to be 'dormant'.

Spending on the apprenticeship programme is demand-led. Employers choose which apprenticeships they offer and at what level, how many apprenticeships to offer and when to offer them in order to meet their current and future skills needs. We do not anticipate that all employers who pay the levy will need or want to use all the funds in their accounts. However, any unspent funds are used to support existing apprenticeship learners and levy-paying employers who spend more than the funds available in their accounts and to fund training with employers that do not pay the levy.

■ Apprentices: Wolverhampton North East**Emma Reynolds:**[\[220893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many apprenticeships have been created in Wolverhampton North East (a) in each of the twelve months before the introduction of the apprenticeship levy and (b) in each month since the levy was introduced.

Emma Reynolds:[\[220895\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of apprenticeship levy-paying employers have hired apprentices.

Anne Milton:

The attached table shows the figures for apprenticeship starts for Wolverhampton North East constituency for each month by academic year from 2015/16 to 2018/19 (quarter 1 reported to date).

In May 2017, there were significant structural changes to the apprenticeship funding system, including the introduction of the apprenticeship levy and apprenticeship service. The profile of apprenticeship starts changed significantly, both in the run-up to the introduction of the levy and subsequently. Care should be taken when comparing individual months with previous years as they are unlikely to provide a meaningful year-on-year trend. Numbers of reported starts are likely to change as the reforms to apprenticeship funding continue to bed in and employers engage with the new system.

The information requested is not held centrally regarding the proportion of levy-paying firms that have taken on apprentices. However, the department holds information on the number of apprenticeship service accounts (ASAs) registered. As

of 31 December 2018, there were 16,100 ASAs registered on the apprenticeship service.

Since the introduction of the levy, 268,500 levy-supported starts have been recorded for England. Levy-supported learners are those supported by levy-paying organisations using at least £1 of their own levy funds. For context, there have been 555,800 total starts for England since the levy (from quarter 4 of 2016/17 to quarter 1 of 2018/19).

In addition, in January 2018, we published that 91.7 percent of those who had PAYE schemes with apprenticeship levy declarations in England of over £150,000 had registered on the apprenticeship service.

Attachments:

1. 220893_220895_apprenticeships_table_attachment
[220893_220895_apprenticeships_table_attachment.xls]

■ **Department for Education: Brexit**

Gareth Thomas:

[219256]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which EU agencies his Department plans to seek continued membership of after the UK has left the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Anne Milton:

During the implementation period, the terms of the UK's participation in EU agencies and bodies will be as set out in Article 128 of the Withdrawal Agreement.

Following our exit from the EU, we are committed to maintaining a close and collaborative relationship with the EU. Our future partnership is a matter for the next phase of negotiations and we look forward to constructive discussions with the EU.

■ **Education**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[220064]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps his Department has taken to prepare the education sector for the effects of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Anne Milton:

Leaving the EU with a deal remains the government's top priority. This has not changed.

The department has published "no deal notices" on GOV.UK[1] to provide information and advice to schools and to further education and higher education institutions. The purpose of these notices is to help them prepare in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

[1] EU Exit: No deal preparations for schools in England -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-exit-no-deal-preparations-for-schools-in-england>.

EU Exit: No deal preparations for further education and apprenticeship providers - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-exit-no-deal-preparations-for-further-education-and-apprenticeship-providers>.

EU Exit: No deal preparations for higher education institutions - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-exit-no-deal-preparations-for-higher-education-institutions>.

Erasmus+ in the UK if there's no brexit deal - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/erasmus-in-the-uk-if-theres-no-brexit-deal/erasmus-in-the-uk-if-theres-no-brexit-deal>.

■ Further Education: Finance

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[220323]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect of trends in the level of funding on the financial sustainability of the further education sector.

Anne Milton:

We are examining the trends in the level of funding for further education in considering the funding and resilience of further education and in assessing how far existing and forecast funding and regulatory structures enable high quality provision. We recognise that some of the key areas of funding have not kept up with costs and we will continue to look carefully at these issues in preparation for the next Spending Review and in the light of the recommendations of the Post-18 Review.

We have protected the base rate of funding for all 16 to 19 year old students until 2020 and plan to invest nearly £7 billion this academic year to make sure that there is a place in education or in training, including for apprenticeships, for every 16 to 19 year old. We are investing in education for adult learners, including for those furthest from learning and the labour market. We are continuing to provide Advanced Learner Loans, which is an established part of the Further Education funding framework and a key source of provider income. We are also doubling the amount of funding available for apprenticeships in England (in cash terms) by 2019-20 when compared with actual levels of spend in 2010-11. This includes funding for both 16-19 and adult apprenticeships.

From 1 April 2016 to 31 January 2019, as part of the area review programme, we made approximately £470 million available to support major college restructuring, supporting significant improvements to financial sustainability in the sector.

■ Grammar Schools: Free School Meals

Lucy Powell:

[220323]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what (a) number and (b) proportion of children in those grammar schools that were successful in the second round of the selective school expansion fund are on free school meals.

Nick Gibb:

The information requested is not held centrally.

The Department launched the second round of the Selective Schools Expansion Fund on 11 February 2019. The deadline for applications is 23 April 2019 and the Department will not start to assess them until after then.

■ Schools: Migration

Layla Moran:

[\[220324\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance his Department offers to (a) teachers and (b) schools on how they present the issue of migration.

Nick Gibb:

The Department does not offer guidance to teachers or schools on how they present the issue of migration. However, sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996 require maintained schools to prevent political indoctrination and secure the balanced treatment of political issues. This duty is reflected in the funding agreements for academies and free schools. In particular, Section 407 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on schools to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

There have been recent valuable additions to the resources available to support teaching of this issue in History. For example, the Windrush Foundation has produced key stage 2 lesson plans for primary schools, and the Runnymede Trust's 'Our Migration Story' website provides extensive resources, including lesson plans.

The Geographical Association and the Royal Geographical Society both provide resources on the issue to support teaching of the Geography curriculum.

■ Students: Loans

Angela Rayner:

[\[220253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many loans have been issued by the Office for Students to higher education institutions in England; and what the value was of each of those loans.

Chris Skidmore:

The Office for Students has issued one short term loan (£900,000) to one higher education provider, which has been repaid in full.

Angela Rayner:

[\[220254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the announcement entitled, New treatment of student loans in the public sector finances and national accounts, published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in December 2018, when his Department plans to adapt their accounting practices in line the ONS decision.

Chris Skidmore:

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) announcement is a statistical change, therefore, there are no changes to the existing policy, operation of the student loans system and Departmental Accounts. While the ONS have announced the decision to change the treatment of student loans in the national accounts, the department's accounting practices will continue to be consistent with the International Financial Reporting Standards, as adapted by the Government Financial Reporting Manual. During the course of 2019, the department will assist the ONS to report the statistical change in line with any new guidance issued as part of the Government Debt and Deficit manual.

Universities: Finance**Angela Rayner:**[\[220252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister of State for Universities, of 11 February 2019, Official Report, column 634, what estimate his Department has made of the number of higher education institutions that may exit the market.

Chris Skidmore:

The department has not made an estimate of the number of higher education institutions that may exit the market.

In the new higher education (HE) regulatory framework, the Office for Students (OfS) has responsibilities to monitor and assess the financial viability of registered providers and in particular to protect the interests of students. The OfS may take action where it identifies particular risks to a provider's financial viability. The department has also given the OfS powers to ensure that registered providers have plans in place to protect their students, via appropriately constructed student protection plans. Should the provider be facing difficulties, the plan may need to be strengthened in a tailored way before OfS can agree it.

It is the responsibility of Vice-Chancellors and the leaders of higher education providers to ensure their institutions are financially viable.

The terms of reference of the review of post-18 education and funding include a focus on ensuring choice and competition across a joined-up post-18 education and training sector. The review will look at how it can support a more dynamic market whilst maintaining the financial sustainability of a world-class higher education and research sector.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Agriculture: 5G****Ben Lake:****[219545]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with Ofcom on encouraging flexible licensing practices for 5G radio spectrum to support the adoption of automation and technology in the agriculture sector; and if he will make a statement.

George Eustice:

Defra is in regular contact with Ofcom about the importance of improving mobile coverage in rural areas, including future benefits of 5G. Supporting the adoption of automation and technology in the agriculture sector is of huge importance to this department.

The Government is clear that spectrum should be used efficiently and effectively. In the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) set out the development of a set of innovative 5G services which may require more flexible approaches to spectrum licensing. The Government therefore welcomes Ofcom's recent consultation documents on spectrum sharing and its proposals towards flexible licensing practices. Ofcom, as the national regulatory authority, is responsible for managing spectrum and ensuring that radio spectrum is used in the most effective way for all sectors, including agriculture.

Defra is also working closely with DCMS on the rollout of the Government's 5G Testbeds and Trials Programme. This includes two rural projects - 5GRIT and 5G Rural First – which are, among other things, exploring 5G benefits for the agricultural sector.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Consultants**Jon Trickett:****[219289]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the value of contracts held by his Department with (a) Deloitte, (b) Slaughter and May and (c) Mott MacDonald is in the last two years.

George Eustice:

Details of central Government contracts above the value of £10,000 are published on Contracts Finder. Contracts published after 26 February 2015 can be viewed at: <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>.

■ Elephants: Animal Welfare**Dr Rupa Huq:****[220299]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural affairs, whether the Government is taking steps to discourage tourism from the UK to (a) Myanmar, (b) Sri Lanka and (c) other countries in which cruelty to elephants has been reported by NGOs.

David Rutley:

The UK is home to some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world and we hope that UK citizens continue to respect these standards when they travel abroad.

The Government has been working with the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) to encourage them to make their customers aware of the reported issues around Asian elephants. Tourists should consider whether there are reasonable grounds to believe that animals have been mistreated before deciding whether to visit an animal attraction.

We would encourage tourists to report any animal welfare concerns to their UK tour operator or travel agent on return to the UK.

■ Farmers: Depressive Illnesses**Jim Shannon:**[\[219444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has allocated funding to charities to help tackle depression in the farming community.

George Eustice:

The Prime Minister launched Government's first loneliness strategy last October. As part of the strategy Defra is supporting community infrastructure and community action to tackle loneliness in rural areas. The ACRE network of Rural Community Councils has already begun prioritising work with local partners on tackling loneliness in rural areas, using Defra's contribution to its funding. We are convening a rural stakeholder group in March to advise and support the work of Government and help with the local communication of initiatives and good practice. The group will meet regularly to explore issues specific to rural communities.

Defra provides grant funding to the Farming Community Network charity for the specific purpose of supporting Bovine TB affected farming families and businesses.

■ Fisheries: Exports**Ian Murray:**[\[220852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the UK fishing industry will be able to export tariff free and without customs checks to EU markets after the transition period.

George Eustice:

The objective of the future economic partnership between the UK and the EU is to provide for no tariffs, fees, charges or quantitative restrictions across all sectors. It would also provide for ambitious customs arrangements which builds on and improves the single customs territory provided for in the Withdrawal Agreement.

Under the Withdrawal Agreement, if the UK does not agree a trade agreement with the EU (and we subsequently need to enter the backstop) then fish products could be subject to tariffs unless a fisheries agreement is in place. The political declaration that

accompanies the Withdrawal Agreement is clear that both the UK and EU will use their best endeavours to conclude and ratify a new fisheries agreement by 1 July 2020 so that it is in place in time to be used for determining fishing opportunities for the first year after the transition period.

■ Food Supply

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[220765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with food distribution and transport companies on the potential effects on that sector of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

David Rutley:

As a responsible Government, we are preparing for all eventualities including that of leaving the EU without a deal. Extensive work to prepare for a no deal scenario has been underway for the last two years to ensure the country continues to operate as smoothly as possible from the day we leave.

The Government has well established ways of working with the food industry on food supply chain issues and we are using these to support preparations for leaving the EU. This includes working with Defra's long established Food Chain Emergency Liaison Group (FCELG), which allows Government and industry to work together to plan for and respond to food supply disruption. The FCELG membership includes trade bodies from across the agri-food supply and distribution sectors and also includes other relevant Government departments, devolved administrations and agencies.

Defra will continue to work closely with food industry stakeholders to understand the impacts of a no deal scenario on the food and drink industry, as well as the contingency planning measures being taken by industry.

■ Food: Consumption

Dr David Drew:

[\[220754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to increase consumption of local and seasonal foods.

David Rutley:

The Government is keen to see an increase in the amount of locally grown seasonal produce consumed in the UK. The Plan for Public Procurement, published under the 2010-15 Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition Government, includes a balanced scorecard to help define the criteria of bids for food and catering contracts.

The scorecard rewards tenders which commit to serve locally sourced food and those that highlight the benefits of seasonal increases in the availability of certain types of produce. Use of the balanced scorecard is mandatory for central Government departments and executive agencies, and Defra is working to increase its uptake in the wider public sector.

Horses: Animal Welfare**Thelma Walker:**[\[221018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the (a) enforcement of the current legal limitations and (b) prosecution of abuses relating to the tethering of horses as set out in section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

David Rutley:

I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme, Paul Farrelly, on 7 February 2019, PQ 216147.

Insects: Conservation**Sir Mark Hendrick:**[\[220088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to preserve natural habitats for (a) butterflies, (b) bees and (c) moths.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

To preserve natural habitats the Government is taking action to protect our best wildlife sites, expand habitat for insects in the wider countryside and support partnerships working on targeted habitat restoration and species recovery.

Over one million hectares of our best habitats for wildlife on land and in our freshwater and coastal areas are conserved through our protected sites designations.

Outside the protected sites series we are managing land to create new wildlife-rich habitat. Since 2011, over 130,000 ha in England have been set aside for this purpose. In 2015, we introduced new and simple agri-environment 'packages' to make it easier for farmers to provide flower rich margins or pollen and nectar plots on fields to support wild pollinators.

Natural England, our statutory nature conservation adviser, continues to work with a range of landowning and NGO partners to support the recovery of threatened insect species by managing and creating habitats for threatened species such as the barberry carpet moth, the short-haired bumblebee and chequered skipper butterfly.

In addition to preserving habitats, the Government is taking action to reduce threats to pollinators. We are supporting science-led restrictions on neonicotinoids so we can protect bees and other pollinators. We also continue to tackle threats from invasive species, such as the Asian hornet, and protect honey bees from pests and diseases through a nationwide team of bee inspectors.

Marine Protected Area: Ascension Island**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[220118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has expedited communications with Cabinet colleagues on provision of funding for a marine protected area for Ascension Island.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Responsibility within Government for the establishment and ongoing management of marine protected areas around the UK's Overseas Territories, including Ascension Island, lies with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Discussions between departments are ongoing.

Noise**Ms Harriet Harman:**[\[220050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural affairs, whether he plans to take steps to meet the World Health Organisation Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region 2018.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

We are working across Government to consider the guidelines and their relevance to future guidance and policy. An officials group is assessing the evidence base as well as other relevant recent research carried out in the UK and abroad, to inform our thinking on this.

Partridges: Conservation**Jim Shannon:**[\[219441\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what funding his Department has allocated to grey partridge recovery projects.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The funding of agri-environment schemes is the principal means of improving habitat provision for farmland birds such as the grey partridge. Examples of measures funded to benefit the grey partridge include the provision of over-wintered stubble and wild bird seed mixtures to provide seed in the winter, reduced input arable margins, such as conservation headlands, to provide food in spring and summer and sympathetic management of hedgerows to provide enhanced nesting opportunities.

Rural Areas**Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger:**[\[219329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will publish a list of the submissions and locations of the rural projects his Department is considering supporting; and when he plans to announce the successful applicants of those projects.

George Eustice:

The Government is investing £3.5 billion into farms and other rural businesses through the 2014-20 Rural Development Programme in England. Schemes within this programme have so far attracted over 30,000 applications and expressions of interest, which are assessed against published criteria and funded in line with programme rules. All Common Agricultural Policy payments, including those for rural development payments above 1,250 euro are published on the [UK Co-ordinating Body website](#).

■ Water: Pollution Control**Jim Shannon:****[219438]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to reduce water pollution from industry.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

This is a devolved matter and the below relates to England only.

Water pollution from industry is controlled by permits issued under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2015. In England, these permits are issued by the Environment Agency (EA) and control the levels of pollution in effluent discharges by setting limits on the chemical concentration and volume of the effluent. The limits are set to protect waters from the adverse impacts of pollution and to meet the appropriate environmental standards for river, ground water and bathing water quality. Operators must comply with the permit and it is an offence to breach a permit condition. Enforcement action may be taken dependant on the nature and severity of the offence.

In addition to controlling pollution from discharges using permits, the EA receives around 40,000 water pollution incident reports per year. Most have little or minor impact but there are around 250 incidents per year which are classified as significant or serious. Very few of these are deliberate acts and are caused accidentally after spillage or system failure. Most significant or serious pollution incidents come from the water industry and agriculture. The remainder are spread across other sectors such as transport, retail, manufacturing, domestic and residential or are a result of natural causes.

The EA responds to all serious incidents and follows them up with appropriate action including warning letters, formal caution, civil sanctions and prosecution. In 2014 the sentencing guidelines were revised so that fines are now related to the level of culpability and the company's turnover. This has seen a steep rise in the value of fines which is now a much greater deterrent to causing pollution.

Working to control discharges through environmental permits and by taking decisive action in response to pollution offences has led to significant reductions in pollution and improvements in water quality over recent years. Plans for continued improvement in this area are included in the Government's 25 Year Environmental Plan.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION**■ Alternative Arrangements Working Group****Jonathan Edwards:****[220848]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, if he will publish all (a) documents, (b) minutes, (c) agendas and (d) reports written (i) by and (ii) for the Alternative Arrangements Working Group.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Secretary of State's meetings with MPs and others to explore alternative arrangements to the backstop form part of routine Ministerial meetings. The Department for Exiting the European Union will publish, on a quarterly basis, details of the Secretary of State's external meetings in line with section 8.14 of the Ministerial Code.

Only Ministers can commission advice from civil servants, and the usual rules around the use and release of government papers will apply. The Government has not provided any papers to the group of MPs. Any documents produced by the MPs are a matter for them.

■ British Nationals Abroad: EU Countries**Keith Vaz:****[R] [218177]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, if his Department will estimate the number of UK citizens residing in EU countries who will return to the UK after 29 March in (a) 2019 and (b) 2020, in the event of the UK leaving the EU (i) with a Withdrawal Agreement and (ii) without a deal.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Withdrawal Agreement includes protections for the rights of citizens including UK nationals currently living in the EU, which will allow them to continue living their lives broadly as they do now in the countries where they currently live.

The Government has been clear that we do not want or expect a no deal scenario. However, we will continue to do the responsible thing and prepare for all eventualities. This includes the potential impact of a no deal scenario on UK nationals currently resident in the EU.

The Office for National Statistics calculates there are approximately 780,000 UK nationals who currently live in the EU, excluding Ireland. Some of them could decide to return to the UK depending on a range of factors including action by EU member states and personal circumstances.

On 19 December, the European Commission reconfirmed their commitment to putting citizens' rights first and called on Member States to take a generous approach to the rights of UK nationals in the EU. The majority of Member States, including France, Spain and the Netherlands, have set out their no deal plans and provided reassurances that the rights of UK nationals will be protected. The Government hopes that other Member States will set out the detail of their plans to protect the rights of UK nationals, in line with our assurances to EU citizens living in the UK, so there should be no need for them to leave.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Brexit**Gareth Thomas:** [219257]

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, which EU agencies his Department plans to seek continued membership of after the UK has left the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

During the Implementation Period, the terms of the UK's participation in EU agencies and bodies is as set out in Article 128 of the Withdrawal Agreement.

Following our exit from the European Union, we are committed to maintaining a close and collaborative relationship with the EU. Our future partnership is a matter for the next phase of negotiations and we look forward to constructive discussions with the EU.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Staff**Layla Moran:** [219567]

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) permanent and (b) contracted staff in his Department in each of the last 12 months.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The number of staff employed by the Department for Exiting the European Union is published, each month, on gov.uk as part of our transparency reporting. It can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-exiting-the-european-union-monthly-workforce-management-information-for-2017-and-2018>

The figures set out the number of payroll staff employed at the end of each month and the number of non-payroll staff (contingent labour and consultants/consultancy). The data for January is due for publication at the beginning of March.

■ European Council**Sir John Hayes:** [218191]

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, which Member State has most often been on the losing side in votes within the European Council since 2004.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The European Council does not keep a formal record of votes held and HMG does not track this. However, the Council of the EU keeps a record of voting results, which is available to the public here:

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/general-secretariat/corporate-policies/transparency/open-data/>

■ **Oliver Robbins**

David Simpson:

[\[220165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what position in the hierarchy of negotiators Olly Robbins holds.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Prime Minister retains personal overall responsibility for the negotiations on the UK side and is supported by her Europe Advisor, who heads up the official-level negotiating team.

■ **Visas**

David Simpson:

[\[220164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what recent discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on visa-free holiday trips for (a) UK citizens to their countries and (b) citizens of EU countries to the UK; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Secretary of State meets regularly with EU counterparts to discuss issues related to our exit.

The Political Declaration makes clear that both the EU and the UK will aim to provide visa-free travel for short-term visits as part of our future relationship.

The European Commission proposed to grant UK nationals visa-free travel to the EU, even in the event of a no deal, subject to reciprocity from the UK. This proposal is currently passing through the EU's legislative process. This would mean that UK nationals would not need a visa when travelling to the Schengen area for short stays of up to 90 days in every 180-day period. The UK has also said that we do not intend to require visas for tourists from the EU.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ **Armed Conflict: Sexual Offences**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[221013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what plans she has for another international meeting on ending violence against women in conflict following the Global Summit to end sexual violence in conflict in 2014.

Mark Field:

My noble Friend, Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, will host the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict International Conference from 18-20 November 2019. The conference will celebrate progress, address remaining challenges, and secure further commitments to action, five years on from the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict.

Ethiopia: Politics and Government**Jim Shannon:**[\[219433\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Ethiopian counterpart on strengthening democracy in that country.

Harriett Baldwin:

I most recently spoke with the Ethiopian State Minister of Foreign Affairs on 23 January. We discussed the political situation in Ethiopia, the rehabilitation process and the role that religious groups are playing. We also discussed the increasing activity of civil society groups, and I welcome the passing of a new civil society law on 7 February. This built on my discussions with the State Minister of Finance during the annual UK–Ethiopia Aid Talks last October, when I offered the UK's support to Government efforts to establish a new legislative platform which underpins democracy. Our support is strengthening the capacity of the Attorney General's Office, which is leading the reform agenda. We have also supported consultation with civil society groups across Ethiopia on the new civil society legislation.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Staff**Jon Trickett:**[\[220085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many staff in his Department have been transferred from direct employment by his Department to employment by Interserve in the last two years.

Alistair Burt:

No staff in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have been transferred from direct employment to employment by Interserve in the last two years.

Israel: Bedouin**Wes Streeting:**[\[220974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with the Israeli authorities on the humanitarian implications of the proposed demolition of Khan al-Ahmar.

Alistair Burt:

The UK is deeply concerned by the humanitarian implications of the proposed demolition of Khan al-Ahmar. We have frequently raised our concerns with the Israeli authorities at senior levels, including with the Israeli Prime Minister and Israeli Attorney General, urging them not to go ahead with their plan to demolish the village. Officials from our Consulate General in Jerusalem continue to visit Khan al-Ahmar, most recently on 18 December. The same day, our Permanent Representative to the UN made clear during a UN Security Council debate on the situation in the Middle East that "we welcome the temporary postponement of plans to demolish the Bedouin community of Khan al-Ahmar but we remain gravely concerned about the

fate of this community". The United Nations has said this demolition could amount to forcible transfer in violation of International Humanitarian Law. As I have said before in this Chamber, the Israeli Government is not obligated to demolish Khan al-Ahmar. It has the power to change its mind and we urge it to do so.

Wes Streeting:

[\[220975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Israeli authorities on the proposed demolition of Khan al-Ahmar.

Alistair Burt:

We have raised concerns with the Israeli authorities at senior levels, including with the Israeli Prime Minister and Israeli Attorney General, urging them not to go ahead with their plan to demolish the village. Officials from our Consulate General in Jerusalem continue to visit Khan al-Ahmar, most recently on 18 December.

■ **Libya: Embassies**

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:

[\[220315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, who the members of the British Representative Office in Benghazi were in 2012.

Alistair Burt:

In accordance with our duty of care to our staff and in line with Data Protection principles and legislation we do not individually identify staff under the grade of Senior Management Structure 2 (SMS 2) in the public domain so are unable to identify the members of the British Representative Office in Benghazi in 2012.

■ **Sri Lanka: Water**

Wes Streeting:

[\[220977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Sri Lankan Government on groundwater contamination in northern Sri Lanka.

Mark Field:

We have received a number of reports about this pressing environmental issue. Our High Commissioner has raised concerns about water contamination with the Chief Minister of the Northern Province, and with the Mayor of Jaffna. He received reassurances that, although oil contamination had been a problem in the past, testing of water samples abroad had shown that the oil content was now below the danger level. Other staff at our High Commission visit Jaffna on a regular basis and there have not been any recent reports that cause concern, but staff will respond appropriately if new reports emerge.

■ Sudan: Detention Centres**Dr David Drew:**[\[220753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when the UK Government last held discussions with the Government of Sudan on that country's use of detention centres.

Harriett Baldwin:

We have consistently made clear to the Government of Sudan our expectation that all detainees will be treated in accordance with international standards and afforded their full legal rights guaranteed in Sudanese law. We have seen no evidence of systemic mistreatment among the general prison population. Following the recent protests we have seen credible evidence of mistreatment of detainees in facilities operated by the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS). We strongly urge the Government of Sudan to implement the recommendations of the National Dialogue that relate to the powers of the security services to arrest and detain individuals. Most recently, senior UK officials in Khartoum raised the issue with the Government of Sudan's Europe Director on 13 February. When I met with the Sudanese Foreign Minister on 22 January I conveyed our concern about the Sudan Government's response to protests and emphasised the importance of rule of law and human rights.

■ Uganda: Human Rights**Ms Harriet Harman:**[\[220725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Ugandan counterparts on the (a) human rights situation and (b) the reported arrest of five opposition politicians and 35 activists on 13 August 2018 in that country.

Harriett Baldwin:

During my visit to Uganda in October 2018, I raised, at the highest levels, the arrests of opposition MPs and members of the public during the Arua by-election. I reiterated the need for those involved to be treated with dignity and fairness and requested an update from the government on investigations into alleged abuses by the security forces. Minister for Armed Forces, Mark Lancaster, reiterated these points to the Ugandan Defence Minister during his visit to London on 25 October. Our High Commission in Kampala continue regularly to raise concerns around civic and political issues directly with the Ugandan government.

■ USA: Visas**Jo Stevens:**[\[220277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of the (a) direct and (b) indirect effect on the ability of British citizens of Somali heritage to obtain a US visa of the US Executive Order 13769.

Sir Alan Duncan:

At the time of the US Executive Order, the Government sought an assurance from the US Government that the order would not affect British passport holders. We are pleased this assurance was achieved. US immigration policy more broadly is a matter for the US Government, just as immigration policy here is set by our Government. Our travel advice sets out our understanding of entry requirements currently in place.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE■ **Air Pollution: Children****Nic Dakin:**[\[220891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of toxic air on children's health.

Steve Brine:

Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the United Kingdom. Long-term exposure to air pollution can cause chronic conditions such as cardiovascular, respiratory diseases and cancer, leading to reduced life expectancy.

Air pollution has a particular impact on children as they grow. There is evidence that the process of normal lung function growth in children is suppressed by long-term exposure to air pollution.

The effects of air pollution on children's health are being studied in research projects. The EXHALE Programme is a London study on air pollution and children's lung health. The Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants has started work to consider the evidence for the effects of air pollution on adverse birth outcomes. The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health is working on a report on 'Indoor Air Quality on Children and Young People's Health across the Life Course'.

■ **Air Pollution: Health Hazards****Dr David Drew:**[\[218747\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 4 February 2019 to Question 212585 on Air Pollution: Health Hazards, what steps (a) his Department and (b) Public Health England are taking to compile sufficient evidence to enable further quantification.

Steve Brine:

The Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) work programme is agreed annually to ensure this meets changing priorities. The committee is not scheduled to engage in further work on the differential health effects of particulate air pollution according to source or components. The Committee's work programme is reviewed annually to ensure that the work is based on existing priorities. Current topics being considered by COMEAP are available at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/653713/COMEAP_work_program.pdf

Recent assessments have been undertaken of the health effects of long-term exposure to the air pollution mixture in the United Kingdom. This was based on studies reporting associations of mortality risk with fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). Further information is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nitrogen-dioxide-effects-on-mortality>

Recent reviews by the Health Effects Institute and World Health Organization of the effects of different components of air pollution, including ultrafine particles (PM_{0.1}), concluded that there is currently limited evidence on the effects on health of ultrafine particles. These reviews can be viewed at the following links:

<https://www.healtheffects.org/publication/understanding-health-effects-ambient-ultrafine-particles>

http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/193108/REVIHAAP-Final-technical-report-final-version.pdf?ua=1

■ **Breast Cancer: Health Professions**

Laura Smith:

[218843]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if the Government will commit to fully funding the Workforce Implementation Plan to tackle shortages in the breast cancer workforce.

Steve Brine:

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has commissioned Baroness Dido Harding, working closely with Sir David Behan, to lead a number of programmes to engage with key National Health Service interests to develop a detailed workforce implementation plan. These programmes will consider detailed proposals to grow the workforce rapidly, including the breast cancer workforce, consider additional staff and skills required, build a supportive working culture in the NHS and ensure first rate leadership for NHS staff.

■ **Cancer: Health Services**

Siobhain McDonagh:

[218743]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government has made an assessment of the level of funding required by Cancer Alliances to deliver the policies set out in the NHS Long Term Plan.

Steve Brine:

Cancer Alliances will work with their sustainability and transformation plans/integrated care systems to develop local plans that set out how they will direct local funding to deliver the cancer ambitions in the NHS Long Term Plan. Cancer Alliances will receive funding to support the transformation required to address the priorities for their local populations.

■ Cancer: Screening

Nic Dakin:

[\[220890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 12 February 2019 to Question 217578 on Breast Cancer: Screening, when the updated National Genomic Test Directory for cancer is due to be published.

Steve Brine:

The updated National Genomic Test Directory for cancer will be issued by the end of February 2019.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Brexit

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[220768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate his Department has made of the cost to the public purse of his Department's preparations for the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Stephen Hammond:

Of the £71.1 million funding the Department has been allocated for 2018/19 and 2019/20 for preparations for European Union exit, we are unable to provide a breakdown of the amount of funding allocated to 'no deal' preparations specifically, as this cannot be separated from EU exit work as a whole across the Department.

■ Disability: Children

Matt Western:

[\[220316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to tackle the funding shortfall for health and social care services for disabled children.

Caroline Dinenage:

The commissioning of health and social care services for children with disabilities is the responsibility of clinical commissioning groups and local authorities respectively. Local commissioners are best placed to assess the needs of the local population and allocate funds accordingly.

In 2014, the Government introduced a new statutory framework requiring local authorities and clinical commissioning groups to commission jointly services for children with special educational needs and disability, across health, social care and education. Since 2014, £327 million has been given to local areas to support implementation of these new arrangements, in addition to the high needs budget for placements for pupils with complex special educational needs which is over £6 billion this year, the highest it has ever been.

The 2015 Spending Review made available more than £200 billion until 2020 for councils to deliver services to local communities, including for provision of social care services for disabled children. The Government is conducting a review of the relative needs and resources of local authorities which will develop a robust, up-to-date

approach to distributing funding across all local authorities in England at Local Government Finance Settlements, including for children's services.

Funding for the National Health Service will grow on average by 3.4% in real terms each year from 2019/20 to 2023/24; by 2023/24 the NHS budget will increase by over £20 billion a year in real terms compared with today.

■ European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

Peter Kyle:

[\[220983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the UK will continue to be able to access the alert systems, databases and networks of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control after the UK leaves the EU.

Steve Brine:

The United Kingdom has a comprehensive surveillance and response system in place to protect citizens from cross-border threats to health. This current system is supported and enhanced by our ability to share data and expertise with other nations from across the world through a wide range of bilateral and multilateral relationships.

Maintaining the ability to prevent, prepare for, detect and respond to health threats that do not recognise borders is key to protecting all our citizens. The UK and the European Union both recognise the importance of continuing close collaboration on health security. As the UK leaves the EU, we will seek to maintain access to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, including all associated alert systems, databases and networks.

■ Foetal Alcohol Syndrome: Cumbria

Tim Farron:

[\[220160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many cases of foetal alcohol spectrum disorder have been diagnosed in Cumbria in the last 12 months for which information is available.

Steve Brine:

This information is not collected centrally.

■ Genito-urinary Medicine

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[220226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 31 January 2019 to Question 212365 on Genito-urinary Medicine: Contacts, whether the data provided on face to face contacts captures appointments in relation to (a) contraception, (b) STIs and (c) both matters; and if he will make a statement.

Steve Brine:

NHS Digital collects and publishes data from the Sexual and Reproductive Health Activity Dataset. The data captures appointments in relation to contraception provided by sexual and reproductive health clinics. The data do not capture detail on

sexually transmitted infections (STIs) unless contraception services are integrated with genitourinary medicine services when limited information on STI related contacts (such as was STI advice/treatment given) are collected.

Data on contraception and STIs are only captured in the context described above and are limited.

■ Health Professions: Regulation

Paul Blomfield:

[\[220892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what additional resources have been allocated to regulators of the health professions to support them with the potential increased workload of maintaining their registers in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Stephen Hammond:

The Government has introduced legislation that will largely maintain existing arrangements for the recognition of European health and care qualifications. European qualifications that are currently recognised automatically by United Kingdom regulators (doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists and pharmacists), will continue to be recognised after the UK leaves the European Union. European qualifications that are not accepted automatically will continue to be assessed against the standard of UK qualifications, as is currently the case.

UK regulators have been preparing for a possible 'no-deal' scenario. As the legislation introduced maintains the current systems as far as is possible for at least two years upon coming into force, little impact is expected after exit day. No additional funding has been allocated.

■ Health Services: British Nationals Abroad

Julie Elliott:

[\[220902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the advice issued on 28 January 2019 entitled New advice for travellers visiting the UK, European Union or European Economic Area in the event of a no-deal EU exit, what advice he has for people on kidney dialysis who wish to travel in the EU or EEA and to whom his advice of 28 January 2019 does not cover because dialysis is not covered under travel insurance.

Julie Elliott:

[\[220903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the advice issued on 28 January 2019 entitled New advice for travellers visiting the UK, European Union or European Economic Area in the event of a no-deal EU exit, when he will issue an update to that advice for people on kidney dialysis who wish to travel to the EU or EEA.

Julie Elliott:

[220904]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what advice he has on compensation to people on dialysis who book, or who have already booked, travel to the EU or EEA and who have to cancel it because they are unable to secure State-funded dialysis treatment whilst they are away.

Stephen Hammond:

If the United Kingdom leaves the European Union without a deal, the Department cannot guarantee the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) will be valid after 29 March 2019 in all European Economic Area countries.

The reciprocal healthcare system requires reciprocity from the EU or individual Member States and cannot be protected unilaterally. The UK Government is seeking agreements with Member States, so that no individual will face sudden changes to their healthcare cover.

People requiring dialysis treatment when travelling should always seek advice from their doctor and renal unit before booking travel. They should also contact the chosen dialysis administrator at the destination of travel to ensure their treatment is covered after 29 March 2019 in a 'no-deal' scenario and so that they are aware of and can agree to any potential charges before booking travel.

Healthcare advice on the National Health Service for travellers with pre-existing conditions including dialysis users is being updated.

Peter Kyle:

[220982]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what arrangements will be in place to provide healthcare cover for UK state pensioners who reside in the EU after the UK leaves the EU.

Stephen Hammond:

The United Kingdom Government appreciates the importance of retaining reciprocal healthcare arrangements with the European Union, and has been clear in the negotiations that it wants to protect the rights of UK citizens in the EU.

Subject to the Withdrawal Agreement being agreed by Parliament, during the implementation period the current rules on reciprocal healthcare will continue until December 2020. The rights of UK nationals living in the EU, and who fall within the scope of the Withdrawal Agreement, will continue to be protected after December 2020, for as long as these individuals remain in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement. This includes state pensioners already benefiting from that cover.

The reciprocal healthcare system requires reciprocity from the EU or individual Member States and cannot be protected unilaterally. The UK Government is seeking agreements with Member States, so that no individual will face sudden changes to their healthcare cover in a 'no deal' scenario.

■ Health: Screening

Sir Kevin Barron:

[220082]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government is on target to meet its commitment in the 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review to provide two million more diagnostic tests per year by 2020-21; and if he will make a statement.

Stephen Hammond:

In 2017/18 the National Health Service carried out 21.9 million diagnostic tests, nearly 1.7 million more than in 2015/16.

NHS England publishes monthly data on diagnostic waiting times which includes the volume of patients waiting for a diagnostic test. The data is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/diagnostics-waiting-times-and-activity/monthly-diagnostics-waiting-times-and-activity/>

■ Hospitals: Transport

Luciana Berger:

[220197]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Huffington Post article entitled Police Driving Mental Health Patients To Hospital In 48 per cent Of All Crisis Cases, published on the 11 February 2019, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that mental health crisis cases are transferred to hospital in an NHS vehicle rather than a police car.

Luciana Berger:

[220198]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Huffington Post article entitled Police Driving Mental Health Patients To Hospital In 48 per cent Of All Crisis Cases, published on the 11 February 2019, what assessment his Department has made of (a) how mental health patients have been affected (b) how their recovery has been impacted by the experience of being transferred to hospital by a police car and not an ambulance.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Code of Practice for the Mental Health Act 1983 is clear that “hospital or ambulance transport will usually be preferable to police transport, which should only be used exceptionally, such as in cases of extreme urgency or where there is an immediate risk of violence”. There are cases, as recognised in the Independent Review of the Mental Health Act, where a patient may request police transportation to minimise their own distress, and where police officers do not request an ambulance.

The Independent Review recommended in December that NHS England should invest capital and revenue to improve the ambulance fleet for mental health conveyance, to create new joined up functions between mental health services, ambulance services and other urgent and emergency care services. NHS England has confirmed in the NHS Long Term Plan that will be the case, and it will introduce new mental health transport vehicles to reduce inappropriate conveyance by police.

The Department has not made an assessment of how police transportation affects the recovery and health of people in mental health crisis.

Luciana Berger:

[\[220199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Huffington Post article entitled Police Driving Mental Health Patients To Hospital In 48 per cent Of All Crisis Cases, published on the 11 February 2019, whether his Department plans to reverse the reduction in funding to ambulance services over the last five years.

Stephen Hammond:

The following table sets out the total income received by National Health Service ambulance trusts in the last five financial years. Total income has increased each year over this period.

Total income received by NHS ambulance trusts 2013/14 – 2017/18

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL NHS AMBULANCE TRUST INCOME
2013-14	2,088,126
2014-15	2,179,338
2015-16	2,194,798
2016-17	2,333,710
2017-18	2,465,389

Source: Published NHS financial accounts

Luciana Berger:

[\[220200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Huffington Post article entitled Police Driving Mental Health Patients To Hospital In 48 per cent Of All Crisis Cases, published on the 11 February 2019, what proportion of the £20.5 billion announced for the NHS in the NHS Long Term Plan will be allocated to ambulance services.

Stephen Hammond:

The National Implementation Framework, which is to be published in the spring, will provide further information on how the NHS Long Term Plan will be implemented. Further details, based on local health system five year plans will be brought together in a detailed national implementation plan in the autumn.

■ Incinerators: Air Pollution

Dr David Drew:

[\[218744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 5 February 2019 to Question 213202 on Incinerators: Air Pollution, with reference to the report entitled Ultrafine Particulates (UFP) in the UK, published by the Air Quality Expert

Group by his Department in 2018, if he will make an assessment of the effect of ultrafine particles on human health (a) in and (b) outside of the vicinity of incinerators.

Steve Brine:

The Air Quality Expert Group Report on 'Ultrafine Particles in the UK' summarised current knowledge on the levels, sources and characteristics of ultrafine particles in the United Kingdom air; the report can be viewed at the following link:

https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/reports.php?report_id=968

An assessment on the potential health impacts of ultrafine particles was beyond the scope of this report.

Reviews by the Health Effects Institute and World Health Organization of the effects of different components of air pollution, including ultrafine particles (PM_{0.1}), concluded that there is currently limited evidence on the effects on health of ultrafine particles. These reports are available to view at the following links:

<https://www.healtheffects.org/publication/understanding-health-effects-ambient-ultrafine-particles>

http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/193108/REVIHAAP-Final-technical-report-final-version.pdf?ua=1

Public Health England has no plans to engage in work on the effects of ultrafine particles on human health in and outside the vicinity of incinerators.

Dr David Drew:

[218745]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 5 February 2019 to Question 213203 on Incinerators: Air Pollution, if he will publish the results of the developing work referred to in paragraph 15 of the paper, The Impact on Health of Emissions to Air from Municipal Waste Incinerators, published in September 2009.

Steve Brine:

Paragraph 15 of the report 'The Impact on Health of Emissions to Air from Municipal Waste Incinerators' refers to ultrafine particles. The report can be viewed at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/384592/The_impact_on_health_emissions_to_air_from_municipal_waste_incinerators.pdf

Since this report, the reviews by the Health Effects Institute and World Health Organization of the effects of different components of air pollution, including ultrafine particles (PM_{0.1}), concluded that there is currently limited evidence on the effects on health of ultrafine particles. These reviews can be viewed at the following links:

<https://www.healtheffects.org/publication/understanding-health-effects-ambient-ultrafine-particles>

http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/193108/REVIHAAP-Final-technical-report-final-version.pdf?ua=1

Recent assessments have been undertaken of the health effects of long-term exposure to the air pollution mixture in the United Kingdom. This work estimated that long-term exposure to the man-made air pollution mixture in the UK has an annual effect equivalent to 28,000 to 36,000 deaths. This was based on studies reporting associations of mortality risk with fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), which includes PM_{0.1}, and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). These documents can be viewed at the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nitrogen-dioxide-effects-on-mortality>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nitrogen-dioxide-effects-on-mortality>

■ Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Dan Jarvis:

[R] [220221]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to find a cure for Irritable Bowel Syndrome.

Steve Brine:

The Department funds research through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including irritable bowel syndrome. It is not usual practice to ring-fence funds for particular topics or conditions. Applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

The NIHR has four live projects on Irritable Bowel Syndrome totalling approximately £3.84 million:

- A randomised, placebo controlled trial to determine the efficacy and mode of action of ondansetron in the treatment of irritable bowel syndrome with diarrhoea;
- ACTIB (Assessing Cognitive Behavioural Therapy in Irritable Bowel): A randomized controlled trial of clinical and cost effectiveness of therapist delivered cognitive behavioural therapy and web-based self-management in irritable bowel syndrome;
- Evaluation of faecal volatile organic compounds in the diagnosis of paediatric inflammatory bowel disease; and
- Eluxadoline for treating irritable bowel syndrome with diarrhoea.

Further information on all NIHR projects can be found at the following link:

www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/programmes/

■ Medical Equipment: UK Trade with EU

Kerry McCarthy:

[220823]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he has taken to support exporters of medical devices to the EU with respect to certification by an EU notified body.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

In leaving the European Union it is in the interests of the United Kingdom and EU to secure a good deal for both sides. One that ensures that patients are not disadvantaged; that the UK will continue to play a leading role promoting and ensuring public health; and that industry must be able to get their products into the UK and EU markets as quickly and simply as possible.

If a deal is agreed by Parliament, then during the implementation period CE marking will continue to be used and recognised for both the UK and EU markets, and UK-based industry will not require an authorised representative established in the EU. UK notified bodies will continue to conduct third-party conformity assessment in the UK and the certificates they issue will continue to be used and recognised for both the UK and EU markets.

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal, the European Commission has issued guidance to industry which says the UK will become a third country, meaning UK-based notified bodies and UK-based Authorised Representatives will no longer be recognised within the EU. The position taken by the European Commission would therefore require UK manufacturers of devices to have an Authorised Representative in the EU in order to continue to supply the EU market.

Certificates issued by UK-based notified bodies will not be recognised by the EU and UK manufacturers who want to place products on the EU market will have to use an EU member state notified body. Once the conformity assessment has been successfully completed, they can place a CE mark on their device and place the product on the UK or EU market.

The Government is in regular contact with the medical devices industry to advise them of the regulatory and export requirements arising from EU Exit.

■ NHS: Drugs

Anne Marie Morris:

[220230]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to paragraph 3.27 of the 2019 voluntary scheme for branded medicines pricing and access, whether NHS England will issue a public consultation on a proposed new commercial framework.

Steve Brine:

NHS England, together with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence is developing a 'commercial framework' setting out the parameters for the commercial approach for medicines in the health service in England. This framework will be

tested with and informed through consultation with stakeholders. The intention is to publish the framework early in 2019.

Anne Marie Morris:

[\[220231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to paragraph 3.57 of the 2019 Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access, what criteria will be used to define the five highest health gain categories; whether NHS England has plans to consult on the selection of categories; when he plans to announce those categories; and which comparator countries will be selected for comparison.

Steve Brine:

NHS England, working with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence and officials from the Department, has begun scoping work to support the identification of the five highest health gain categories as part of the implementation of the Voluntary Scheme. NHS England anticipates engaging with interested stakeholders, including the pharmaceutical industry, over the course of 2019.

Darren Jones:

[\[220318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how patient organisations will be involved in the scoping for a review of NICE technology appraisal methods included in the 2019 voluntary scheme for branded medicines pricing and access.

Steve Brine:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is in the process of planning how to conduct its scoping of the review of the methods for technology appraisal and highly specialised technologies evaluations. Scoping will involve patient organisations and other relevant stakeholders, including industry. The project of scoping and review of the technology appraisal and highly specialised technologies methods and processes is timetabled in the 2019/20 business year. Additional detail and more information will be made available on the NICE website in due course.

Kevin Brennan:

[\[220816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of the UK leaving the EU on 29 March 2019 on the supply of medicines to the UK for NHS use.

Stephen Hammond:

Our number one priority is to ensure patients continue to have unhindered access to medicines as we exit the European Union and we are working with all sectors in the supply chain to ensure this happens.

The Government remains committed to leaving the EU with a deal. Under the conditions of the Withdrawal Agreement, there will be a two-year Implementation Period within which the Government will negotiate the United Kingdom's future relationship with the EU. During the Implementation Period, there will be no change to the current trading arrangements with the EU/European Economic Area (EEA), meaning the supply of medicines and medical products will continue unhindered.

As a responsible Government, we are planning for all possible exit scenarios, including 'no deal'. Our 'no deal' medicines supply contingency plans include sensible mitigations for medicines that come to the United Kingdom from or via the EU/ EEA to ensure that the supply of essential medicines, is not disrupted.

In August 2018, the Department wrote to all pharmaceutical companies that supply prescription-only and pharmacy medicines to the UK that come from, or via, the EU/EEA asking them to ensure a minimum of six weeks additional supply in the UK, over and above existing business-as-usual buffer stocks, by 29 March 2019. The response from industry has been very positive. The vast majority of companies have confirmed stockpiling plans are in place.

On 7 December, the Government published updated reasonable worst-case scenario border disruption planning assumptions in the event of a 'no deal' EU exit. Medicines and medical products are prioritised in cross-Government planning, and the Department is working with relevant partners across Government and industry to ensure we have sufficient roll-on, roll-off freight capacity on alternative routes to enable these vital products to continue to move freely into the UK.

We are confident that if everyone does what they need to do, supplies will continue unhindered. The Department does not expect to see significant changes to existing medicine supply chains or capacity in the intervening period between now and 29 March 2019, although we will be monitoring this closely.

Bambos Charalambous:

[\[220998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many weeks' worth of medicines the Government has asked pharmaceutical companies to stockpile as part of preparations for the UK leaving the EU without a deal; and how his Department decided on that period of duration.

Bambos Charalambous:

[\[221000\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what information he holds on those NHS breast cancer drugs that pharmaceutical companies will have six weeks' supply of by 29 March 2019.

Stephen Hammond:

We understand that breast cancer drugs are vitally important to many people in this country. Our 'no deal' European Union exit contingency plans include sensible mitigations for medicines that come to the United Kingdom from or via the EU/European Economic Area (EEA), to ensure that the supply of breast cancer drugs and other essential medicines to patients is not disrupted.

In August 2018, the Department wrote to all pharmaceutical companies that supply prescription-only and pharmacy medicines to the UK that come from or via the EU/EEA asking them to ensure a minimum of six weeks additional supply in the UK, over and above existing business-as-usual buffer stocks, by 29 March 2019 in a 'no deal' scenario. The duration of the stockpiling requirement was based on the

Government's reasonable worst-case scenario border disruption planning assumptions.

We also recognise that certain medicines with short shelf lives, including medical radioisotopes, cannot be reasonably stockpiled. Where these medicines are imported from the EU or EEA, we have asked that suppliers ensure in advance plans to air freight these medicines from the EU in the event of the no deal exit.

The Department is unable to discuss specific medicines because to we have committed to treating all information received confidentially, securely and to using it only for the purposes of the Department's programme, in order to reassure participating companies. This means not introducing information about a specific company, medicine, or a supply route into the public domain or to a third party.

■ NHS: Finance

Sir Kevin Barron:

[\[220081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how has the £300 million per year to fund new diagnostic equipment and additional staff capacity announced in the 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review has been allocated.

Steve Brine:

The 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review made a commitment to invest up to £300 million per year by 2020/21. The published financial profile agreed for the NHS England Cancer Programme over the four years to 2020/21 was:

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
£123 million	£140 million	£154 million	£190 million

This is being invested in earlier diagnosis and personalised care, including additional staff capacity and equipment. In addition, £130 million has been invested to modernise radiotherapy equipment. Funding has been allocated for over 80 new or upgraded linear accelerators across the country since October 2016.

■ NHS: Procurement

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[220225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) restrictions and (b) prohibitions are in place on (i) engaging with and (ii) selling to the NHS for senior staff who leave NHS England and move to work for private companies.

Stephen Hammond:

The standard contract of employment that NHS England Executive and Senior Manager staff are issued with includes the following:

"20. Post-termination restrictions

20.1 You agree that, following the termination of your employment for any reason you will not directly or indirectly, either alone or jointly with or on behalf of any person, firm or company and whether on your own account or as principal, shareholder, partner, employee, agent or otherwise:

20.1.1 for a period of six months lobby the UK government in relation to any aspect of national or regional health policy with a view to promoting or advancing your own business interests or those of any third party

20.1.2 for a period of six months solicit the employment or engagement of any person who immediately prior to termination of your employment was a senior employee in a managerial, executive or technical capacity of NHS England with whom you worked or with whom you had contact or whose work you were aware of in the 12 months prior to such termination.”

■ Nurses: Resignations

Jo Stevens:

[\[220276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many nurses have left the employment of the NHS in each of the last five years.

Stephen Hammond:

NHS Digital publishes Hospital and Community Health Services workforce statistics. These include staff working in hospital trusts and clinical commissioning groups, but not staff working in primary care, local authorities or other providers.

The following table shows the number of nurses and health visitors who have left National Health Service employment as at 31 October, in the last five years, headcount.

	NURSES AND HEALTH VISITORS THAT HAVE LEFT NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE EMPLOYMENT
October 2013 – October 2014	29,723
October 2014 – October 2015	32,345
October 2015 – October 2016	33,466
October 2016 – October 2017	33,506
October 2017 – October 2018	32,362

Source: NHS Digital

Notes:

These figures include nurses moving to roles in primary care and social care.

■ Nurses: Training

Julian Sturdy: [\[220203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of nurse training course fees and bursaries being paid for by the NHS subject to the completion of several years of post-registration work as a nurse.

Julian Sturdy: [\[220204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the current framework and funding of nurse training in incentivising sufficient people to join the nursing profession to meet the needs of the health service.

Stephen Hammond:

In August 2017 the Government changed the funding system for pre-registration undergraduate nurse training. The intention of the reforms is to boost participation and secure the future supply of home-grown nurses to the National Health Service and enable universities to create additional nursing and midwifery training places.

On 7 February, the University and College Admissions Service (UCAS) published full-time undergraduate nursing and midwifery applications made by the 15 January deadline. This data showed a 4.5% increase in the number of applicants compared to the same point in 2018.

Based on the data UCAS published in February, there is no intention to provide bursaries for nurse training course fees.

On 9 May 2018 the former Secretary of State for Health (Rt. hon. Jeremy Hunt MP) announced a £10,000 package of golden hello payments for 2018/19 loan funded postgraduate nursing students that take up employment in learning disability, mental health or community service nursing roles. The full details of this incentive will be published in due course.

The NHS Long Term Plan, published on 7 January 2019, sets out a vital strategic framework to ensure that over the next 10 years the NHS will have the staff it needs so that nurses have the time they need to care, working in a supportive culture that allows them to provide the expert compassionate care they are committed to providing.

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has commissioned Baroness Dido Harding, working closely with Sir David Behan, to lead a number of programmes to engage with key NHS interests to develop a detailed workforce implementation plan. These programmes will consider detailed proposals to grow the workforce, including consideration of additional staff and skills required, build a supportive working culture in the NHS and ensure first rate leadership for NHS staff.

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[220908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many nursing applications there were in each (a) constituent part of the UK and (b) (i) region of, (ii) local authority in

and (iii) parliamentary constituency in England in each year from the 2015 to the 2019 cycle year.

Stephen Hammond:

Data on nursing applications is not held at local authority and parliamentary constituency level. Data on applications is not available for 2019 entry.

The following table shows the number of applications made to nursing and midwifery courses in each United Kingdom nation.

Number of applications to nursing and midwifery courses, split by UK country of provider and entry year

ENTRY YEAR	2015	2016	2017	2018
English providers	194,075	196,260	150,970	126,000
Northern Irish providers	7,220	7,330	6,750	6,325
Scottish providers	21,105	20,725	20,900	20,435
Welsh providers	9,885	10,445	9,490	9,810

Source: Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) published end of cycle data

The following table shows the number of applications made to nursing and midwifery courses in each region of England.

Number of applications to nursing and midwifery courses, split by English region of provider and entry year

ENTRY YEAR	2015	2016	2017	2018
East Midlands	15,045	15,620	11,620	9,490
East of England	16,450	16,775	12,455	9,390
London	45,520	46,415	33,490	27,775
North East	6,920	6,915	5,810	4,625
North West	32,220	32,100	26,095	22,510
South East	18,895	19,560	15,370	11,590
South West	10,050	10,790	8,415	7,395
West Midlands	23,240	23,200	17,550	14,915
Yorkshire and The	22,045	20,820	17,120	14,865

ENTRY YEAR	2015	2016	2017	2018
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Humber

Source: UCAS unpublished end of cycle data

Notes:

- Data on applications for 2019 entry is not held;
- Each unique UCAS applicant can make up to five applications;
- Refers to applications during the main UCAS application cycle. These do not include those made through clearing; and
- These data do not include applications made directly to universities.

There were 34,030 applicants from all domiciles to study nursing and midwifery at English providers at 15 January 2019 compared with 32,580 at the same time in 2018. This is an increase of 1,450, or 4.5%.

■ Pancreatic Cancer

Steve McCabe: [\[218748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that every patient with pancreatic cancer receives treatment within the first 20 days of diagnosis.

Steve McCabe: [\[218749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many pancreatic cancer patients received treatment within 20 days of diagnosis in each of the last five years.

Steve Brine:

The information is not available in the format requested.

Clinical priority remains the main determinant of when a patient should be treated.

NHS England will shortly be introducing a new Faster Diagnostic Standard for all cancer patients, including those with suspected pancreatic cancer, which will see patients given a diagnosis or the all clear within 28 days. The 31-day standard of decision to treat to undergoing first treatment will remain in place. However, this is an upper limit and clinical priority will always remain the main determinant of when a patient should be treated.

■ Plastics: Air Pollution

Dr David Drew: [\[218746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what information his Department holds on the pollutants emitted by the combustion of plastic that are detrimental to human health.

Steve Brine:

Public Health England (PHE) does not hold specific information on pollutants emitted by the combustion of plastics other than monitoring information provided to it in relation to incidents involving the combustion of plastics, such as fires at centres storing plastics intended for recycling.

PHE, previously as the Health Protection Agency, reviewed the evidence on the products of combustion from fires in general including, but not specifically involving plastics. This advice can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/combustion-products-a-toxicological-review>

The combustion of plastic material can release various substances that are potentially harmful to health, for example, asphyxiant gases e.g. carbon monoxide, irritant gases e.g. hydrogen chloride and phosgene, polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins (PCDDs) and polychlorinated dibenzofurans (PCDFs), phosphorous oxides and particulate matter.

Prediction of the formation toxic combustion products from plastics and risk to health would depend on many factors, such as the type of plastic, combustion conditions (temperature, oxygen availability etc), chemicals released, concentrations and duration of exposure.

■ Respiratory System: Staff**Mike Kane:****[220250]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to collect data on the regional primary-care respiratory workforce in the NHS to address the long-term respiratory workforce challenge identified in the NHS Long Term Plan.

Steve Brine:

Following the publication of the NHS Long Term Plan, the National Implementation Framework, to be published in the spring, will provide further information on how the Long Term Plan will be implemented. Additional details, based on local health system five year plans, will be brought together in a detailed national implementation plan in the autumn.

■ Secure Psychiatric Units: Autism and Learning disability**Patrick Grady:****[220278]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policy on closing secure health care units for people with autism and learning difficulties of the proposed opening by Elysium Healthcare of five new such units in England.

Caroline Dineneage:

We have made no such assessment.

We remain committed to reducing the number of people with learning disabilities and/or autism who are inpatients in hospital, reducing the length of time those admitted spend there, and enhancing the quality of both hospital and community settings.

Some people will continue to need access to time limited inpatient services for assessment of their needs and treatment where this is appropriate. In such circumstances, it is for National Health Service commissioners to take decisions on which providers to commission services from. Our position is that patients should receive the best possible service and outcomes irrespective of which organisation provides it.

■ **Surgery: Medical Equipment**

Peter Aldous:

[219411]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that surgery after-care equipment is (a) collected from patients when it is no longer needed and (b) reused when in pristine condition in order to reduce costs.

Stephen Hammond:

There is a responsibility on National Health Service trusts to make the very best use of all resources and items where they are safely and legally reusable and returnable.

The policy on the return of equipment is a matter for each individual NHS trust. The policy should be included in the trust's Sustainable Development Management Plan (SDMP). The publication of a trust's SDMP is a requirement under Service Condition 18 of the NHS Standard Contract. This should be available for inspection by any member of the public.

■ **Water Supply: Fluoride**

Frank Field:

[220799]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent comparative assessment he has made of the (a) level of fluoride in water supplied by regional water suppliers and (b) effect of those levels on child dental health.

Steve Brine:

The most recent comparative assessment can be found in Public Health England's 'Water Fluoridation Health Monitoring Report for England (2018)' which can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-fluoridation-health-monitoring-report-for-england-2018>

This gives a detailed description of the effects on dental health of living in areas with a water fluoridation scheme (containing ≥ 0.7 mg/l fluoride) compared to areas without a water fluoridation scheme.

The report found that in areas where there is a water fluoridation scheme children aged five in deprived areas are 39% less likely to experience tooth decay and

children in deprived areas are 68% less likely to be admitted to hospital for dental extractions.

The report found that water fluoridation is an effective and safe intervention to improve oral health and reduces inequalities.

HOME OFFICE

■ Actors: EU Countries

Peter Kyle:

[\[220981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons UK actors auditioning to work in EU countries are being asked by theatre companies and arts organisations to provide current EU passports; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Nokes:

Pre-employment checks by theatre companies and organisations employing UK nationals to work in other EU countries are a matter for those organisations. Until the UK leaves the EU, UK nationals continue to have the same rights to live and work in other EU member states as they do now.

■ Asylum: Applications

Catherine West:

[\[220305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his Department remains committed to making decisions on straightforward asylum applications within a target time of six months.

Catherine West:

[\[220308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his Department has a target for the time to make decisions on non-straight forward asylum applications.

Caroline Nokes:

We are committed to ensuring that asylum claims are considered without unnecessary delay, to ensure that those who need protection are granted as soon as possible and can start to integrate and rebuild their lives, including those granted at appeal. All asylum claims lodged in the UK are carefully considered on a case by case basis, based on their individual merits, against a background of relevant case law and up to date country information.

Until recently, our aim was to decide 98% of straight forward asylum claims within six months of the date of claim. However, many asylum claims are not straight-forward, which meant it was not always possible to make an initial decision within six months of the date of claim. Many of these cases had a barrier that needed to be overcome to make the asylum decision and many of these barriers were outside of the Home Office's control.

To promote a greater understanding and transparency of the asylum system, we have prioritised deciding older claims and those made by more vulnerable individuals, whose claims are more complex. This has resulted in a reduction in the proportion of claims decided within 6 months.

We are engaging stakeholders as part of our plans to introduce new service standards which will help inform how we will prioritise asylum decision making in the future. This will seek to address the concerns that have been raised with the current arrangements, additionally as part of our wider strategy, we aim to increase the overall number of caseworkers to reduce the total number of outstanding claims.

Catherine West: [220306]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the current average waiting time is for a decision to be made on straightforward asylum application.

Catherine West: [220307]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the current average waiting time is for a decision to be made on a non-straightforward asylum application.

Caroline Nokes:

Until recently, our aim was to decide 98% of straight forward asylum claims within six months of the date of claim. However, many asylum claims are not straight-forward, which meant it was not always possible to make an initial decision within six months of the date of claim. Many of these cases had a barrier that needed to be overcome to make the asylum decision and many of these barriers were outside of the Home Office's control.

To promote a greater understanding and transparency of the asylum system, we have prioritised deciding older claims and those made by more vulnerable individuals, whose claims are more complex. This has resulted in a reduction in the proportion of claims decided within 6 months.

We are engaging stakeholders as part of our plans to introduce new service standards which will help inform how we will prioritise asylum decision making in the future. This will seek to address the concerns that have been raised with the current arrangements, additionally as part of our wider strategy, we aim to increase the overall number of caseworkers to reduce the total number of outstanding claims.

The Home Office does not publish data relating to the average waiting times for decisions to be made on straight forward and non-straight forward asylum claims, but does publish data on the percentage of asylum applications processed within the current service standard to decide 98% of straight forward asylum claims within 6 months of the date of claim.

Data on performance against the current published service standard can be found on tabs Asy_10 and Asy_11 of the Asylum Transparency Data November 2018 at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-transparency-data-november-2018>

In the November release of the transparency data, the Home Office are still reporting performance against our previous service standard to decide all straight forward asylum cases within 6 months of the date of claim. The next release of transparency data, scheduled for 28 February 2019, will still contain data on performance and will be labelled under the title of percentage of cases decided within 6 months rather than explicitly referring to the service standard.

■ Asylum: Children

Charlie Elphicke:

[218788]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 6 February 2019 to Question 215158 on UK-France Migration Committee, what services were purchased with the £3.6 million of funding to support transfers of eligible children to the UK.

Caroline Nokes:

The UK and France enjoy a special relationship based on shared values and priorities, including promoting the rule of law, protecting the rights of individuals and ensuring the security of our citizens. In January 2018 both countries signed the Sandhurst Treaty, which included a funding package of £45.5 million to fund joint co-operation on all elements of tackling the impact of illegal migration in northern France.

Within this package, £3.6 million was specifically allocated to funding the development of the Dublin process to support transfers of eligible children to the UK, including training for those working with unaccompanied children, family tracing and targeted information campaigns. This full package of £3.6 million was paid to the French Government at the end of 2018. We continue to work with France to transfer eligible children under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 and the Dublin regulation and transfers are ongoing.

■ Court Orders

Liz Saville Roberts:

[217685]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what data his Department collects on the (a) breach and (b) multiple breaches of restraining orders.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of Harassment offences reported to and recorded by the police in England and Wales. This includes offences relating to a "Breach of a restraining order".

These statistics are victim-based and data, for each year since 2013, can be found in police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables>

■ Drugs: Misuse**Jim Shannon:**[\[185075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress he has made on the implementation of the Drug Strategy, published in July 2017.

Victoria Atkins:

Nationally, the Government is already delivering a range of actions through the 2017 Drug Strategy to prevent drug misuse in our communities, support people to recover from dependence on drugs, and support enforcement partners to tackle the illicit drug trade. We have established a Home Secretary-chaired Board which includes representation from Government departments and wider partners that are critical to drive implementation of the commitments in the 2017 Drug Strategy.

However, we recognise there is still further to go to tackle the problems caused by drugs. That is why, on 8 February, the Home Secretary appointed Professor Dame Carol Black to lead a major review that will look into the ways in which drugs are fuelling serious violence.

First announced in the Home Secretary's conference speech in October, the initial stage of the wide-ranging review will look at who drug users are, what they are taking, and how often in order to build the most in-depth and comprehensive picture of this issue to date. The review, which will build on existing Government strategies to combat drugs, serious violence and serious and organised crime, will examine the harms that drugs cause and the best ways to prevent drug-taking.

■ European Convention on Extradition**Louise Haigh:**[\[220964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which Member States of the EU have rescinded legislation implementing the European Convention on Extradition 1957.

Mr Nick Hurd:

All Member States of the European Union have remained parties to the European Convention on Extradition and continue to operate it with other Council of Europe members who are not Member States of the EU.

■ Extradition**Louise Haigh:**[\[220966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many extradition requests from (a) the UK and (b) category 2 territories under Part 2 of the Extradition Act 2003 have been approved in each year since 2003.

Louise Haigh:[\[220967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many extradition requests under Part 2 of the Extradition Act 2003 from (a) the UK to category 2 territories and (b) category 2 territories to the UK have been rejected in each year since 2003.

Caroline Nokes:

“Category 2 territories” refers to countries designated as extradition partners under Part 2 of the Extradition Act 2003

The information on the numbers of extradition requests rejected by the UK or by category 2 territories is not routinely published. Not all the information requested is held centrally. The tables below set out the information which is centrally held by the Home Office. The figures are from local management information, and have not been quality assured to the level of published National Statistics. As such they should be treated as provisional and therefore subject to change.

Figures for the numbers of people extradited or requests refused in a particular year may include those for whom a request was made in a previous year.

Year	Number of people extradited to the UK	Number of people extradited from the UK
2003	64	55
2004	47	50
2005	11	62
2006	14	45
2007	19	29
2008	17	17
2009	26	38
2010	19	27
2011	22	27
2012	25	38
2013	26	28
2014	11	32
2015	26	23
2016	21	24
2017	15	38
2018	24	15

■ **Female Genital Mutilation****Jo Stevens:****[220275]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many cases of alleged female genital mutilation have been investigated in each of the last five years.

Victoria Atkins:

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a crime and it is child abuse. The Government is clear that we will not tolerate a practice that can cause extreme and lifelong suffering to women and girls.

The Home Office does not collate information on investigations, arrests and prosecutions centrally. Information on FGM referrals from the police to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) from 2010-18 is available in the CPS's Violence Against Women and Girls Report, available at <https://www.cps.gov.uk/publication/violence-against-women-and-girls>

The Serious Crime Act 2015 introduced a number of measures to help overcome the barriers to prosecution, including: a new mandatory reporting duty for known cases of FGM in under-18s; extension of extra-territorial jurisdiction over FGM offences committed abroad; lifelong anonymity for victims; FGM Protection Orders (FGMPOs); and a new offence of failure to protect a girl from the risk of FGM. Between their introduction and 30 September 2018, 296 FGMPOs were made to protect victims and those at risk.

■ **Firearms: Crime****Angela Crawley:****[218828]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) 0.5 calibre rifles have been (i) used in connection with criminal offences and (ii) reported stolen from

certificate holders and (b) criminal convictions have resulted from (iii) the use of or (iv) the illegal provision of 0.5 calibre rifles, in the last five years.

Mr Nick Hurd:

Statistics on firearm offences are not broken down by the calibre of firearm used but the Government is not aware of any offences involving 0.5 calibre rifles in the last five years. One 0.5 calibre rifle was reported stolen in 2016 and this rifle was subsequently successfully recovered.

The Government is concerned about the risks that high muzzle energy rifles would pose to public safety if they were to be acquired by criminals or terrorists. Given the strength of views on this issue, the Government intends to launch a public consultation on this and other firearms matters later this year.

■ **Home Office: Assistance Animals**

Paul Farrelly:

[\[219334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will take steps to ensure that his Department's service providers display stickers to welcome assistance dogs.

Victoria Atkins:

Each contract award is based on criteria relevant to that contract. The displaying of stickers to welcome assistance dogs is not always applicable. Social Value, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations are of importance and these factors are considered during the procurement process as well as throughout the lifecycle of contracts where relevant and proportionate to do so.

■ **Home Office: Brexit**

Gareth Thomas:

[\[219247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which EU agencies his Department plans to seek continued membership of after the UK has left the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Nokes:

During the Implementation Period, the terms of the UK's participation in EU agencies and bodies will be as set out in Article 128 of the Withdrawal Agreement.

Following our exit from the European Union, we are committed to maintaining a close and collaborative relationship with the EU. Our future partnership is a matter for the next phase of negotiations and we look forward to constructive discussions with the EU.

■ **Home Office: ICT**

Jon Trickett:

[\[187307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 1 November to Question 183259 on Home Office: ICT, how many of the 360 are classed as contingent labour.

Caroline Nokes:

There are 360 working on the construction of the Immigration Platform Technologies programme. Of the 360 personnel, 8 are civil servants and the remaining 352 are contingent labour.

Hospitals: Transport**Luciana Berger:**[\[220201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Huffington Post article entitled Police Driving Mental Health Patients To Hospital In 48 per cent Of All Crisis Cases, published on the 11 February 2019, what assessment he has made of the cost to his Department of mental health crisis cases being transferred to hospital in a police car, not an NHS vehicle, in the last twelve months.

Mr Nick Hurd:

While it is expected that a person experiencing a mental health crisis should normally be transported by ambulance, there are circumstances in which for public safety reasons use of a police vehicle may be deemed necessary. Where police vehicles were used during 2017/18 in 62% of cases this was due to a risk assessment or an ambulance was not requested or the reasons was not recorded.

The costs of such use will vary depending on the circumstances of individual cases and cannot easily be calculated. Nevertheless the Government has been very clear that the inappropriate use of police vehicles is undesirable from a patient perspective and abstracts police from their core policing duties.

The Home Office is therefore working with police and health partners to find ways of identifying the reasons for and reducing conveyance by police vehicle. In addition the NHS Long Term Plan includes plans to introduce new mental health vehicles to reduce inappropriate use of ambulances and police vehicles.

Human Trafficking: Finance**Alex Norris:**[\[219560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the November 2018 High Court judgement and reinstatement of subsistence rates of £65 a week for possible victims of trafficking in the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), what the current subsistence rates are for people in the NRM who are (a) in outreach support, (b) in safe house accommodation (not catered), (c) in safe house accommodation (catered) and (d) in National Asylum Support Service accommodation.

Victoria Atkins:

In light of the judgment in K and AM, the Home Office immediately reinstated the top up paid to those in the Victim Care Contract who are also receiving support from the asylum support system, so that they receive the same level of financial support they were receiving before the judgement.

This is:

- £35 per week for those in outreach support
- £65 per week for those in non-catered safe house accommodation
- £35 per week for those in catered safe house accommodation (catering covers all food costs and considers dietary and religious restrictions)
- A top-up for those in receipt of financial support from the National Asylum Support Service so that they receive a total of £65 per week which means £27.25 for those in receipt of section 95 support £29.61 for those in receipt of Section 4(2) support

■ Immigrants: Detainees

Tulip Siddiq: [192941]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is the longest period spent in immigration detention by a detainee who left an Immigration Removal Centre between June 2017 and October 2018.

Caroline Nokes:

The Home Office publish data on the number of people leaving detention by year and quarter, broken down by length of detention. The latest data is available in tables dt_06 and dt_06_q of the immigration statistics, year ending June 2018: Detention tables.

Figures for July to September 2018 will be released on 29 November 2018 in Immigration statistics, year ending September 2018, available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>

Tulip Siddiq: [218833]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 24 January 2019 to Question 212416 on Immigrants: Detainees, whether total resource costs of running the detention centres includes (a) health services within detention and (b) escorting services to and from detention.

Caroline Nokes:

The costs include all welfare provision but exclude Healthcare provision costs in England. Health Care services are provided by NHS England under a different agreement. The costs do not include the costs of the escorting contract which covers escorting to and from removal centres, the cost of escorting for removals and other supporting activities.

■ Immigrants: Domestic Abuse

Angela Crawley: [218829]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications have been made for the destitute domestic violence concession in (a) Lanark and Hamilton East, (b) Scotland and (c) the UK in each of the last five years.

Angela Crawley:

[218830]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what his Department's performance standard is for processing destitute domestic violence concession applications; and how many applications have been completed within that target time in the last 12 months.

Angela Crawley:

[218831]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applicants granted the destitute domestic violence concession have then been refused Indefinite Leave to Remain in each of the last five years in (a) Lanark and Hamilton East constituency, (b) Scotland and (c) the UK.

Caroline Nokes:

We do not hold the data required to answer the question in the requested format, as the data is not broken down by Parliamentary constituency or metropolitan borough and we do not publish data on those granted under the concession but subsequently refused Indefinite Leave to Remain.

Wider published statistics relating to individuals granted leave to remain under the destitution domestic violence concession and Indefinite Leave to Remain in the United Kingdom as a victim of domestic violence are available from the Immigration Statistics year ending September 2018 release are provided in the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-september-2018-data-tables>

■ **Immigration: Carers**

Stephen Doughty:

[220909]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what advice has been given to Zambrano carers following the rulings in *Chen v Home Secretary* and *Maria Teixeira v London Borough of Lambeth and Home Secretary* in the context of (a) the UK's withdrawal from the EU and (b) the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Stephen Doughty:

[220910]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what advice his Department has provided to people involved in *Surinder Singh* immigration cases on the implications for their immigration status of the UK leaving the EU (a) with and (b) without a deal.

Caroline Nokes:

In a deal scenario, provision will be made in the Immigration Rules for a non-EU citizen who is resident in the UK as the primary carer of a British citizen, and who currently derives a right of residence from wider EU law (a Zambrano carer), as set out in paragraph 6.12 of the Statement of Intent on the EU Settlement Scheme (published on 21 June 2018). Further de-tails will be provided shortly on the new status which will be available to Zambrano carers in both a 'deal' and 'no deal' scenario.

Paragraph 6.12 of the Statement of Intent also set out that, in a 'deal' scenario, non-EU citizen family members of British citizens who are lawfully resident in the UK by the end of the implementation period on 31 December 2020, by virtue of regulation 9 of the EEA Regulations (the 'Surinder Singh' route), will be eligible to apply for status under the EU Settlement Scheme. Further details will be provided shortly on the immigration status of family members of British citizens returning from the EU in both a 'deal' and 'no deal' scenario.

■ Immigration: English Channel

Charlie Elphicke:

[\[218789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the cost to his Department (a) has been and (b) will be of Royal Navy assets patrolling the English Channel in relation to immigration.

Caroline Nokes:

The deployment of the Royal Navy vessel is an interim measure whilst the two Border Force cutters currently redeployed from overseas make their way back to UK waters.

As stated in the House of Lords by Baroness Williams on 6 February 2019 to date, it has cost a total of £700,000.

The deployment is being funded by the Home Office and will be kept under constant review.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals

Peter Grant:

[\[220282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when he plans to publish the details of the refund process for EU nationals who have already paid fees through the EU Settlement Scheme.

Caroline Nokes:

As the Prime Minister announced on 21 January, there will be no fee for applications under the EU Settlement Scheme when we roll out the scheme in full by 30 March.

Anyone who has applied during the pilot phase, or who does so, will have their fee reimbursed. The Home Office will set out further details in due course.

Patrick Grady:

[\[220942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what costs are incurred by people contacting the dedicated telephone advice service for the EU Settlement Scheme using (a) mobile phones and (b) landlines.

Patrick Grady:

[\[220943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of making the dedicated telephone advice service for the EU Settlement Scheme a freephone service for all those calling from UK phone numbers.

Caroline Nokes:

The Home Office will not charge for this service although calls to the Settlement Resolution Centre from within the UK will cost the same as dialling any 01 or 02 number. This can be up to 10p per minute from a UK landline and between 3p to 40p from a mobile, depending upon the provider. Applicants may get free calls to some numbers as part of their call package. We also have an 02 number available for those calling from overseas.

Intelligence Services**Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[220065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps his Department has taken to minimise the effects on the UK's security services of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The UK's Security and Intelligence Agencies together with law enforcement bodies are fully involved in Government planning for the UK's exit from the EU. We are unable to publish further information due to the risk of releasing information which could be exploited to the detriment of national security.

National County Lines Coordination Centre**Anneliese Dodds:**[\[219569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 11 February 2019 to Question 217156, whether the National County Lines Coordination Centre will be reporting on its activities.

Victoria Atkins:

The National County Lines Co-ordination Centre is a joint initiative between the National Crime Agency and the National Police Chiefs' Council, supported by £3.6m of Home Office funding.

The NCLCC supports operational policing as well as providing a central point at which intelligence and information is shared and the links with criminal exploitation and illegal drugs markets are identified. The NCLCC co-ordinates weeks of intensive law enforcement action focusing activity and support on areas of highest risk. The NCA publishes information on the outcome of these weeks of action and details of the most recent activity in January, which led to over 600 arrests and 1000 people safeguarded, are available at nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news.

Offences against Children: Bail**Sarah Champion:**[\[220240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of pre-charge bail applications in child sexual abuse investigations were successful in each of the last five years.

Sarah Champion:

[220241]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in what proportion of cases of individuals charged with child sexual abuse were those individuals not placed under pre-charge bail conditions in each of the last five years.

Sarah Champion:

[220242]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been released on pre-charge bail following an arrest for child sexual abuse in each of the last five years.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Home Office does not centrally hold the information requested.

From April 2017 the Home Office requested information on a voluntary basis from police forces on the number of individuals released on pre-charge bail following arrest, broken down by bail length.

This data collection has been published (as an Annex) within the 'Police powers and procedures, England and Wales' statistical bulletin, based on data received from 17 forces for the 2017/18 financial period. These figures give an indicative picture only and should be treated with caution – they have been designated as 'Experimental Statistics', to acknowledge further development will take place in the future. These can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-powers-and-procedures-england-and-wales-year-ending-31-march-2018>

Data on the number of individuals released on pre-charge bail following arrest, broken down by bail length, were requested on a mandatory basis from April 2018, which will be published in the next instalment of the 'Police powers and procedures, England and Wales' statistical bulletin, scheduled for release in Autumn 2019.

Information on the number/proportion of persons released on pre-charge bail with restrictions are not collected, nor are information on specific details of pre-charge bail restrictions, and these will not be covered in the statistics.

■ Offenders: Religion

Sir John Hayes:

[218756]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the relationship between an individual's (a) religious identification and (b) propensity to commit crime.

Victoria Atkins:

The police are not required by the Home Office to record information on the religious identification of perpetrators of crime, and the Home Office has not made an assessment of any link.

■ Passports: Lost Property

John Spellar:

[\[177178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many passports were lost by his Department's Immigration Section in the last 12 months.

Caroline Nokes:

Data on lost passports in the last 12 months is not captured and consolidated across the Border, Immigration and Citizenship System. To find this information would require interrogation of individual case records and therefore could only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

From November 2018, the majority of immigration applicants who apply to confirm or extend their stay in the UK, or apply for citizenship, will be managed by the Home Office's new commercial partner Sopra Steria on behalf of UK Visas and Immigration. As part of this new service, for the first time, applicants will be able to retain their passport and supporting evidence as part of the application process

■ Police Custody

Ruth George:

[\[220325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many police custody suites have been in operation in the UK in each of the last 10 years.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Home Office does not hold this information. Decisions about the provision of police station custody suites are an operational matter for Chief Constables working with democratically accountable Police and Crime Commissioners.

■ Police: Ethnic Groups

Stephen Doughty:

[\[220233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions he has had with police forces on reforming recruitment procedures to increase the recruitment, retention and promotion of people from BAME backgrounds.

Mr Nick Hurd:

There is a greater proportion of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) officers than ever before, however the Government has been clear that there is more for forces to do.

The Government established the College of Policing as the professional body for policing. The College has delivered a major programme of work to address the recruitment, retention and progression of officers from BAME and other underrepresented groups in policing including: capturing what works; publishing positive action advice; and reviewing the initial recruitment processes. A pilot of a new assessment centre for police officer recruits is now underway, led by the Metropolitan Police, and an evaluation is expected to be published by the College of Policing in autumn 2019.

Building on the foundations laid by the College, the National Police Chief's Council published its first Diversity, Equality and Inclusion strategy in October 2018.

Ministers are in regular dialogue with policing partners about increasing police workforce diversity. The Home Secretary chaired a Race Diversity Roundtable with policing leaders in October 2018, following which he wrote to Police and Crime Commissioners, the College of Policing, Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services and chief constables, urging a whole system approach to driving improvements in diversity.

■ Police: Expenditure

Steve McCabe:

[220063]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the change in level of funding for the police force in (a) England and (b) the West Midlands has been in each year since 2010.

Mr Nick Hurd:

It is not possible to make direct comparisons between these years due to changes in police funding arrangements over the period. Information on historic police funding can be found in our statistical bulletin published at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-funding-for-england-and-wales-2015-to-2019> which explains the changes in the structure of police funding.

Details of the police funding settlement for forces in England and Wales, is published annually at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-finance>. The funding settlement for 2019/20, agreed by Parliament on 5 February, provides up to £970 million of additional funding for the police, including the pensions grant and income from council tax precept. In the West Midlands, this means funding of up to £568.6 million, an increase of up to £34.3 million from 2018/19.

■ Police: Finance

Mark Menzies:

[218804]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment has been made of the level of reserves held by (a) Lancashire Police Constabulary and (b) other police constabularies.

Mr Nick Hurd:

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) can keep part of their funding in financial reserves to help manage financial risk and to fund major future costs such as change programmes aimed at improving services to the public.

Information on police force reserves in England and Wales is published online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-financial-reserves>. This also includes statutory guidance in the information that PCCs should publish on their financial reserves.

The Lancashire PCC held total resource reserves of £37.9 million in March 2018.

■ Police: Staff**Chris Ruane:****[220804]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate he has made of the number of police officers employed by each territorial police force in England and Wales in each of the last five years.

Mr Nick Hurd:

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

Data on the number of police officers in England and Wales, by Police Force Area, as at 31 March each year and going back to March 2007, can be found in the accompanying Open Data Table:

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

The latest published figures, representing the picture as at 30 September 2018, can be accessed in 'Table 1' of the accompanying data tables here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-30-september-2018>

■ Pornography: Slavery**Sir John Hayes:****[218182]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he has made an assessment of the correlation between legal pornography, people trafficking and sexual slavery; and if he will make a statement.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government has not conducted any assessments to the link between legal pornography, people trafficking and sexual slavery.

The Government Equalities Office are commissioning qualitative research to look into any relationship between porn and attitudes to women. This research is due to be completed this Summer 2019.

The Government has commissioned a research project into the prevalence and nature of prostitution in England and Wales; to inform the evidence base before any changes are made to policy and legislation in respect of prostitution. This independent research is being led by the University of Bristol and we anticipate receiving their report in the Spring this year.

■ UK Border Force: Patrol Craft

Charlie Elphicke: [218790]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the names are of the two Border Force cutters that he has recalled from the Mediterranean and Aegean seas; what their current locations are; and on what date they will arrive in the English Channel.

Caroline Nokes:

HMC Protector and HMC Seeker have been recalled to the English Channel.

All essential maintenance has been completed on the cutters and both are fully crewed. These vessels are designed and built to work around coastal areas rather than to undertake long distance open ocean deployments during adverse weather conditions.

For the crews to transit the Bay of Biscay during winter, especially during the current period of deep Atlantic pressures sweeping across and causing high swells (at times up to 14 metres), is a dangerous pursuit and one which must not be taken carelessly. The vessels therefore require a favourable weather window to return to the UK safely and securely.

The two cutters are expected to arrive in the coming weeks.

Charlie Elphicke: [218791]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the daily operating cost is of a Border Force cutter (a) at sea and (b) in port.

Charlie Elphicke: [218792]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the daily operating cost is of a Border Force patrol craft (a) at sea and (b) in port.

Caroline Nokes:

It is Home Office policy not to comment on details of the deployment of any operational capability or taskings, as to do so would or is likely to prejudice national security.

Please see below a Home Office publication link to transparency data from 2010 to financial year 2017/2018 on Home Office spending.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ho-annual-reports-and-accounts>

Border Force uses a layered approach to coastal defence, including patrols comprising additional military and law enforcement vessels, on-shore resources and intelligence and surveillance to detect efforts to smuggle guns and drugs or facilitate illegal entry into the country.

Charlie Elphicke: [218793]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many days each Border Force cutter has spent (a) at sea and (b) in port in (i) each year from 2010 to 2018 and (ii) 2019.

Charlie Elphicke:

[218794]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many days each Border Force patrol craft has spent (a) at sea and (b) in port in (i) each year from 2010 to 2018 and (ii) 2019.

Caroline Nokes:

It is Home Office policy not to comment on details of the deployment of operational capability or taskings, as to do so would or is likely to prejudice national security.

■ **Undocumented Migrants: Boats**

Charlie Elphicke:

[218802]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2019 to Question 215154 on Undocumented Migrants: Kent, how many suspected illegal migrants entered the UK by small boat in each month from October 2018 to January 2019.

Caroline Nokes:

We do not routinely publish this level of data on clandestine entry or attempts to enter the UK. Published data on the numbers can be found in the links below for the Home Secretary's statement on 31 December 2018 and the subsequent Westminster Hall Debate on 30 January.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-bolsters-border-force-fleet-in-the-channel>

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2019-01-30/debates/9E4482A1-3368-4E5F-89A3-A2B1853974C1/EnglishChannelIllegalSeaborneImmigration?highlight=illegal%20seaborne#>

■ **Undocumented Migrants: Kent**

Charlie Elphicke:

[218798]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2019 to Question 215154 on Undocumented Migrants: Kent, how many of the 500 migrants referred to were not Iranian.

Charlie Elphicke:

[218799]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2019 to Question 215154 on Undocumented Migrants: Kent, what were the claimed nationalities of the migrants referred to who were not Iranian; and how many migrants claimed each of those nationalities.

Caroline Nokes:

We do not routinely publish this level of data on clandestine entry or attempts to enter the UK and we do not comment on the status of cases once they have claimed asylum.

Charlie Elphicke:**[218800]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2019 to Question 215154 on Undocumented Migrants: Kent, what number of people does the figure 80% represent.

Charlie Elphicke:**[218801]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2019 to Question 215154 on Undocumented Migrants: Kent, what number of people does the figure 40% represent.

Caroline Nokes:

Please see below a Home Office publication link to the Home Secretary's statement on 31 December 2018. This can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-bolsters-border-force-fleet-in-the-channel>.

■ Weather: Death

Sir Mark Hendrick:**[219306]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the reasons behind the high level of Excess Winter Deaths (EWDs) in 2017-2018; what plans he put in place to reduce the number of EWDs in 2018-2019 and what plans he will put in place for 2019-2020.

Victoria Atkins:

The Home Office has no specific remit in respect of Excess Winter Deaths and has not made any such assessment.

■ West Midlands Police: Staff

Steve McCabe:**[220763]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of the total number of police officers were employed by West Midlands Police force in each year since 2010.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers in West Midlands Police, and the proportion they comprise of the total number of FTE police officers in England and Wales from 31 March 2010 to 30 September 2018, are shown in the table below:

TABLE:NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POLICE OFFICERS IN WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND AS A PROPORTION OF THE ENGLAND AND WALES TOTAL, 2010 TO 2018

As at:	Number	Proportion of all E&Ws officers (%)
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TABLE:NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POLICE OFFICERS IN WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND AS A PROPORTION OF THE ENGLAND AND WALES TOTAL, 2010 TO 2018

2010: 31 March	8,626	6
2011: 31 March	8,149	6
2012: 31 March	7,826	6
2013: 31 March	7,615	6
2014: 31 March	7,288	6
2015: 31 March	7,133	6
2016: 31 March	6,944	6
2017: 31 March	6,756	5
2017: 30 September	6,535	5
2018: 31 March	6,581	5
2018: 30 September	6,559	5

Source: Home Office, 'Police Workforce England and Wales' statistical bulletin

1 Excludes British Transport Police

2 Data in these tables include officers on career breaks and other types of long term absence, and those seconded from other forces. They exclude officers seconded out to central services (e.g. the Home Office, the National Crime Agency).

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Buildings: Insulation

Mr Steve Reed:

[\[220243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant the Answer of 11 February 2019 to Question 217589 on Buildings: Insulation, whether his Department has commissioned the Building Research Establishment to design a test methodology to assess the fire safety of thermal insulation.

Mr Steve Reed:

[\[220244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant the Answer of 4 February 2019 to Question 217591 on Buildings: Insulation, if his Department will commission BS 8414 large-scale tests on systems incorporating (a) zinc

composite material, (b) copper composite material, and (c) aluminium honeycomb cladding.

Mr Steve Reed: [\[220246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant the Answer of 11 February 2019 to Question 217591 on Buildings: Insulation, if his Department will be carry out testing of the 134 samples of Expanded Polystyrene held by the Building Research Establishment.

Mr Steve Reed: [\[220247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 11 February 2019 to Question 217591 on Buildings: Insulation, how many of the 1,426 non-Aluminium Composite Cladding samples held by the Building Research Establishment will be covered by the planned tests .

Kit Malthouse:

I refer the Hon Member to the answer I gave to him on 4 February 2019 UIN214563. The focus currently is on testing non Aluminium Composite Material external cladding panels found on buildings. The findings will help determine, in consultation with the expert panel, any further action we should take. This could include further testing and advice to building owners.

Mr Steve Reed: [\[220245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant the Answer of 11 February 2019 to Question 217591 on Buildings: Insulation, if his Department will publish the dates on which each of the proposed materials will be tested; and whether the results of each test will be published as soon as they are available.

Kit Malthouse:

My Department is finalising the schedule of individual tests with the Building Research Establishment. My Department will make arrangements to publish the outcomes of the research.

Mr Steve Reed: [\[220911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant the Answer of 11 February 2019 to Question 217589 on Buildings: Insulation, if he could clarify the legal effect of the Building Research Establishment's methodology in relation to the use of cladding materials on existing buildings.

Kit Malthouse:

The methodology establishes the focus and the methods of the research. The Department will consider in the light of the findings of the research, and with the advice of the Independent Expert Panel, whether any further action is necessary.

■ Cemeteries: Vandalism

Tulip Siddiq:

[220301]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what funding his Department has allocated to (a) local authorities and (b) the police to protect Jewish and Islamic cemeteries from targeted vandalism in each of the last four years.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

Vandalism and the desecration of cemeteries are criminal offences and we are confident that these offences will be dealt with appropriately by the police, local services, and criminal justice system. Where these criminal offences are aggravated by hostility towards particular religious communities these will be investigated as hate crimes.

The Government provides funding support to specialist third party organisations the Community Security Trust and Tell Mama, both of which report hate crimes to the police, spread awareness about hate crimes, and provide victim support.

■ Green Belt

Tulip Siddiq:

[218832]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many housing units have been approved on land formerly used as greenbelt in each of the last three years.

Kit Malthouse:

The requested information is not gathered or held centrally

Statistics on changes in the amount of Green Belt land in England are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/green-belt-statistics>. These statistics include information on where Green Belt designation has been changes as part of the planning process and the reason for this change as provided by the local authority.

■ Lancashire Enterprise Partnership: Public Appointments

Graham P Jones:

[220189]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of recruiting a new Chair of the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership.

Jake Berry:

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) are independent bodies, supported by an accountable local authority. Government ensures uniform standards are met through the National LEP Assurance Framework, which sets out that chairs are expected to be influential local leaders of high integrity. To meet these standards each LEP makes its own decisions locally for recruitment and associated costs which are subject to scrutiny by the accountable body.

■ Landlords: South Yorkshire**Dan Jarvis:****[R] [220223]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2019 to Question 216296 on Landlords: South Yorkshire, for what reasons (a) Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and (b) Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council did not meet the assessment criteria.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The terms of the Rogue Landlord Enforcement Grant Fund were set out in the bidding prospectus, from which the assessment criteria were drawn. This included that funds were for the financial year 2018/19. Both Barnsley and Doncaster requested funding for salaried positions continuing into the next financial year, and so falling outside the scope of the Fund.

■ Urban Areas: Departmental Responsibilities**Alison McGovern:****[220211]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, which towns in the UK have a ministerial champion in the Government.

Jake Berry:

Ministerial responsibilities can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-ministers-and-responsibilities>.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Afghanistan: Humanitarian Aid****Jim Shannon:****[220216]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what humanitarian support her Department has provided to Afghanistan as a result of the drought in that country.

Alistair Burt:

We are extremely concerned about the impact of the deadly drought last year in Afghanistan. The UK is providing life-saving assistance to hundreds of thousands of Afghans affected by one of the worst droughts the country has ever faced, including vital food and shelter. We provided emergency food aid in July last year to 432,000 people to enable them to remain in their homes. UK Aid has also supported tents and urgent relief items for up to 260,000 people who are facing a severe winter away from their homes; cash transfers for 190,000 people to buy essential items; and special nutritious food for 90,000 children and pregnant women to prevent malnutrition. And, by contributing to the UN appeal, UK funds are reaching more people in need with food assistance. As the scale of the drought became clear over the course of the year, we increased our funding for the drought response to £35 million, bringing

DFID's total spend on the humanitarian response in Afghanistan to £67 million in 2018. This support is helping some of Afghanistan's most vulnerable people.

■ **Department for International Development: Brexit**

Gareth Thomas:

[\[219259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, which EU agencies her Department plans to seek continued membership of after the UK has left the EU; and if she will make a statement.

Harriett Baldwin:

During the Implementation Period, the terms of the UK's participation in EU agencies and bodies will be as set out in Article 128 of the Withdrawal Agreement.

Following our exit from the European Union, we are committed to maintaining a close and collaborative relationship with the EU. Our future partnership is a matter for the next phase of negotiations and we look forward to constructive discussions with the EU.

■ **Department for International Development: Consultants**

Jon Trickett:

[\[219295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the value of contracts held by her Department with (a) Deloitte, (b) Slaughter and May and (c) Mott MacDonald is in the last two years.

Harriett Baldwin:

The below table shows the value of contracts awarded to (a) Deloitte, (b) Slaughter and May and (c) Mott MacDonald in the last two years for programme delivery.

SUPPLIER	NO. OF CONTRACTS AWARDED	
	IN 17/18 AND 18/19	CURRENT CONTRACT VALUE
Mott MacDonald Ltd	9	£147,944,151
Deloitte Consulting Pvt Ltd Co. 1		£2,243,338
Slaughter and May	0	0

■ **Developing Countries: Equality**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[221009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking tackle global inequality.

Harriett Baldwin:

DFID works to reduce inequality by working to end extreme poverty and through sustainable and inclusive growth, ensuring that poor and marginalised people have

access to opportunities and services, such as education. Between 2015 and 2018, DFID has supported 3 million people to raise their incomes or gain a better livelihood. We have also supported 11.4 million children, including 40,000 girls with disabilities, to gain a decent education through our Support to the Global partnership for Education and the Girl Education Challenge. We have also reached 42.1 million children under 5, women of childbearing age and adolescent girls through our nutrition-relevant programmes.

In July 2018, the UK Government, in partnership with the Government of Kenya and the International Disability Alliance, hosted the UK government's first-ever Global Disability Summit. The Summit raised global attention on a long-neglected issue, mobilised over 170 sets of new global and national commitments on disability and showcased good practice, innovation and evidence from around the world.

■ **Developing Countries: Job Creation**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[221011]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to measure and monitor the standard and quality of the jobs created by UK development assistance.

Harriett Baldwin:

No country can eradicate poverty or transition from aid without inclusive economic growth that produces quality jobs. This is a defining development challenge for DFID's partner countries and is at the heart of building global prosperity and stability that is in the UK's national interest.

DFID's 2017 Economic Development Strategy expressly commits us to deliver more and better jobs – seeking to improve job quality progressively and raise standards as countries develop. As developing countries generate better quality jobs, opportunities increase for UK trade and investment that further contribute to poverty reduction and mutual prosperity.

The Department is currently working to improve how it monitors and measures its jobs impact – including through partnerships with the World Bank and the Office of National Statistics to capture job quality and key elements of decent work.

■ **Developing Countries: Tuberculosis**

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[220171]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department spent on programmes tackling tuberculosis in (a) 2015-16, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2017-18.

Alistair Burt:

DFID invests in the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and malaria as the principal mechanism to combat TB. The UK is currently the second largest investor in the Global Fund, providing £1.2 billion in the 5th replenishment (2017 – 2019); and in the 4th replenishment period (2012-16) we invested £800 million.

We have some bilateral programmes to combat TB but these are decreasing as our investment in the Global Fund increases. Bilateral spending on TB, which we publish by calendar year, is: £10,017,171 for 2015; £2,626,718 for 2016; and £2,455,101 for 2017.

In addition we fund research on TB, including to develop more effective diagnostics and treatment, programmes to support countries to strengthen their health systems to better address all causes of ill health, including TB, and significant other investments into other health multilaterals such as the WHO, which provides technical leadership on tackling TB and strengthening health systems, and Unitaid which is supporting the introduction of new drugs for drug-resistant TB, the first in nearly 50 years, and the development of paediatric TB medicines for children in some of the world's poorest countries.

Data on UK aid expenditure is published each year and can be accessed from the link below

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statistics-on-international-development-2017>

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[220172]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much funding her Department has provided for the research and development of (a) diagnostics, (b) drugs, (c) vaccines and (d) applied health systems research for Tuberculosis in each of the last five years.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK Government is a global leader in investment in Research and Development for TB, second only to the US.

The table shows the funding provided by the Department for International Development for research for Tuberculosis (TB) in each of the last five years.

SPEND ON TB RESEARCH IN £M					
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
a) diagnostics	0.98	0.71	0.70	1.40	2.45
b) drugs	6.00	8.00	7.00	4.00	9.00
c) vaccines	3.30	1.90	1.60	1.36	1.59
d) applied health research	2.62	3.04	4.56	2.90	2.76
Total	12.90	13.65	13.86	9.66	15.80

■ Female Genital Mutilation

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[220087]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what events the Department for International Development held to mark the United Nations Day for Zero Tolerance of Female Genital Mutilation.

Alistair Burt:

On this year's International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), the Secretary of State attended an event hosted by the Royal College of Midwives and the 'Vavengers'. This brought together over one hundred anti-FGM activists and survivors in the spirit of collaboration, partnership and shared determination to end FGM once and for all.

The UK leads the world in our support to the Africa-led movement to end FGM. In 2018 we announced a further £50m UK aid package - the biggest single investment worldwide to date by any international donor – to tackle this issue across the most-affected countries in Africa.

■ Middle East: Internally Displaced People

Sir David Evennett:

[219319]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to support internally displaced people in (a) Syria and (b) Iraq.

Alistair Burt:

The ongoing conflict in Syria has caused immense human suffering, displacing over 6 million people within Syria. The UK has committed £2.71 billion in response to the Syria Crisis since 2012.

We monitor displacement and maintain close contact with other donors and humanitarian partners to ensure our programmes are supporting those most in need, including internally displaced people (IDPs). In September 2018, DFID provided an additional £32 million for Northern Syria to provide essential services such as shelter and clean water for those in need, including the up to 1.4 million IDPs in Idlib. We also fund the life-saving provision of water for thousands of IDPs at the Rukban camp and are supporting efforts to help those affected by hazardous winter conditions at Al-Hol camp. But our efforts are hampered by access problems caused by Assad's regime and violence on the ground.

In Iraq, DFID has committed £252.5 million in humanitarian support since 2014. This includes an additional £10 million which I announced during my visit to Baghdad last month. UK aid has been a lifeline for IDPs and others in need. The UK has provided healthcare services to 4.1 million people, sanitation and safe water to 2.1 million people and food to over 400,000 people.

The UK has also committed over £47 million to directly improve conditions in areas liberated from Daesh in Iraq, including an additional £6.9 million which I announced during my recent visit. UK aid is having real impact. For example, it enabled the

repair of a water treatment plant serving 300,000 people in East Mosul, the rehabilitation of 2,000 homes in West Mosul and the reopening of 38 schools across Northern Iraq. This action makes it easier for IDPs to return safely.

■ Overseas Aid

Andrew Rosindell:

[220130]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of removing the duty to spend 0.7 per cent of GDP on Official Development Assistance to enable more flexibility in the allocation of that funding.

Harriett Baldwin:

As outlined in the Conservative manifesto and re-affirmed by the Prime Minister on her recent visit to Africa and subsequently by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons, the Government is committed to spending 0.7 per cent of our Gross National Income on aid. This commitment not only helps create a safer, healthier and more prosperous world but also secures the UK's standing in it.

■ Palestinians: Antisemitism

Joan Ryan:

[R] [220730]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to her Department's Memorandum of Understanding with the Palestinian Authority (PA), what discussions her Department has had with the PA on the assertion broadcast on 14 December 2018 on official PA TV, that Jews (a) expose their fangs whenever they get the chance and (b) are always plotting against humanity.

Alistair Burt:

The UK strongly condemns any language or actions that could stir up hatred and prejudice. The UK regularly raises allegations of incitement and antisemitism with the PA at senior levels. I did this most recently in my meeting with PA Minister for Education Sabri Saidam on 21 January 2019. We will continue to press the PA to uphold their commitment to promote peace and tolerance.

Joan Ryan:

[R] [220731]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to her Department's Memorandum of Understanding with the Palestinian Authority (PA), what discussions her Department has had with the PA on the assertion broadcast on 4 November 2018 on official PA TV, that Jews knew only to make money, trade, weave plots, corruption, and such.

Alistair Burt:

The UK strongly condemns any language or actions that could stir up hatred and prejudice. The UK regularly raises allegations of incitement and antisemitism with the PA at senior levels. I did this most recently in my meeting with PA Minister for Education Sabri Saidam on 21 January 2019. We will continue to press the PA to uphold their commitment to promote peace and tolerance.

Joan Ryan:

[R] [\[220732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to her Department's Memorandum of Understanding with the Palestinian Authority (PA), what discussions her Department has had with the PA on the assertion broadcast on 10 April 2018 on official PA TV, that the Holocaust was a lie.

Alistair Burt:

The UK strongly condemns any language or actions that could stir up hatred and prejudice. The UK regularly raises allegations of incitement and antisemitism with the PA at senior levels. I did this most recently in my meeting with PA Minister for Education Sabri Saidam on 21 January 2019. We will continue to press the PA to uphold their commitment to promote peace and tolerance.

■ **Palestinians: Schools**

Joan Ryan:

[R] [\[220733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 28 January 2019 to Question 211628, what assessment her Department has made of the PA Minister of Education's assertion on 22 January, as reported by al-Watan, that the minister stressed the ministry's and all the Palestinian people's rejection to the attack on the national Palestinian curriculum lead by the Zionist lobby.

Alistair Burt:

The UK is committed to working with the Palestinian Authority (PA) to ensure that the pilot Palestinian curriculum is consistent with the PA's commitment to adhere to the principle of non-violence and to take action against incitement to violence. The UK will conduct an independent review into allegations of incitement in textbooks, with findings to be published by September 2019. I personally discussed the content of the pilot Palestinian curriculum with Palestinian Authority (PA) Education Minister Sabri Saidam earlier this year. Minister Saidam has committed to engage constructively with the findings of the textbook review, and to consider its recommendations.

■ **Supermarkets: Fairtrade Initiative**

Jim Shannon:

[\[220218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what support her Department provides to Fair Trade companies as part of its work to tackle human and labour rights abuses in the global supply chains of UK supermarkets.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK government is a strong supporter of the Fairtrade movement, which plays an important role in helping producers around the world improve their lives through receiving fair prices for their products. Between 2010 and 2018, the Department for International Development invested over £20.2m into Fairtrade and the UK was the first country to produce a National Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

DFID has funded the development of Fairtrace, a technology-based supply chain mapping tool which has helped Fairtrade to broaden their commercial customer base. The tool has been used by major UK businesses such as The Co-op and Ben & Jerry's. In 2017, Fairtrace helped 7 major brands to map their supply chains; illustrating journeys from over 191 producer groups in over 23 countries.

The UK government will continue to champion this agenda as part of our commitment to improving the lives of smallholder farmers and to a free, fair and transparent trade system that helps lift developing countries out of poverty.

■ Sustainable Development

Dr Matthew Offord:

[219403]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what progress is being made on preparations for public involvement in the Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Government is committed to an inclusive Voluntary National Review (VNR) that showcases activity across the UK. To date, 200 organisations and individuals have submitted case studies highlighting activity to support delivery of the Goals. We continue to welcome contributions which can be submitted via our VNR website. In March, we will host a number of sector-focussed engagement events – including with the private sector, civil society, young people, local organisations, and trade unions. Details on how to get involved will be published shortly at:

www.gov.uk/sustainabledevelopmentgoals.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Arms Trade: Bosnia and Herzegovian

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:

[220314]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the article entitled UK Missed Chance to Stop Suspect Bosnian Bullet Deal published in Balkan Insight on 6 June 2018, whether those responsible for shipping ammunition from Bosnia to Saudi Arabia without a trade licence will be prosecuted; and whether future license applications from those responsible will be denied.

Graham Stuart:

The Government cannot comment on individuals or companies that have previously been, or are currently being investigated. HM Revenue and Customs, on behalf of the Government, investigates all credible allegations of strategic export control offences, which can proceed to a full criminal investigation. HMRC investigators will recommend prosecution when and where there is clear evidence of a serious criminal offence.

Export licence applications are rigorously assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, taking account of all prevailing circumstances at the time of the application. The assessment may also take into account the risk that the proposed legitimate activity to be licensed will directly or indirectly facilitate other activities that violate export control or sanctions legislation. In doing so, the Government will consider, inter alia, the conduct of the licence applicant.

■ Arms Trade: Human Rights

Lyn Brown: [\[220155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many countries which appeared on the list of the UK Government's Human Rights Priority Countries in 2017 (a) attended and (b) sent delegations to the 2017 Defence and Security Equipment International.

Graham Stuart:

The Department for International Trade and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office undertake a stringent process of scrutiny and approval before any invitations to foreign governments are issued, for major UK defence exhibitions like DSEI.

Respect for human rights is a mandatory consideration in the process and a country would not be invited where that would contradict the UK's international obligations. Invitations are reviewed if the situation in any one country changes significantly prior to an exhibition.

Six human rights priority countries were invited and attended Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) 2017 as official delegations.

Lyn Brown: [\[220156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many states which appear on the Government's list of Human Rights Priority Countries are (a) scheduled to attend and (b) scheduled to be represented by delegations to the 2019 Defence and Security Equipment International.

Graham Stuart:

No decisions have yet been taken on official invitations to international delegations to attend Defence and Security Equipment International 2019.

■ Arms Trade: Trade Fairs

Lyn Brown: [\[220158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to Answer of 25 January 2018 to Question 124053 on Arms Trade: Trade Fairs, if he will publish the (a) personnel and (b) transport costs to the British Army of sending 44 military escort officers to attend the Defence and Security Equipment International in 2017.

Graham Stuart:

There were no personnel and transport costs to the British Army of sending military escort officers to attend the Defence and Security Equipment International in 2017. All associated costs were met in full by the commercial event organiser.

Lyn Brown:[\[220159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to Answer of 25 January 2018 to Question 124053 on Arms Trade: Trade Fairs, what estimate he has made of the number of military escort officers due to attend the Defence and Security Equipment International in 2019.

Graham Stuart:

The number of military escort officers who will be required to attend the Defence and Security Equipment International in September 2019 is not yet finalised.

■ Dumping: China**Stephen Kinnock:**[\[220918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether in the event that the EU Withdrawal Agreement is agreed to UK markets will be protected by EU trade defence measures against Chinese dumping during the transition period of 30 March 2019 to December 2020.

George Hollingbery:

The UK will continue to apply the EU's Common External Tariff during the Implementation Period from 30 March 2019 to December 2020, including EU trade remedy measures.

Stephen Kinnock:[\[220921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he plans to take to ensure the replication of EU trade defence measures to prevent Chinese dumping on the UK market in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

George Hollingbery:

In the event that the UK leaves the EU with no deal, the Government's priority is to provide continuity for UK industry. Our transition policy is therefore to ensure UK industry retains trade remedy protections on exit, and so we are committed to carrying across existing measures where there is a UK interest, and then reviewing them to make them UK specific. We will follow this approach for any anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and safeguard measures that are in place on exit day.

■ Overseas Trade: Canada**Jim Shannon:**[\[220215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent steps he has taken to increase bilateral trade with Canada.

Graham Stuart:

The Canada-UK bilateral trading relationship is an important one and vital to our economy. Total trade between the UK and Canada in 2018 totalled £18.4bn and both sides have committed to deepening our commercial relationship further.

My Ministerial colleagues and I have regular contact with the Canadian Administration, business representatives and others, including through our diplomatic missions in Canada, to support and increase investment and trade flows.

Both the Prime Minister and PM Trudeau have publicly committed to a 'seamless transition' of the Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (CETA) as the UK leaves the EU and to avoid a cliff edge for Canadian and UK businesses.

■ Trade Agreements: USA**Mr Ben Bradshaw:**[\[220742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether provisions relating to (a) the National Health Service and (b) food standards will be included in future trade negotiations between the US and the UK; and if he will make a statement.

George Hollingbery:

Protecting the National Health Service (NHS) is of the utmost importance to the UK. The NHS is protected by specific exceptions and reservations in EU trade agreements and as we leave the EU, the UK will continue to ensure that rigorous protections are included in any future trade agreement between the US and the UK.

We have also been clear that any future trade agreements must work for UK producers, businesses, and consumers, and uphold the UK's high levels of food safety, animal welfare standards, and environmental protection.

JUSTICE**■ Child Arrangements Orders: Grandparents****Anna McMorris:**[\[217676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 24 July 2018 to Question 164517 and the Answer of 4 February 2019 to Question 213335 on Child Arrangement Orders, what timescale is in place for his assessment of steps to help grandchildren maintain contact with their grandparents after a parental separation.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government has acknowledged calls for reform. This is an important area on which we are reviewing options.

■ Ministry of Justice: Brexit

Gareth Thomas:

[\[219261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, which EU agencies his Department plans to seek continued membership of after the UK has left the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Edward Argar:

During the Implementation Period, the terms of the UK's participation in EU agencies and bodies will be as set out in Article 128 of the Withdrawal Agreement.

Following our exit from the European Union, we are committed to maintaining a close and collaborative relationship with the EU. Our future partnership is a matter for the next phase of negotiations and we look forward to constructive discussions with the EU.

■ Offences Against Children: Compensation

Andrew Griffiths:

[\[220844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate his Department has made of the number of successful child sexual abuse prosecutions that resulted in a criminal compensation order in (a) 2017 and (b) 2018.

Andrew Griffiths:

[\[220845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average compensation award was for successful child sexual abuse prosecutions which resulted in a criminal compensation order in (a) 2017 and (b) 2018.

Lucy Frazer:

The number of prosecutions, convictions, sentences, compensation orders and average compensation amount for child sex abuse offences in 2017 can be viewed in the table attached.

Court statistics on prosecutions and convictions for 2018 will be published in May 2019.

Attachments:

1. Table [Copy of Copy of PQ220844 220845 table1.xlsx]

■ Personal Independence Payment: Appeals

Andy McDonald:

[\[219456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 21 May 2018 to Question 144209 on Personal Independence Payment: Appeals, what solutions his Department is exploring to increase the capacity of the Tribunals Service in relation to personal independence payment; and what the digital reform initiatives referred to in that Answer are.

Lucy Frazer:

[Holding answer 14 February 2019]: HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) has been working with the tribunal judiciary both to appoint additional judges and panel members and to list more Personal Independence Payment (PIP) appeals into each tribunal session.

For example, the Social Security and Child Support tribunal has recruited extra fee-paid judicial office holders: 250 judges across the First-tier Tribunal, 125 disability qualified members and up to 230 medical members. In addition, we are listing more PIP appeals per session and have introduced case-management “triage” sessions, with the aim of reducing the time taken for appeals to reach final determination. All these measures will increase the capacity of the tribunal, with the aim of reducing waiting times for appellants.

We are also developing a new digital system with a view to enabling speedier processing of appeals and a better service for all parties to the proceedings. Information on the new digital service can be found at www.gov.uk/government/news/new-online-service-launched-for-pip-appeals. This service is now also live for Employment and Support Allowance appeals.

Finally, we are working with the Department for Work and Pensions to understand what could be done to reduce the number of appeals being submitted to the Tribunal, through their focus on improving decision-making and the mandatory reconsideration process. Latest figures (to September 2018) indicate that since PIP was introduced, 3.7 million decisions have been made, and of these 10% have been appealed and 5% have been overturned at tribunals.

■ Prisoners' Transfers: EU Countries**Mr Philip Hollobone:****[220145]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for each EU Member State, how many prisoners have been transferred (a) to and (b) from the UK under the EU Prisoner Transfer Directive.

Mr Philip Hollobone:**[220146]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, on what date the compulsory prisoner transfer agreements with each non-UK country came into force; how many prisoners were transferred (a) from and (b) to the UK (i) under each of those agreements and (ii) in the last arrival period under each of those agreements.

Lucy Frazer:

Any foreign national who comes to our country and abuses our hospitality by breaking the law should be in no doubt of our determination to punish and deport them. More than 45,000 foreign national offenders have been removed from the UK since 2010, and in the last financial year almost 6,000 were removed from prisons, immigration removal centres, and the community.

The Early Removal Scheme is the principal method for removing foreign national offenders early from prison. In 2017/18, over 2,000 foreign national offenders were removed under this scheme. Prisoners may also be transferred to a prison in their own country under Prisoner Transfer Agreements. The principal compulsory prisoner transfer scheme is the EU Prisoner Transfer Framework Decision (2008/909/JHA). In addition, compulsory transfer may take place under the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons, and a small number of bilateral prisoner transfer agreements.

Our departure from the European Union will have implications on prisoner transfers to the EU. If we leave the EU without a 'deal', we will lose access to the EU Prisoner Transfer Framework Decision. This will mean falling back on the Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons and its Additional Protocol, which we believe to be a less effective mechanism than the EU agreement. Therefore, under a 'no deal' scenario we should be prepared to see a decline in the number of transfers to and from the EU.

The tables below provide information for England and Wales, taken from Management Information. In relation to British national prisoners transferred into England and Wales, Management Information does not distinguish between prisoners transferred under the EU Prisoner Transfer Framework Decision and the Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons. Transfer may therefore have taken place on either a voluntary or compulsory basis. Please note that transfers have not taken place to several countries listed in the tables below as the UK either does not hold nationals from those countries in our prisons, or because there are concerns that prisons might be in breach of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The transfer of prisoners into and out of Scotland and Northern Ireland is a devolved matter.

TABLE 1: TRANSFER UNDER THE EU PRISONER TRANSFER FRAMEWORK DECISION (EU PTFD)

Country		Date country ratified the EU PTFD	Number of foreign national prisoners transferred from England and Wales	Number of British national prisoners transferred into England and Wales
1	Austria	01/01/2012	--	1
2	Belgium	18/06/2012	17	3
3	Bulgaria	Not ratified	--	--
4	Croatia	01/07/2013	--	1
5	Cyprus	23/05/2014	1	5

TABLE 1: TRANSFER UNDER THE EU PRISONER TRANSFER FRAMEWORK DECISION (EU PTFD)

6	Czech Republic	01/01/2014	12	3
7	Denmark	05/12/2011	1	6
8	Estonia	01/01/2015	1	--
9	Finland	05/12/2011	--	1
10	France	05/08/2013	--	--
11	Germany	25/07/2015	2	9
12	Greece	15/11/2014	--	2
13	Hungary	01/01/2013	--	1
14	Italy	05/12/2011	9	9
15	Ireland (Republic)	Not ratified	--	--
16	Latvia	01/07/2012	15	--
17	Lithuania	01/04/2015	28	--
18	Luxembourg	05/12/2011	--	2
19	Malta	03/02/2012	1	1
20	Netherlands	01/11/2012	141	6
21	Poland	01/01/2012	35	--
22	Portugal	17/12/2015	9	7
23	Romania	26/12/2013	56	--
24	Slovakia	01/02/2012	17	2
25	Slovenia	20/09/2013	--	--
26	Spain	11/12/2014	9	40
27	Sweden	01/04/2015	3	1
Total			357	100

TABLE 2: TRANSFER UNDER THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON THE TRANSFER OF SENTENCED PERSONS *THIS TABLE DOES NOT INCLUDE EU MEMBER STATES WHICH HAVE RATIFIED THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL AS TRANSFERS TAKE PLACE UNDER THE EU PRISONER TRANSFER FRAMEWORK DECISION. PLEASE NOTE: THE DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE HAS BEEN TAKEN AS THE DATE THE UK RATIFIED THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL OR THE DATE OF RATIFICATION BY THE NAMED COUNTRY, WHICHEVER IS THE LATER DATE.*

Country	Date the Additional Protocol entered into force	Number of foreign national prisoners transferred from England and Wales	Number of British national prisoners transferred into England and Wales
1 Bulgaria	01/11/2009	--	--
2 Georgia	01/11/2009	--	--
3 Iceland	01/11/2009	--	--
4 Lichtenstein	01/11/2009	--	--
5 FRY Macedonia	01/11/2009	--	--
6 Moldova	01/11/2009	--	--
7 Montenegro	01/11/2009	--	--
8 Norway	01/11/2009	--	--
9 Russia	01/11/2009	--	--
10 Serbia	01/11/2009	--	--
11 San Marino	01/11/2009	--	--
12 Switzerland	01/10/2014	--	--
13 Turkey	01/09/2016	--	--
14 Ukraine	01/11/2009	--	--

TABLE 3: BILATERAL PRISONER TRANSFER AGREEMENTS

Country		Date the Bilateral Prisoner Transfer Agreement came into force	Number of foreign national prisoners transferred from England and Wales	Number of British national prisoners transferred into England and Wales
1	Albania	11/06/2013	24	2
2	Ghana	06/07/2017	--	--
3	Libya	29/04/2009	--	--
4	Nigeria	29/09/2014	1	--
5	Rwanda	23/11/2010	--	--
6	Somaliland	Not Available	--	--
Total			25	2

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

■ Early Years Ministerial Group on Family Support

Dr Paul Williams: [\[220327\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, on what date the Early Years Ministerial Group on Family Support last met.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Early Years Family Support Ministerial Group last met on 6 February 2019.

Dr Paul Williams: [\[220328\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, which members of the Early Years Ministerial Group on Family Support were attended the most recent meeting of the group.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Early Years Ministerial Group on Family Support is chaired by myself, Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP, as Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons. The following Ministers sit on the group:

- Chief Secretary to the Treasury - The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP
- The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Family Support, Housing and Child Maintenance - Justin Tomlinson MP

- The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families - Nadhim Zahawi MP
- The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Mental Health and Inequalities - Jackie Doyle-Price MP
- The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Local Government) - Rishi Sunak MP
- Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability - Victoria Atkins MP

All members of the group are actively involved in progressing the work of the group. At the last meeting, the only members who could not attend were the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

Dr Paul Williams:

[\[220329\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, whether (a) she and (b) members of the Early Years Ministerial Group on Family Support have held meetings with Cabinet colleagues.

Andrea Leadsom:

All members of the Early Years Family Support Ministerial Group, including myself, regularly have meetings with other government Ministers including Cabinet colleagues. This is an integral part of our varied roles in government.

Dr Paul Williams:

[\[220330\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, what progress the Early Years Ministerial Group on Family Support has made on (a) identifying gaps in available provision and (b) recommendations on how coordination across Departments can be improved; and if she will make a statement.

Andrea Leadsom:

The Early Years Family Support Ministerial Group will make recommendations to the relevant Secretaries of State on how the Government can further improve the coordination and cost-effectiveness of early years family support, and identify gaps in available provision, in due course.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Anniversaries: Northern Ireland

Nigel Dodds:

[\[219326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what plans she has to mark the centenary of Northern Ireland; and how much funding she has allocated to those plans.

Karen Bradley:

The Northern Ireland Office has been involved in the planning of Decade of Centenaries commemorations in Northern Ireland, but has not yet developed plans to mark the centenary of Northern Ireland in 2021.

TRANSPORT■ **A1: Nottinghamshire****Sir Greg Knight:**[\[220810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans are in place to repair the potholes and poor road surface on the A1 northbound carriageway near Claypole in Nottinghamshire; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

Highways England inspectors travel the network to carry out weekly safety inspections of the A1. If any safety critical defects are identified, an instruction is given to mitigate any immediate safety issues within 24 hours. Permanent repairs are then carried out within a timescale appropriate to the severity and impact of the defect, frequently within 28 days.

During February 2019, Highways England carried out some patching repairs to the A1 northbound carriageway near to Claypole. Road signs have also been installed within the area to advise drivers of uneven road surface conditions. Orders for permanent repairs have been raised and Highways England contractors are planning resources to undertake the repair work.

On 2 March 2019, overnight patching works will be carried out within the area. These works will be completed by a machine, leaving a smoother road surface, as opposed to patching applied by hand.

■ **Airports****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[220068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps his Department has taken to prepare small and medium-sized airports for the effects of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Chris Grayling:

The Department's aviation technical notices and the European Commission's published plans for aviation contingency preparations, including proposed Regulations, clearly demonstrate that, in the event of no deal, both sides are committed to maintaining connectivity.

The Department has and will continue to engage with colleagues across Government and stakeholders from across the aviation industry to help them prepare for EU Exit.

■ Aviation: Southwark

Ms Harriet Harman:

[\[220049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to reduce flight path concentration over the London borough of Southwark.

Jesse Norman:

Airports are responsible for the specific arrangements for low-level flightpaths. All proposals to alter these arrangements must follow the Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) airspace change process which was revised in 2018, following the publication by the Department of revised air navigation guidance.

This guidance requires airports who are seeking to make alterations to their flightpath arrangements to consult with those communities who may be affected by the proposed changes.

A key requirement set out in the guidance is the need for airspace change sponsors to consider the use of multiple flightpaths to disperse air traffic, as well as undertaking a full assessment of the airspace options they are considering.

The Government continues to encourage airports to work with their local communities to identify possible options that may reduce the overall adverse health impacts arising from aircraft noise.

■ Bexleyheath Railway Line: Landslips

Sir David Evennett:

[\[220109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what explanation he has received from Network Rail for the recent landslip on the Bexleyheath railway line; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure that (a) works are completed quickly and (b) disruption to passengers is minimised.

Andrew Jones:

Network Rail have advised the Department about the extent and causes of the landslip on the Bexley Heath railway line which took place on Monday 11 February. Network Rail have reinstated services along this line and are also carrying out geotechnical surveys to understand why the landslip occurred. To help prevent further landslips in this area, Network Rail have installed remote sensors and cameras which send regular information (including pictures and videos) about the condition of the cutting. Network Rail plan to carry out more intensive remediation work at this site in Control Period 6 (from 2019/20).

■ Bus Services

Darren Jones:

[\[220317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to create a national bus strategy.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Department welcomes the recent Transport Select Committee inquiry into “The Health of the Bus Market”, which has demonstrated that there is considerable interest in a national bus strategy. The Department awaits the Committee’s report and will use its recommendations to inform a decision on the scope and timing of such a strategy.

■ Channel Ferries: Freight**Alan Brown:**[\[220290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Written Statement of 7 January 2019, Haulage Update, HCWS 1233, what costs have been incurred by his Department as a result of (a) due diligence and external cost consultants and (b) legal advice and services.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

I refer the hon. Member to the Answer I gave to PQ UIN 219568.

Alan Brown:[\[220291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 24 January 2019 to Question 210667 on Channel Ferries: Freight, how many companies that made representations (a) formally lodged, (b) indicated an intention to lodge and (c) decided not to lodge court proceedings; and if he will make a statement.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

On 25 January 2019 the Channel Tunnel Group Ltd and France-Manche SA (“Eurotunnel”) brought two claims against the Secretary of State for Transport by way of judicial review and under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. We are not aware of any other claims against the Department.

■ Cross Country Railway Line**Mr Clive Betts:**[\[220083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the oral contribution of 10 January 2019, Official Report, column 526, whether he has had further discussions with the cross county train operator on increasing capacity on trains between Leeds and Birmingham.

Andrew Jones:

The Department is currently looking at all options for the successor to the Cross Country franchise. Officials are also in regular discussions with the current operator, Arriva Cross Country, about potential ways of increasing capacity on the busiest routes as a priority as suitable rolling stock becomes available in the market.

■ Great Western Railway Line

Dr David Drew:

[\[220752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to make an assessment of the quality of the rail line between Swindon and Reading to improve passenger comfort.

Andrew Jones:

The condition of Network Rail's assets is monitored and regulated by the Office of Rail and Road. Our £48bn funding package for the next five years will see increased levels of spending on maintenance and renewals across the network, with the aim of giving passengers a more reliable railway while preserving safety.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Jon Trickett:

[\[220084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reason the announced prices for the construction of High Speed 2's London stations are £350 million and £300 million below the prices originally quoted in tender documents listed on the Official Journal of the European Union for Euston and Old Oak Common respectively.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

None of the documentation associated with this procurement involve cost estimates that are £350m or £300m below the OJEU notice for Euston and Old Oak Common respectively.

HS2 Ltd's current estimated contract values are within the range included in the original OJEU notification and ITT documentation. For the avoidance of doubt, HS2 Ltd's current estimated contract values are:

Euston - £1.512bn

Old Oak Common - £1.054bn

Dame Cheryl Gillan:

[\[220720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many (a) HS2 Ltd personnel and (b) staff in his Department working on High Speed 2 have accommodation away from home paid for by HS2 Ltd or his Department for more than two nights per month.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

a) There were a small number of HS2 Ltd personnel who stayed away from home for a minimum of 2 nights each month through 2018.

b) There were no DFT staff working on HS2 that had hotel accommodation for a minimum of 2 nights each month paid for by the Department through 2018.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line: Buckinghamshire

Dame Cheryl Gillan: [\[220716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the (a) proportion and (b) value of the spoil suitable for commercial sale from the tunnels for High Speed Two in Buckinghamshire.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

No material arising from the tunnel would be suitable for commercial sale. 100% of the material will be utilised in the scheme for landscaping on the Western Valley Slopes, the area of restoration to the south of the Chiltern Tunnel South Portal.

Dame Cheryl Gillan: [\[220717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of the the proposed High Speed Two tunnelling in Buckinghamshire will pass through ground which is clay with flints.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

Approximately 200m of the tunnel will pass through a contiguous layer of clay with flints. This occurs for the final 200m of tunnelling near Great Missenden.

Dame Cheryl Gillan: [\[220718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of the tunnelling works for High Speed Two in Buckinghamshire will pass through earth classified by the British Geological Survey as (a) white chalk subgroup, (b) grey chalk subgroup and (c) any other soils.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

- a) approximately 14,200 metres of the tunnels pass through a white chalk sub-group
- b) approximately 1,000 metres of the tunnels pass through a grey chalk sub-group
- c) approximately 200 metres of the tunnels pass through other soils (clay with flints)

■ High Speed Two: Travel

Dame Cheryl Gillan: [\[220719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 11 February 2019 to Question 217418, how much of the £2,506,977.66 spent on rail fares by HS2 Ltd between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2018 was spent on (a) first class fares, (b) second class fares and (c) fares that attract savings.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The breakdown of the £2,506,977 spent on rail fares by HS2 Ltd between 1 January and 31 December 2018 is as follows

- a) £0 was spent on first class fares.
- b) There are no second class fares*
- c) A percentage saving was made on fares valuing £1,521,880

*£2,496,975 was spent on standard class and the remainder on Eurostar tickets

■ London Airports: Noise

Ms Harriet Harman:

[\[220723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to reduce the noise nuisance from planes flying over South East London to or from (a) Heathrow and (b) London City Airport.

Jesse Norman:

The Government's airspace modernisation framework will allow the industry to deliver airspace changes that will make journeys quicker, quieter and cleaner.

The Government has secured international agreements that incentivise the development of quieter aircraft and there are several new types of aircraft now coming into service that will be significantly quieter than their predecessors.

The Government is currently consulting on a number of sustainable growth proposals within a new aviation strategy, including considering setting targets for noise reduction, and how best to monitor and report aviation noise at a national level.

In relation to Heathrow, in 2017 the Government renewed the airport's night flight restrictions, maintaining the number of movements but significantly reducing the amount of noise an airport is allowed to make.

■ Offshore Industry: Continental Shelf

Grahame Morris:

[\[220187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the adequacy of the crewing model used by Prosafe to secure contracts with oil and gas companies for offshore worker accommodation on the UK Continental Shelf since January 2018.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, has powers in respect of the safe manning of UK ships and enforcement of international requirements for safe manning in respect of the navigation and safe operation of a non-UK ship. "Safe manning" in these terms does not include the crewing model in respect of other functions of the ship (such as the hotel services on board). The MCA can only inspect non-UK ships when calling at a UK port or anchorage.

Grahame Morris:

[\[220188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to ensure that crewing agencies used by Prosafe on accommodation vessels contracted for work in the UK Continental Shelf are compliant with the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Recruitment and Placement) Regulations 2014.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Recruitment and Placement) Regulations apply only to employment businesses and employment agencies based in the United Kingdom. They, along with other UK legislation regulating employment businesses and employment agencies, enshrine the requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 in respect of recruitment and placement services in UK law and are enforced by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), on behalf of the Secretary of State, enforces the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum requirements for seafarers etc.) Regulations 2014. These Regulations implement the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC) requirement that the shipowner must ensure that seafarers on board the ship are recruited from employment businesses or employment agencies which are compliant with the MLC. The shipowner is also responsible for ensuring that the seafarers' living and working conditions are compliant with UK regulations

Seafarers have the right to complain, if they are not receiving their entitlements, to the shipowner. If the seafarer does not receive a satisfactory response, they can then complain to the ship's flag State or to the MCA, as the port State.

These provisions do not cover offshore workers who are not seafarers working or staying on board accommodation vessels contracted for work in the UK Continental Shelf.

■ Offshore Industry: North Sea**Grahame Morris:**[\[220186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the companies that provide vessels for offshore worker accommodation in the North Sea oil and gas industry.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Department for Transport does not hold this information.

■ Roads: Cumbria**Mary Creagh:**[\[220150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what environmental impact assessment his Department has made of the plastic road trial in Cumbria.

Jesse Norman:

The Department for Transport announced on 31 January 2019 it was allocating £22.9 million for research and trials on new surface materials for pothole repair. This includes providing £1.6 million to extend an existing trial of the use of plastic roads in Cumbria which is being taken forward by Cumbria County Council, as local highway authority.

As part of this trial, research into both the technology and the environmental impacts of using such materials will be undertaken by Gaist Ltd, the University of Nottingham,

the University of Central Lancashire, the University of the Sunshine Coast in Australia, and the University of California, USA.

■ Taxis: Licensing

Kate Hoey:

[\[220057\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's response to the recommendations of the report of the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Task and Finish Group, what the timeframe is for the implementation of those recommendations; and whether primary legislation will be required to enact those recommendations.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Government's response to the report of the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Task and Finish Group sets out which of the recommendations the Department proposes to take forward. Many of the short-term recommendations made by the Chair of the Task and Finish Group in his report are for licensing authorities to make full use of their extensive existing powers and these are a matter for licensing authorities to consider.

Work has already started to take forward some of the recommendations, for example the Department launched, on 12 February, its consultation on draft statutory guidance to be issued to licensing authorities on the use of their powers to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm which will run until 22 April. Those reforms that require legislative change, for example national minimum standards, will be made through primary legislation when time allows.

TREASURY

■ Financial Services

Jo Stevens:

[\[220935\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many companies have been investigated by the Financial Conduct Authority for (a) market abuses and (b) breaches of financial regulation in each of the last five years.

John Glen:

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) provides an overview of its enforcement activities in its enforcement annual performance reports. These reports, for the past five years, can be found on the following links:

[2013/14](#)

[2014/15](#)

[2015/16](#)

[2016/17](#)

[2017/18](#)

■ Help to Save Scheme

Dr David Drew:

[\[220755\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to improve publicity of the Help to Save scheme.

John Glen:

HMRC is promoting Help to Save to potential customers through established channels including the Tax Credit digital service, HMRC helplines, Jobcentres, and HMRC App. Initial research suggested that this is the most appropriate way of reaching the eligible population.

HMRC has publicised the scheme through social media and had positive coverage in national, regional and consumer media. HMRC is also engaged with local authorities and housing associations nationwide, along with a wider national stakeholder network including Citizens Advice and the Money Advice Service.

HMRC is currently sending out text messages with details of the scheme to potentially eligible customers who have yet to open an account. Plans are also in place to send letters to individuals who may be eligible for the scheme.

HMRC has also developed new relationships with organisations offering salary deduction services to major UK employers, allowing employees to sign up to the scheme while making savings easier through automatic deductions.

HMRC will continue to review how best to maximise take-up, and is increasing its understanding of customer interest and behaviour throughout these early stages of the scheme.

■ Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[220817\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to set an income threshold of £15,000 per annum before people have to pay (a) income tax and (b) National Insurance contributions.

Mel Stride:

Budget 2018 announced that the Government will meet its commitment one year early, increasing the Personal Allowance to £12,500. This is an increase of over 90% in less than a decade, and means that in 2019-20 a typical basic rate taxpayer will pay £1,205 less in tax than in 2010-11.

It is important to remember that National Insurance contributions (NICs) provide access to social security benefits and are critical to the Government's ability to fund the NHS and contributory benefits, including the State Pension.

■ Inflation

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[219388\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has plans to ensure that inflation does not rise in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

John Glen:

Maintaining price stability is the primary objective, set out in law, of the independent Monetary Policy Committee. As such, the Government does not comment on the conduct of monetary policy. This objective is defined as a symmetric inflation target of 2%, as measured by the twelve month increase in the Consumer Prices Index. Subject to this, its secondary objective is to support the economic policy of the Government, including its objectives for growth and employment.

At their February meeting, the MPC reemphasised that *“the monetary policy response to Brexit, whatever form it takes, will not be automatic and could be in either direction”*, adding that *“the Committee will always act to achieve the 2% inflation target.”*

■ Loans: Interest Rates

Frank Field:

[\[220096\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much funding has been allocated to the provision of interest-free loans as announced in Budget 2018; and when the first such loans will be made available.

John Glen:

At Budget 2018, the Government announced that it will carry out a study into the feasibility of establishing a no-interest loans scheme in the UK, and design a pilot.

The feasibility study, which will be launched this year, will examine issues such as access, eligibility and funding models and help to determine how a pilot could work.

■ Money Laundering

Jo Stevens:

[\[220936\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent steps his Department has taken to ensure the enforcement of the UK's anti-money laundering laws.

John Glen:

The UK has one of the strongest anti money laundering (AML) regimes in the world. The Financial Action Task Force – which sets global AML standards - concluded in December of last year that the UK has the strongest AML regime of over 60 countries assessed to date. This government is committed to combatting illicit finance, has already done more than any other to tackle the threat of money laundering, and we are building on our strengths.

The Treasury has strengthened AML supervision by creating the Office for Professional Body AML supervision (OPBAS), hosted by the FCA and operational

since January 2018. OPBAS has recently completed its initial supervisory assessments of all professional body supervisors. The Treasury will continue to work closely with OPBAS to ensure that its plans and activities are effective, risk-based and implemented effectively by professional body supervisors.

The Economic Crime Strategic Board (ECSB) met for the first time in January. The Board is co-chaired by the Chancellor and the Home Secretary and consists of ministers, senior officials, heads of regulatory and law enforcement authorities, and representatives from the private sector including CEOs of major banks. The Board's purpose is to drive the public and private sector response to economic crime, by setting strategic priorities, ensuring resources are aligned to priorities and scrutinising overall performance against the economic crime threat.

We are co-leading the wider economic crime reform programme with the Home Office, including reforming the Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) regime.

■ Personal Pensions

Dr Caroline Johnson:

[220313]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many high street commercial properties are owned within self-invested personal pensions (SIPPs); and how many empty high street commercial properties are owned within SIPPs.

John Glen:

The Treasury does not hold the information requested.

At Budget 2018, the Government announced an action plan to support the sustainable transformation of high streets, including the piloting of a register of empty commercial properties to support the wider regeneration of high streets and town centres.

■ Revenue and Customs: Ealing

Dr Rupa Huq:

[220300]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the cumulative length of service is of all the HMRC staff at International House, Ealing, who are at risk of redundancy as a result of the closure of that office.

Mel Stride:

HMRC wants to keep as many employees as possible as it moves to its regional centres. It has been clear that if someone can move to a regional centre and has the skills it needs or is able to develop them, there will be a role for them.

The HMRC office at Ealing, International House, is scheduled to close in 2020-21 under HMRC's location strategy. The number of staff in the office who may be at risk of redundancy will not be known until the completion and outcome of one to one conversations between staff and their managers and the result from the independent decision maker. The discussions are held around a year in advance of any move and take personal circumstances into account.

■ Revenue and Customs: ICT

Darren Jones:

[\[221004\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many citizens have registered a voice recognition password to access HMRC services; and what legal provisions apply to the collation of that voice recognition data by HMRC.

Mel Stride:

7,227,106 customers have registered a voice recognition password to access HMRC services.

HMRC currently relies on the legal basis of consent to collect and process voice data from individuals under Article 6(1)(a) of the GDPR. The legal basis for most processing of personal data in HMRC is Article 6(1)(e) and section 8 DPA 2018, namely “public task”. However, HMRC does not rely on the “public task” legal basis for Voice ID at present as HMRC allows the customer to decide whether they want to use Voice ID for convenience and it is only one of 3 methods HMRC uses to verify the identity of customers on the phone.

As biometric data is special category data, one of the additional conditions in Article 9 of GDPR also needs to be met in order for HMRC to process this data. Given consent is the legal basis for processing, HMRC relies on the Article 9 (2)(a) condition of explicit consent for the processing. HMRC allows the customer to choose to opt in to use the service for convenience and verification by other means remains possible.

HMRC obtains explicit consent from customers and clearly informs them about how they can withdraw their consent.

■ Tax Avoidance

Grant Shapps:

[\[220152\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to delay the loan charge settlement day until after the conclusion of the review of that charge.

Mel Stride:

The Government chose to accept section 95 during the passage of the Finance Bill introduced by a cross party group. As set out by section 95, the Government will lay a report no later than 30 March 2019. The report will review the effect of changes made to the time limits for assessment where tax loss arises in relation to offshore tax, and compare these with other legislation including the charge on disguised remuneration loans.

The charge on disguised remuneration loans remains unchanged as a result of the requirement for a report, and will apply to disguised remuneration loan balances on 5 April 2019.

The charge on disguised remuneration (DR) loans will apply to outstanding DR loan balances on 5 April 2019. It is targeted at artificial tax avoidance schemes where earnings were paid in the form of non-repayable loans made by a third party. The

loans are provided on terms that mean they are not repaid in practice, so they are no different to normal income and are, and always have been, taxable.

The Government estimates that up to 50,000 individuals will be affected by the 2019 loan charge. Information is not held at constituency, borough or regional level.

Since the announcement of the 2019 loan charge at Budget 2016, HMRC has now agreed settlements on disguised remuneration schemes with employers and individuals totalling over £1 billion. Pay As You Earn (PAYE) liabilities fall on the employer in the first instance. The charge on DR loans does not change this principle and the employee will only be liable where the amount cannot reasonably be collected from the employer, such as where the employer is offshore or no longer exists. Around 85% of the settlement yield since 2016 is from employers, with less than 15% from individuals. HMRC will never force somebody to sell their main home to pay for their DR debt, or the loan charge.

HMRC is working hard to help individuals get out of avoidance for good and offer manageable and sustainable payment plans wherever possible. It carefully considers each case and there is no maximum limit on how long a customer can be given to pay what they owe. HMRC considers a customer's ability to pay on a case by case basis and decisions are based on each individual's personal circumstances.

HMRC has simplified the process for those who want to settle their use of DR schemes before the loan charge arises. DR scheme users who currently have an income of less than £50,000 and are no longer engaging in tax avoidance can automatically agree a payment plan of up to five years without the need to give HMRC detailed information about their income and assets. This arrangement has been extended to 7 years for scheme users who have an income of less than £30,000.

Anybody who is worried about being able to pay what they owe should get in touch with HMRC as soon as possible. They have a number of ways to help those who are genuinely unable to make a full payment of tax on time, for example, by arranging payments by instalments.

Anneliese Dodds:

[221022]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to Mary Aiston's oral evidence to the Treasury Committee on 30 January 2019, what steps HMRC is taking to ensure that people affected by the disguised remuneration loan charge are not forced to sell their homes.

Mel Stride:

HMRC will never force somebody to sell their main home to pay for their Disguised Remuneration (DR) debt, or the loan charge. Anybody who is worried about being able to pay what they owe should get in touch with HMRC as soon as possible. They have a number of ways to help those who are genuinely unable to make a full payment of tax on time, for example, by arranging payments by instalments. HMRC's Debt Management team are also trained to identify customers who are vulnerable

and will refer them to HMRC's specialist "Needs enhanced support" team. They will tailor their support to meet the needs of the individual.

DR schemes are contrived arrangements that pay loans in place of ordinary remuneration with the sole purpose of avoiding income tax and National Insurance contributions.

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■ Tax Avoidance: Greater London

Ms Harriet Harman:

[220724]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people are affected by the 2019 Loan Charge in (a) Camberwell and Peckham and (b) London Borough of Southwark and (c) London.

Mel Stride:

The charge on disguised remuneration (DR) loans will apply to outstanding DR loan balances on 5 April 2019. It is targeted at artificial tax avoidance schemes where earnings were paid in the form of non-repayable loans made by a third party. The loans are provided on terms that mean they are not repaid in practice, so they are no different to normal income and are, and always have been, taxable.

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Anybody who is worried about being able to pay what they owe should get in touch with HMRC as soon as possible. They have a number of ways to help those who are genuinely unable to make a full payment of tax on time, for example, by arranging payments by instalments.

■ Tax Collection

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[220766]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department has taken with HMRC to prepare the tax collection system for potential disruption caused in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Mel Stride:

HMRC has well-developed plans to provide the flexibility to respond in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal, including guidance and support for businesses and individuals.

The Taxation (Cross Border Trade) Act received Royal Assent on 13 September 2018, and both Departments are making good progress in delivering the necessary secondary legislation for tax and customs. Resourcing plans are in place to fill EU Exit roles across HMRC's various business areas. As of the end of January 2019, there are currently over 4,200 people working on EU Exit.

HMRC is committed to ensuring functioning tax and customs systems that facilitate the continuation of trade flow, the collection of revenues, and a secure UK border.

■ **Taxation: Electronic Government**

Chris Ruane: [\[220106\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the cost to SMEs of Making Tax Digital.

Chris Ruane: [\[220107\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much his Department has spent on publicity and advertising relating to the migration of businesses to the Making Tax Digital regime.

Chris Ruane: [\[220108\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the preparedness of SMEs in dealing with the migration from the manual taxation to Making Tax Digital regime.

Mel Stride:

Businesses who are registered for VAT and whose taxable turnover exceeds the VAT registration threshold of £85,000 will be required to keep their records digitally and file their VAT returns using Making Tax Digital (MTD) compatible software for periods starting on or after 1 April. For the majority of businesses, who file quarterly, their first MTD returns won't be due until August or later. Small businesses with turnover below the VAT threshold are not required to join, but can do so voluntarily.

HMRC are using a range of methods to communicate with businesses and agents, both paid for and free, in order to ensure businesses are aware of the changes and know what they need to do to prepare.

Thousands of businesses have already joined the MTD VAT pilot service. HMRC are on track to have written to every business who is required to join MTD by the end of February, encouraging them to join the pilot and pointing them to the range of help and support that is available.

HMRC's Impact Assessment for MTD, published on 1 December 2017, was developed through a widespread and comprehensive programme of work that considered the costs and requirements of businesses across the VAT population. The methodology and modelling has been rigorously reviewed, including by trusted external stakeholders such as the Administrative Burdens Advisory Board (ABAB). The Impact Assessment considered the requirements for businesses of different sizes and practices, including small businesses.

Businesses and accountants are making preparations for the introduction of MTD, and thousands have already joined the pilot on a voluntary basis to test the service before they are mandated to use it. Most businesses will not need to submit their first VAT return through the new service until August at the earliest. For the first year, penalties will not be issued for late filing, only for late payment.

Chris Ruane: [220806]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will list the consultations he has had on making tax digital with (a) professional bodies representing SME's and (b) the ICAEW.

Chris Ruane: [220807]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the cost to SMEs of purchasing making tax digital compatible computer (a) software and (b) hardware.

Mel Stride:

During the consultations on MTD in 2016, we received detailed responses from ICAEW, Federation of Small Businesses, Chartered Institute of Taxation, Low Incomes Tax Reform Group, National Farmers' Union and others. Their contribution was influential in shaping the Making Tax Digital (MTD) service.

The Government and HMRC have since maintained a regular dialogue with businesses, tax agents, professional bodies and software developers throughout the design and delivery of MTD.

The Making Tax Digital Impact Assessment published on 1st December 2017 remains a credible estimate of costs and savings for the VAT businesses that will be mandated from April 2019 and takes account of both software and hardware costs:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-tax-digital-changing-the-scope-and-pace-technical-note/making-tax-digital-for-business>.

HMRC have been working closely with the software industry to create a competitive market. Currently, there are over 160 MTD-compatible software products available, at a range of price points including some free products and others which allow continued use of a spreadsheet.

As set out in the Impact Assessment, very few businesses will incur costs relating to hardware due to MTD. Most businesses will be able to claim any costs for hardware and software against their tax.

WALES

■ City Deals: Swansea Bay

Jonathan Edwards: [220181]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what progress he has made on the joint investigations by the UK and Welsh Governments into the Swansea Bay City Deal.

Alun Cairns:

Actica Consulting were appointed by the UK and Welsh Governments to undertake the Joint Independent Review of the Swansea Bay City Region City Deal in January 2019. The review is currently underway and I expect to receive the final report by the end of February.

■ European Union Withdrawal Agreement (Public Vote) Bill: Wales

Liz Saville Roberts:

[\[220303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill will require a legislative consent motion from the National Assembly for Wales.

Liz Saville Roberts:

[\[220304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what steps he has taken to ensure that the Government receives legislative consent from the National Assembly for Wales on the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill.

Alun Cairns:

The European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill is an essential part of our preparations for a smooth and orderly exit from the EU. The Bill is yet to be introduced, but we expect to seek the legislative consent of the National Assembly for Wales for some of its provisions.

The UK Government has undertaken extensive and meaningful engagement with the Welsh Government in preparing the Bill. Regular JMC (European Negotiations) meetings have provided a productive forum for Ministers from the UK, Welsh and Scottish governments to discuss the Bill. The UK Government has also shared clauses in draft with Ministers from the devolved administrations, allowing them the opportunity to comment and inform the UK Government's approach to the Bill. UK Government officials have also met with their counterparts in the Welsh Government on a fortnightly basis since the summer to discuss the Bill. The Welsh Government has been positive about both the quantity and quality of engagement to date and this engagement will continue as we prepare for the introduction of the Bill.

■ Renewable Energy: Wales

Jo Stevens:

[\[220939\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what steps his Department is taking to promote green energy production in Wales.

Alun Cairns:

The UK Government supports a range of renewable energy schemes in Wales through the Renewables Obligation and Feed-in Tariffs schemes, and has supported 192 MW of renewable energy generation in Wales through the Contracts for Difference (CfD) Scheme. The Government plans to open a further CfD allocation round by May 2019, and Welsh stakeholders were invited to contribute to the consultation process at an event in Cardiff on 20 February 2018.

The Government is investing in Wales to support its low carbon generation targets through initiatives such as the Pembroke Dock Marine project in the Swansea Bay City Deal. Furthermore, we are in negotiations with local partners in North Wales about the inclusion of a Smart Energy Networks project within the North Wales

Growth Deal, and have included the Morlais Marine Energy Infrastructure Project in the Department for International Trade's Capital Investments Energy Portfolio.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Candidates: Disability

Caroline Lucas:

[\[220173\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, pursuant to the Answer of 8 February 2019 to Question 217059, on Candidates: Disability, what plans her Department has in place for expanding the EnAble Fund to support deaf and disabled candidates in the event of (a) a General Election called before March 2020 or (b) the exhaustion of the Fund.

Victoria Atkins:

The EnAble Fund for Elected Office is an interim fund and is therefore time bound with limited funding. It is primarily for the forthcoming English local elections in May.

The Government is clear that political parties are responsible for supporting their disabled candidates (as defined by the Equality Act 2010). We are undertaking a programme of work to help parties to put long-term sustainable solutions in place.

■ Down's Syndrome: Abortion

Fiona Bruce:

[\[217546\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether the Government Equalities Office is taking steps to (a) tackle the 90 per cent termination rate following a prenatal diagnosis of Down's syndrome and (b) assess the effect of that rate on the community of people with Down's syndrome; and if she will make a statement.

Victoria Atkins:

We recognise the concerns that the introduction of offering non-invasive prenatal test (NIPT) could have on the rate of possible terminations following a diagnosis of Down's Syndrome. However, the key objective of NHS Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme (FASP) is to enable prospective parents to make informed choices, at each step along the screening pathway. The screening guidance and midwife training is very clear that the options should be offered sensitively and prospective parents decisions respected. Counselling is available at all stages of the screening pathway to support people to make informed choices in the event of a fetal abnormality being detected, and the decision to terminate must rest on the judgement of the woman herself and her doctors.

The national introduction of the evaluative roll out of NIPT as a contingent screening test is yet to be implemented into the NHS FASP. Once NIPT is rolled out, data on the choices women make regarding screening and/or diagnosis will be collected. Data will also be collected on the pregnancy outcomes of women who choose to have screening, and about babies born with Down's syndrome.

■ Equal Pay: Disclosure of Information

Jess Phillips:

[\[219473\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what plans the Department has to consult on lowering the threshold for gender pay gap reporting in future reporting years.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government Equalities Office continues to encourage organisations with fewer than 250 employees to publish gender pay gap data voluntarily, and supports them to do so. Several employers under the threshold reported in the first reporting year, and some have already done so ahead of the deadlines for the second year.

We recognise the challenges that smaller organisations face in compiling the data, and would consult with stakeholders on feasibility and possible implications before extending the regulations.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Cold Weather Payments

Marion Fellows:

[\[220280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason cold weather payments are given to people receiving income related employment and support allowance but not contributions-based employment and support allowance; and if she will review her Department's policy.

Justin Tomlinson:

Cold Weather Payments are made to people who receive certain income-related benefits and satisfy the eligibility conditions. People who receive contribution-based benefits are not eligible for Cold Weather Payments. This is because the scheme was specifically designed to target the additional heating costs of the most vulnerable people in society. The scheme is subject to financial constraints and to ensure that limited public funds are used in the most effective way possible, the Government believes that the fairest way of managing this is by linking eligibility to income-related benefits.

To put this into context, during the 2010/11 Cold Weather Payment season over £435 million was paid to eligible claimants. If the scheme were to be extended to all contributory benefit recipients, the scheme would become unaffordable.

■ Credit Unions

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[220111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many credit unions have been involved in the Credit Union Expansion Project; and in which region do they operate.

Guy Opperman:

Over 70 Credit Unions benefited from the Credit Union Expansion Project with products such as an Automated Lending and Decision System. These credit unions operated across England, Wales and Scotland. The Credit Union Expansion Project did not include credit unions in Northern Ireland as the aim of the project was to drive up membership of GB credit unions from a very low base. Across GB less than 1% of the population were members of a credit union at the outset of the project. The situation in Northern Ireland is different with over 26% of the population being members of credit unions. The Minister for Pensions and Financial Inclusion met with representatives of Northern Ireland credit unions on the 20 July 2018 in Belfast.

Department for Work and Pensions: Brexit**Gareth Thomas:**[\[218158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many officials from her Department have been seconded from their primary role to make preparations for the UK leaving the EU without a deal; and if she will make a statement.

Alok Sharma:

To date, no DWP officials have been seconded from their primary role to make preparations for the UK leaving the EU without a deal. DWP continues to make appropriate preparations using existing staff.

Department for Work and Pensions: Dundee**Peter Grant:**[\[220283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many cases are served by the Dundee service centre by (a) constituency and (b) local authority area.

Alok Sharma:

The total number of claims assigned to the Dundee Service Centre was 48,046 as of December 2018. Information to constituency and local authority level is not available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Natural Gas: Safety**Eddie Hughes:**[\[220319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when the Annual Report of the Cross Government Group on Gas Safety and Carbon Monoxide will be published on the HSE website.

Sarah Newton:

HSE aims to publish the Annual Report of the Cross Government Group on Gas Safety and Carbon Monoxide on its website by the end of March 2019.

■ Pension Credit

Stephen Doughty:

[220236]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate her Department has made of the average annual loss in pension credit and pension age housing benefit per couple who are in a mixed-aged relationship after 15 May 2019.

Guy Opperman:

Mixed-age couples will see no reduction in the amount of benefit they receive as a result of this change, unless they are already in receipt of Pension Credit and/or pension-age Housing Benefit but then lose entitlement to both of those benefits.

■ Pension Funds

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[220067]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent guidance his Department has provided to pension fund managers on preparing that sector for the effects of the UK leaving the EU without a deal.

Guy Opperman:

There is a range of information from regulatory authorities for occupational pension schemes in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a Withdrawal Agreement (deal), bulked up by information from the Government. The DWP introduced new legislation at the end of last year (The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2018/9780111175736/contents>) to help to provide certainty for businesses and the public to ensure a functioning statute book when the UK leaves the EU.

More recently, the DWP has worked closely with The Pensions Regulator to develop communications for pension schemes regarding the impact of leaving the EU <https://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en/document-library/statements/exit-from-the-eu-statement>. This statement was published on The Pension Regulator's website on 24 January 2019. The Financial Conduct Authority has also issued guidance on their website 'Preparing for Brexit' <https://www.fca.org.uk/brexit>

In December 2018, the DWP published guidance for UK and EU occupational pension consumers on GOV.UK regarding payment of occupational pensions to EU citizens living in the UK <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eu-citizens-in-the-uk-benefits-and-pensions-in-a-no-deal-scenario> and UK citizens living in the EU <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-nationals-in-the-eu-benefits-and-pensions-in-a-no-deal-scenario> in the event of a no deal scenario.

The Government also published their Technical Notice in August 2018 'Banking, insurance and other financial services if there's no Brexit deal: technical notice on financial services regulatory framework' <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/banking-insurance-and-other-financial-services-if-theres-no-brexit-deal/banking-insurance-and-other-financial-services-if->

[theres-no-brexit-deal](#) which offers guidance to pension schemes for continued planning in the event of no deal.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Appeals

Hilary Benn:

[220791]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how frequently her Department re-assesses entitlement to personal independence payments (PIP) mobility element in cases where the individual has previously won their appeal against refusal to award PIP mobility element.

Sarah Newton:

Reviews are a key part of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and ensure that not only do awards remain correct where needs may change but that we also maintain contact with the claimant.

A PIP award, which can be paid at one of eight rates, will be reviewed periodically. Importantly, the length of an award is based on an individual's circumstances and can vary from nine months to an ongoing award, with a light touch review at the ten-year point.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Blackpool

Gordon Marsden:

[220795]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effect of waiting times for personal independence payment appeals on the wellbeing of claimants in Blackpool.

Sarah Newton:

Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) and DWP are very sensitive to the needs of people who may be affected by waiting times for tribunal hearings. Tribunal staff and judicial office-holders are trained accordingly, with HMCTS' reasonable adjustments policy and practice applied where appropriate. Guidance on the policy is published on GOV.UK. If an expedited hearing is sought, or where the tribunal identifies a case which might benefit from an expedited hearing, a judge or caseworker will make a decision on the issue, taking all the circumstances of the case into account.

HMCTS is appointing additional judges and panel members and generally taking forward initiatives with the potential to increase the capacity and performance of the tribunal, including listing more Personal Independence Payment appeals into each session. In the North West specifically, closer case management of cases ready to list has allowed many cases to be dealt with in advance of a hearing.

Furthermore, DWP is reviewing its decision making and Mandatory Reconsideration processes with a view to reducing the number of appeals that need to be made. It is also working closely with HMCTS as it develops a new digital system which will enable speedier processing of appeals.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Blood Diseases

Caroline Lucas:

[218780]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many personal independence payment claims where (a) the main disabling feature is haemophilia and (b) the claimant has been affected by contaminated blood received nil points or low points in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18 and (c) 2018-19.

Sarah Newton:

With regards to (a), the Department publishes data on clearances (whether the claim was awarded, disallowed or withdrawn), which can be broken down by month and by Main Disabling Condition (which includes Haemophilia A and Haemophilia B) in the PIP Clearances table at <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>.

Guidance on how to use Stat-Xplore is here:

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

Data on clearances is available from the date PIP was introduced in April 2013 to October 2018 and only those who attend an assessment will have a Main Disabling Condition recorded for them. Please note, contaminated blood is not a disabling condition on Stat-Xplore but can be the cause of other disabling conditions.

The information requested on point scores (b) is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Mental Illness

Gordon Marsden:

[220796]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 12 February 2019 to Question 218200, how many personal independence payment assessments where a claimant had a diagnosis of a mental health disorder have resulted in no award in (a) the North-West and (b) England; and how many of those assessments were overturned at a mandatory reconsideration or appeal.

Sarah Newton:

The information requested is provided in the table below.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claimants with a primary disabling condition of psychiatric disorders – April 2013 to September 2018

-	ENGLAND	NORTH WEST
Disallowed post-referral to the Assessment Provider due to failing the assessment	309,110	49,310
Of these:	-	-
	17,470	2,650

-	ENGLAND	NORTH WEST
Change of award at Mandatory Reconsideration		
Decision overturned at appeal	29,710	4,120

Since PIP was introduced 3.7m decisions have been made in Great Britain for all health conditions up to September 2018, of these 10% have been appealed and 5% have been overturned.

There are strands of work in progress to drive continuous improvement in the decision making process. This has included the deployment of approximately 150 Presenting Officers, who are presenting DWP's case in a number of PIP and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) appeals.

Presenting Officers have a role in gaining valuable insight into Tribunals' view of the Department's processes - both at the original decision stage and at mandatory reconsideration - and why decisions may be overturned.

Their feedback is being directed to the relevant parts of the business in order to drive long term improvements to the claimant journey.

DWP is also running a series of tests exploring the different ways evidence could be gathered, and the quality of decision making.

The data has been rounded to the nearest 10.

PIP data includes normal rules and special rules for the terminally ill claimants, and covers new claims and DLA reassessment claims.

Data is based on primary disabling condition as recorded on the PIP computer systems. Claimants may often have multiple disabling conditions upon which the decision is based but only the primary condition is shown in these statistics.

The geography relates to the origin of the claim (i.e. derived from claimant's postcode).

The appeals may include decisions which are changed at MR, and where the claimant continues to appeal for a higher PIP award, are then changed again at tribunal appeal.

Claimants who have received benefit decisions more recently may not yet have had time to complete the claimant journey and progress to appeal.

■ Social Security Benefits: Fraud

Chris Ruane:

[220104]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 8 February 2019 to Question 216979 on Social Security Benefits, if she will list the top 10

territorial police forces which most frequently submitted information on the activities of benefit claimants to her Department in each of the last three years.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Department for Work and Pensions does not record which police force submitted any referral. When a referral is received from the police, the source type is simply listed as "police".

Chris Ruane:

[\[220105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 8 February 2019 to Question 216979 on Social Security Benefits, which police referrals to her Department related to (a) universal credit, b) personal independence payments and (c) employment support allowance claimants in each of the last three years.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is committed to reducing both fraud and error and considers all referrals of suspected benefit fraud. Information is received from a variety of different sources, including members of the public, local authorities, members of staff, data matching and the police.

There is no mandatory requirement for any police force within the United Kingdom to make referrals of suspected benefit fraud to DWP. Where information is received, DWP will check to see if there are grounds for further investigation, as with any potential benefit fraud allegation.

The table below shows the total volume of referrals received for the requested benefits in each of the last three years where the referral source is noted as 'police'.

YEAR	UNIVERSAL CREDIT	PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT	EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT ALLOWANCE
2016/17	180	890	1,510
2017/18	470	1,100	1,340
2018/19 YTD	402	650	670

**Please note that all figures are rounded to the nearest 10.*

Chris Ruane:

[\[220805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 8 February 2019 to Question 216979 on Social Security Benefits, what proportion of referrals from territorial police forces to her Department were made at the request of her Department.

Justin Tomlinson:

Whilst fraud referrals help the Department for Work and Pensions tackle fraud and error, the Department does not request referrals from the police and there is no obligation on either the police or members of the public to provide referrals.

■ Universal Credit**Anneliese Dodds:**[\[211353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to her speech entitled, Universal Credit: personal welfare, delivered on 11 January 2019, how many recipients of universal credit where payments are made to the woman's bank account (a) have and (b) do not have children.

Alok Sharma:

[Holding answer 28 January 2019]: Our internal data shows, that of the estimated 59% of couples where the woman is the Universal Credit payee, we estimate that 81% of these have dependent children in the household.

Frank Field:[\[218204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of moving the start date of a universal credit claim to the point when a claimant sets up as universal credit account for assessment purposes.

Frank Field:[\[218211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of allowing greater flexibility on start dates for assessment periods to claim universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

Universal Credit, in common with other benefits, has a start date that is set out in regulations (The Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment, Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Claims and Payments) Regulations 2013).

This is a fixed start date and marks the beginning of the award and assessment period. It is necessary to have a fixed start date to be able to assess entitlement and determine the amount of payment due. To do otherwise would create uncertainty for claimants and would be impractical to administer.

The effective start date of a claim for Universal Credit is normally the date on which the claim is submitted by the claimant and received by the Department.

However, in certain circumstances, where we have had direct contact with a claimant who has requested assistance in helping them make their claim, for example through requesting a home visit, the date of contact becomes the start date of their claim.

Frank Field:

[218208]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of universal credit claimants have (a) been informed of, (b) applied successfully for, and (c) applied unsuccessfully for twice monthly payment options.

Alok Sharma:

Universal Credit provides an unprecedented level of personalised support, which is tailored and managed through Work Coaches. Unlike the legacy system Universal Credit Work Coaches know each person's case and have more tools than ever before to help people prepare for work and get a job.

Personal Budgeting Support aims to prepare claimants for the financial changes Universal Credit brings. It provides support to help them manage their monthly payments and prioritise essential bills, such as rent and utilities, as they move over to Universal Credit.

In response to question part (a), the Personal Budgeting Support process includes a conversation at their initial work search interview to gauge their potential support needs – meaning all claimants are informed of support that includes alternative payment arrangements and more frequent payments.

In response to question part (b), the available information on the number of households on Universal Credit that receive More Frequent Payments or Scottish Choices More Frequent Payments is published and can be found at:

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

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

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

Please be aware that as the statistics are based on whether a household has actually been paid a More Frequent Payment, it will not include households that had a More Frequent Payment set up but were not actually paid more frequently, for instance because they cancelled the More Frequent Payment before they were paid.

For question (c), the information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Stephen Timms:

[220052]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effect of the roll-out of universal credit on levels of rent arrears among claimants.

Justin Tomlinson:

Safeguards are in place for Universal Credit claimants, including Advances, budgeting support and Alternative Payment Arrangements and claimants already receiving Housing Benefit are paid an additional two weeks of Housing Benefit to support them whilst they transition to monthly payments on Universal Credit. Our work coaches gauge claimants' financial needs from their first interview and can refer them to more specialist support for debt advice if required.

According to latest figures (August 2018), only about 7% of social rented households were claiming Universal Credit. Many tenants have pre-existing rent arrears at the start of their claim; indications at this stage are that Universal Credit actually helps to clear these arrears over time.

Stephen Timms:

[\[220053\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effect of the five week waiting time for universal credit on demand at foodbanks.

Justin Tomlinson:

We have always said there are many reasons why people use foodbanks. We have listened to feedback on how we can support our claimants and acted quickly, making improvements such as extending advances, removing waiting days, and introducing housing benefit run on. These changes are giving support to vulnerable people who need it most, whilst at the same time helping people get into work faster.

Stephen Timms:

[\[220054\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effect of the five week waiting time for universal credit, and the consequent requirement for claimants without savings to take an advance from her Department, on levels of indebtedness among claimants.

Alok Sharma:

New Claims are often made as a result of a life event such as losing a job or separating from a partner and these events can be associated with financial problems. To ensure that no-one has to experience hardship during their first assessment period the Department has introduced a number of measures to support claimants before they receive their first Universal Credit award. New claimants can apply for a Universal Credit new claim advance if they need financial support. This is an interest free payment of up to 100% of their total expected award and they can have up to 12 months to repay it. In the Autumn Budget 2018, we also announced that from October 2021, the repayment period for these advances will be extended further, to up to 16 months.

Following the Autumn Budget 2017, we have also implemented a comprehensive and wide-ranging package of improvement measures worth £1.5 billion to help claimants as they move over to Universal Credit. This includes removing waiting days, providing an additional 2 weeks of Housing Benefit to eligible claimants to support them when they move to Universal Credit and, increasing the amount and repayment period for Universal Credit new claim and benefit transfer advances.

At the Autumn Budget 2018, we also announced the introduction of a two-week continuation of Income Support and the income related elements of Employment and Support Allowance and Jobseeker's Allowance from July 2020. This will provide 1.1 million households with further financial support during their first assessment period.

Stephen Timms:

[\[220055\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of universal credit claimants in the last 12 months had to complete a Work Capability Assessment as part of their application.

Stephen Timms:

[\[220056\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average waiting time is for universal credit applicants required to complete a Work Capability Assessment for that assessment to be carried out.

Sarah Newton:

Statistics on Work Capability Assessments for Universal Credit are intended for publication in the near future as Official Statistics.

Frank Field:

[\[220095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people are migrating naturally to universal credit each week by region.

Alok Sharma:

Claimants only move from existing benefits to Universal Credit through natural migration when they experience a significant change in their circumstances that triggers a new claim to benefit.

The requested information is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Stephen Timms:

[\[220726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for how long consent is granted, when the criteria are met, to friends, family members or professionals to access information on a claimant's universal credit claim.

Alok Sharma:

Explicit consent, which can be given by a claimant via their journal, over the phone, or in person when accompanied by their adviser, is not indefinite for representatives. Once explicit consent has been provided by a claimant, it will last until the specific request for information is resolved, or until the end of the Assessment Period after the one in which the consent was given. Alternatively, a claimant can withdraw their consent at any stage.

Explicit consent is time bound because the Department must ensure that it protects the comprehensive data belonging to our claimants effectively and that it ensures it is used only for the purposes intended.

The Department also has a well-established appointeeship arrangement system for claimants who are unable to manage their own affairs.

In our response to the Social Security Advisory Committee in November 2018 in respect of the managed Migration regulations, we have agreed to explore

options for improving the process of explicit consent in collaboration with the committee.

Stephen Timms: [\[220729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people making an application for universal credit in (a) April 2018 and (b) October 2018 waited more than (i) six weeks, (ii) seven weeks, (iii) eight weeks, (iv) nine weeks and (v) ten weeks before receiving their first payment.

Alok Sharma:

The next regular official statistics will be published on 19 February 2019. This will provide the latest data on payment timeliness for new Universal Credit claims. Future official statistics will include additional breakdowns of payment timeliness.

Longer term we will publish further Universal Credit statistical releases and continue to commission and publish ad-hoc statistical releases.

Frank Field: [\[220801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 13 February 2019 to Question 218202, if she will break the results of the survey down by universal credit claimants on (a) live service and (b) full service.

Alok Sharma:

To break the results of the Claimant Service and Experience Survey 2017-2018 down to those who claimed under Universal Credit live service and those who claimed under full service systems would only be possible at disproportionate cost.

■ Universal Credit: Domestic Abuse

Alison McGovern: [\[220213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps staff in her Department are authorised to take when they suspect an abusive partner is attending an appointment with a universal credit claimant.

Justin Tomlinson

We always look to deal with vulnerable claimants sensitively and recognise that victims

of domestic abuse often find it difficult to discuss sensitive matters.

Each claimant is assigned to a single work coach, which helps build a trusting relationship.

Private rooms are available in almost all Jobcentres so that individuals can discuss sensitive issues with their work coach in private.

All our work coaches receive mandatory training – developed with input from domestic abuse charities – to help them recognize the signs of abuse.

By summer 2019, we will have domestic abuse specialists in every Jobcentre to further raise awareness of domestic abuse, and support work coaches

■ Universal Credit: Housing

Frank Field:

[218210]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will consider enabling universal credit claimants to choose a payment schedule that aligns their assessment periods and payment dates with earnings patterns and the payment of housing costs.

Alok Sharma:

Universal Credit seeks to take earnings into account in a way that is fair and transparent. The amount of Universal Credit paid reflects, as closely as possible, the actual circumstances of a household during each monthly assessment period, including any earnings reported by the employer during the assessment period, regardless of when they were paid, or which month they relate to.

Assessment periods allow for Universal Credit awards to be adjusted on a monthly basis, ensuring that if a claimant's income falls, they do not have to wait several months for a rise in their Universal Credit award.

Claimants can always discuss the implications of this with their case managers and work coaches and can be referred to Personal Budgeting Support to help them manage their budgeting.

The Government is working with employers to ensure that they use the most appropriate payment practices and comply with RTI guidelines in order to minimise the incidence of erroneous or late reporting by employers. HMRC have updated the guidance to reiterate to employers the importance of reporting accurate dates and the impact on payment cycles.

More guidance on this is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-different-earning-patterns-and-your-payments/universal-credit-different-earning-patterns-and-your-payments-payment-cycles>

■ Universal Credit: Multiple Sclerosis

Ian Murray:

[220184]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people affected by multiple sclerosis in Scotland will be moved over from other benefits to universal credit.

Sarah Newton:

The data requested is not available at this time.

Ian Murray:

[220185]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people affected by multiple sclerosis in Scotland claim universal credit.

Sarah Newton:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Universal Credit: Self-employed

Tracy Brabin: [\[220312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of families that use the childcare element of universal credit have at least one family member who is self-employed.

Justin Tomlinson:

Based on our internal data, around 10 per cent of Universal Credit Full Service payments containing a childcare element, have at least one person in receipt of self-employed earnings.

■ Universal Credit: West Midlands

Liam Byrne: [\[220809\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will list the (a) dates and (b) formats of representations her Department has received from the Mayor of the West Midlands on (i) the roll out of universal credit in the West Midlands or (ii) the policy design of universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

The Mayor of the West Midlands visited Coventry Jobcentre on 02 November 2018 and Wolverhampton Service Centre on 18 January 2019.

To list the date and format of all correspondence from the Mayor of the West Midlands on rollout and policy design, from across the Department, would only be possible at disproportionate cost.

■ Winter Fuel Payments

Frank Field: [\[220800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will consider amending the annual Winter Fuel Payment letters to give pensioners a clear option, should they decide they do not require the money, of donating their payment to a charitable fund which helps to keep low-income families with children warm during the winter months.

Guy Opperman:

Winter fuel payments give reassurance, particularly to poorer pensioners that they can keep warm during the colder months. The DWP currently issues around 12 million winter fuel payments. Introducing an option on the notification for customers to donate their winter fuel payment would introduce complexity to the process. Recipients are of course free to donate the payment to a charity of their choice.

The DWP also has a process in place should a recipient wish to return their payment. In these circumstances the customer should return the payment to the relevant benefit office, the address of which can be found at the top of the notification.

■ **Work Capability Assessment: Dundee**

Peter Grant:

[\[220284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what is the average length of time is for a claimant to be referred to a work capability assessment by the Dundee service centre.

Sarah Newton:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Artificial Intelligence

Jo Stevens:

[\[218822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that the use of artificial intelligence complies with equalities legislation.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 13 February 2019. The correct answer should have been:

Margot James:

~~While we have seen some success with voluntary measures to improve online safety, Government has been clear that tech companies need to take more consistent and effective action to tackle online harms.~~

~~A joint DCMS-Home Office White Paper will be published shortly, setting out clear responsibilities for tech companies to keep their users safe online.~~

The Government recently set up the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation to provide independent, expert advice on the measures needed to enable and ensure safe, ethical and innovative uses of AI and data-driven technologies.

The first two projects the Centre will study include: the use of data in shaping people's online experiences; and the potential for bias in decisions made using algorithms. This work will play an important role in promoting and ensuring fairness and the ethical use of data to deliver maximum benefits for society. An interim update on these projects is expected in summer 2019.

Further, it is essential that AI developed in the UK reflects the needs and make-up of society as a whole and that industry and the public sector are able to access the greatest supply of talent in terms of numbers. Increasing diversity in the AI workforce is vital to ensure that everyone with the potential to participate has the opportunity to do so. The government's Office for AI will work with the AI Council to promote diversity in the AI workforce.

HOME OFFICE

■ Metropolitan Police: Expenditure

Louise Haigh:

[\[217646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 31 January 2019 to Question 213415, what the total amount requested by the Metropolitan Police was between 2017-18 and 2018-19 for which the Government chose to award £22 million in Special Grant funding.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 11 February 2019. The correct answer should have been:

Mr Nick Hurd:

~~Please see attached document with answer.~~

The £22 million awarded in Special Grant funding to the Metropolitan Police referred to in our answer to question 213415 was solely for the Grenfell Tower investigation and response. It does not represent the full amount of Special Grant funding provided to the Metropolitan Police for 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Please see table below regarding Metropolitan Police Special Grant claims and awards for 2017/18 and 2018/19:

	2017/18		2018/19	
	Claimed	Awarded	Claimed	Awarded
Grenfell Tower	£11 million	£10.1 million	£13.5 million	£11.4 million
Madeleine McCann investigation	£308,500	£308,500	£300,000	£300,000
Royal Wedding	N/A	N/A	£237,000	£237,000
USA President visit	N/A	N/A	£1.3 million	£1.3 million
Commonwealth Summit	£602,000	£602,000	£4.6 million	£4.6 million
Commonwealth Summit – Hostile Vehicle Mitigation measures	£5.2 million	£5.2 million	N/A	N/A
London terrorist attacks	£7.7 million	£7.7 million	N/A	N/A
Total	£24.8 million	£23.9 million	£19.9million	£17.8 million

Information regarding all Special Grant claims and awards from 2014/15 to 2017-18 has been published on the .gov.uk website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-funding-special-grant-applications>

Attachments:

1. PQ Answer 217646.docx

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Hague Convention

Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan):

[[HCWS1339](#)]

The Government has decided to opt in to the European Commission's proposals for Council Decisions authorising the acceptance by certain Member States of the accession of named countries to the 1980 Hague Convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction, in the interests of the EU. The acceptances are as follows:

- Austria, Cyprus, Croatia, Luxembourg, Portugal, Romania and the United Kingdom to accept Dominican Republic;
- Austria, Luxembourg and Romania to accept Belarus and Uzbekistan;
- Austria to accept Ecuador and Ukraine;
- Austria and Romania to accept Honduras.

The UK has already accepted Belarus, Uzbekistan, Ecuador, Ukraine and Honduras and therefore these Council Decisions do not instruct the UK to take any action.

All EU Member States are party to the 1980 Hague Convention, the primary civil law international instrument which provides a mechanism to seek the prompt return of wrongfully removed or retained children to their country of habitual residence.

When a country wishes to accede to the Convention, it is necessary for an existing contracting state to accept that country's accession before the Convention can apply between them. It is the European Commission's view that there is exclusive competence on the EU for all matters relating to the 1980 Convention and that therefore Member States must be authorised by the EU to accept accessions by third countries and must do so collectively through Council decisions.

Although not anticipated in the proposals, the Government believes that the UK opt-in under the Protocol to Title V of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union applies and it has therefore asserted its right to choose whether to opt in and has decided that it is in the UK's best interests to do so.

The Government believes that the wider significance of these proposals for external competence mean that it is in the UK's interests to participate fully in these negotiations, including having the ability to vote. These proposals must be agreed by unanimity within the EU Council.

JUSTICE**■ Probation update**

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Mr David Gauke):

[\[HCWS1338\]](#)

I wish to inform the House regarding future arrangements for probation services in the South West and Wales.

The House will be aware that Community Rehabilitation Companies were set up just over four and a half years ago (with contracts awarded in December 2014). They were a new idea and part of probation reforms which extended supervision on licence each year to an additional 40,000 offenders released from prison sentences of less than 12 months.

These companies do not deal with high-risk offenders – who are managed by the National Probation Service – but with low and medium risk offenders. They have been set up in a range of ways. There are 21 companies, the majority of which are private-sector owned with a range of voluntary sector third party suppliers. Their particular purpose is to work with low and medium risk offenders, supervise them, develop plans for them, and provide them with rehabilitative services, in order to reduce the reoffending rate.

On Thursday 14 February 2019, Working Links (Employment) Limited, and its three CRCs: Wales CRC, Bristol, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire CRC, and Dorset, Devon and Cornwall CRC, went into administration. The Ministry of Justice has been in discussions with Working Links and has taken immediate action to ensure that probation services are fully protected in these areas. Our central priority is of course to protect the public, ensuring that we have the right supervision of offenders in place, and that probation staff are supported in their important work. We have undertaken significant work to determine the most sustainable option for future management of probation services in Wales and the South West and have transferred staff and services to Kent, Surrey and Sussex CRC, which is owned by Seetec. This change has been made via a variation to Kent, Surrey and Sussex CRC's existing contract. Seetec has a good track record in Kent, Surrey and Sussex and we are satisfied that they are well-placed and well-equipped to take over these services and run them effectively. Plans have been implemented to ensure that probation staff and other key probation stakeholders are well-informed with regards to the transition.

We are also working towards more bespoke arrangements for the services in Wales, specifically that offender management services in Wales be transferred to HMPPS before the end of the current contractual period, to better dovetail with the future design for probation delivery in Wales. Our intentions are to transfer these services by the end of 2019, rather than the previously planned date of 2020, and we are currently working at pace with Seetec to accelerate this process.

We also recognise the impact of Working Links' Administration upon its other public-sector contracts in the UK, and have been engaging with the Department for Work and Pensions and the Scottish Government. DWP will be working with Working Links and the

Administrators to identify all participants of its programmes who are potentially affected to ensure appropriate advice and support is provided.

The Government continues to work to improve the effectiveness of the wider probation system. We have already taken action to stabilise and improve probation delivery. Last year, we announced we intended to end CRC contracts early and held a consultation on proposals to improve future probation services. We also agreed contractual changes with current CRCs to improve performance in key areas. We want to create a better system in future which will prevent these kinds of things happening again. We intend to better integrate public, private and third sector providers, putting in place a more stable and resilient probation system, which works effectively to protect the public and tackle reoffending. We will announce detailed plans later this year.

We know probation is vital to ensuring justice is done and the cycle of reoffending is broken. We will work closely with Kent, Surrey and Sussex CRC and Seetec in the next weeks and months to ensure the continuation, stability and improvement of services.