



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 13 June 2019 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:30 P.M., 13 June 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: Living Wage

Justin Madders:

[\[261262\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what proportion of organisations that hold contracts with his Department pay the National Living Wage.

Lucy Frazer:

The Attorney General's Office does not hold direct contracts with organisations. Goods and services are obtained through direct ordering with a supplier, or through contracts held by other government departments.

The Attorney General's Office holds no information on rates of pay for other organisations. Specific rates of pay are a matter for each individual organisation.

■ Rape: Prosecutions

Gloria De Piero:

[\[261501\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what the average number of days taken from a report of rape to a decision to charge was in each year since 2010.

Lucy Frazer:

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not maintain a record of the average number of days taken from a report of rape to the police through to a decision to charge. Data is, however, held on the average number of days from submission of a rape case by the police to the CPS through to the date of the decision to charge. The CPS works closely with police colleagues to ensure that where individuals are charged, cases have been thoroughly investigated and individuals are properly charged and prosecuted so that the interests of both victims and perpetrators are protected and cases do not collapse mid-trial. The figures provided in the table below include the end to end timeliness from submission to the date of the decision to charge. This comprises of the time when the case was with both police and the CPS.

Financial Year	Average Number of Calendar Days Receipt to Decision to Charge	Average Consultations per Suspect	
2010-2011	321.71	2011-2012	331.74
2012-2013	341.69	2013-2014	401.66
2014-2015	551.65	2015-2016	531.66
2016-2017	671.80	2017-2018	781.97

There are a number of reasons for the steady increase in the average number of days and average number of consultations per case since 2010/11. The number of consultations between CPS prosecutors and police investigators is important. Consultations allow for a close examination of the evidence thus ensuring the case is strong. Clearly, the more consultations that take place, the longer the time between receipt of the case and the decision to charge.

Police are now encouraged to seek early investigative advice more often and in particular in rape and serious sexual offences cases. Early investigative advice helps to ensure that cases are thoroughly investigated and the evidence to be brought before the court is strong. As a result, fewer cases are dropped after the defendant has been charged. With the increase in early investigative advice, CPS is more often involved at an earlier stage in proceedings and this will invariably impact on the average number of consultations and overall timeliness.

There has also been an increase in the complexity of rape cases investigated by the police. Investigations often involve large amounts of electronic material (social media, emails, text messages, video and photographs) which needs to be reviewed by prosecutors before a charging decision can be made. This also impacts on the average number of consultations and timeliness of the pre-charge stage of the case.

CPS prosecutors work closely with police colleagues to build strong cases which can be brought before the courts. Increased complexity has been evidenced over time by the rise in the average number of consultations with the police. Since 2010/11, the number has increased from 1.71 to 1.98 consultations per case, a rise of 16%.

Changes have now been made to the Casework Management System to provide for a more sophisticated level of reporting. In future, CPS will be able to report the timeliness for each individual consultation.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Carbon Capture and Storage

Paul Farrelly:

[\[262267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps the Government has taken to promote carbon capture, utilisation and storage technologies.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government believes that carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS) has the potential to play an important role in meeting the UK's climate targets. CCUS can add value to the economy and help tackle hard to decarbonise sectors.

The Government published its CCUS Action Plan in November 2018, designed to progress CCUS in the UK, including enabling the UK's first CCUS facility to be operational from the mid-2020s. The Government is investing over £50 million in CCUS innovation support between 2017 and March 2021.

CCUS is also likely to play an important role in achieving our Industrial Clusters Mission, creating the world's first net-zero industrial cluster by 2040. This is supported by up to £170 million from the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund to support the deployment of low carbon technologies and enabling infrastructure in one or more clusters. In addition, through our Industrial Energy Transformation Fund we are investing £315 million to support businesses with high energy use to cut their bills

and emissions through increased energy efficiency and transition to a low carbon future through the use of lower carbon energy and processes. This may support CCUS projects.

In March this year, the Government launched the CCUS Advisory Group. Backed by government and industry support, the Group will provide advice on the potential incentives and regulations needed for the development of a new UK market in CCUS.

The Government is also working with other governments to promote the development of CCUS internationally. We hosted, with the International Energy Agency, the Global CCUS Summit in Edinburgh last November which brought together world energy leaders from governments and industry to accelerate the global progress of CCUS and co-lead the CCUS initiatives under both Mission Innovation and the Clean Energy Ministerial.

■ Carers: Leave

Steve McCabe: [\[262228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of providing a statutory entitlement to up to 10 days paid care leave.

Steve McCabe: [\[262229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing the statutory right for employees taking longer-term unpaid care leave to return to their original employment after their caring duties have finished.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Government recognises the challenges of balancing work and care. Improving support for carers to do so is a key part of the action plan that we published in June 2018.

The Department is working with colleagues across Government to consider the question of dedicated employment rights for carers alongside existing employment rights (such as the right to request flexible working and the right to time off for family and dependants).

■ Coal

Zac Goldsmith: [\[259966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of existing coal stocks to meet expected needs for electricity generation before coal is phased out.

Chris Skidmore:

[Holding answer 10 June 2019]: The latest statistics are publicly available (Energy Trends table 2.1.)

The government is committed to ending unabated coal power by 2025. As a result of our existing policies, including carbon pricing and our support for renewables, we have already made great headway in reducing our reliance on coal, which fell from 39% of electricity in 2012 to 5% in 2018. There are now regular coal free periods, and in May the UK went without running coal power generation for over two weeks – the longest coal-free period in the country since the 1880s.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Living Wage**

Justin Madders:

[\[261259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of organisations that hold contracts with his Department pay the National Living Wage.

Andrew Stephenson:

This question would be a disproportionate cost to answer, as we do not hold this information centrally. However, as this is a statutory requirement, our expectation is that 100% of organisations that hold contracts with the department will be paying the National Living Wage. If the department identified any organisation that was in breach, we would engage with them to ensure legal compliance.

■ **Energy**

Mark Menzies:

[\[262348\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his Department's timeframe is for the publication of the energy white paper.

Chris Skidmore:

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has stated his intention to publish the energy white paper in the summer. We will provide more details in due course.

■ **Flexible Working**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[258982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to encourage employers to be more flexible in their employee working hours.

Kelly Tolhurst:

Through the Industrial Strategy, the Government is working to transform our economy and ensuring that everyone, whatever their background, can access and progress at work.

Flexible working can play an important part in helping businesses to improve their productivity and recruit and retain the best available talent. All employees with 26 weeks' continuous service with their employer have the right to request flexible

working. The Government is also considering a new duty on employers to be clear when advertising a job whether it is available on a flexible basis.

In addition, the Government, with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, has established the Flexible Working Taskforce to promote wider understanding and implementation of inclusive flexible work and working practices. The taskforce has developed a high-level business case for flexible working guidance on flexible recruitment and continues to promote more flexible hiring through the on going campaign "Happy to Talk Flexible Working".

■ Ford Motor Company: Bridgend

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[262301]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will hold discussions with representatives of Ford UK on that company meeting 50 per cent of the tax deductions from redundancy payments to workers at Ford Bridgend; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Stephenson:

The terms of the separation packages for Ford Bridgend Engine plant workers have only recently been communicated by the company.

Ford has indicated that they will seek to avoid compulsory redundancies. They have also stated that they will be offering generous voluntary redundancy packages and options for redeployment.

United Kingdom Government and Welsh Government are working together to support Ford workers and the local community.

■ Minimum Wage

Stephanie Peacock:

[R] [260711]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the oral answer of the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility on 4 June 2019, Official Report, column 53, what the evidential basis is for her statement that in 2019, £118 million has been paid back to more than 220,000 workers who were underpaid the minimum wage.

Kelly Tolhurst:

[Holding answer 10 June 2019]: We are committed to taking robust enforcement action to ensure that everyone who is entitled to the National Minimum or Living Wage receives it.

We have more than doubled the budget for minimum wage compliance and enforcement since 2015; it is now at a record high of £27.4 million.

To clarify, since 1999, minimum wage arrears worth over £118 million have been paid to 835,000 workers. In the year 2018/19 alone, £24.4m of wage arrears were identified, owed to more than 220,000 workers.

The transcript error within the Official Report has now been corrected.

■ **Paternity Leave: Discrimination**

Dawn Butler:

[\[262298\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to prevent workplace discrimination against fathers taking parental leave.

Kelly Tolhurst:

Fathers taking parental leave benefit from a number of legal protections against discrimination. Legislation is in place and provides protection against redundancy and detriment. They also have a right to return to the same or similar job.

As part of our consultation on pregnancy and maternity discrimination, Government is also considering whether fathers who have taken shared parental leave should benefit from additional redundancy protection into a period of return to work.

■ **Pay**

Stephanie Peacock:

[\[261537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answers of 5 June 2019 to Questions 257798 and 257799, and in the format of the Answer of 11 April 2019 to Question 241458, what proportion of jobs in (a) the UK, (b) Yorkshire, (c) South Yorkshire and (c) Barnsley are paid the (i) National Living Wage and (ii) National Minimum Wage.

Kelly Tolhurst:

Through the National Living Wage (NLW) and National Minimum Wage (NMW), the Government ensures that the lowest paid in our society are fairly rewarded for their work. April 2019's increase to the NLW will see nearly 1.8 million workers in the UK receive a 4.9% pay rise. A full-time worker on the NLW will now be more than £2,750 better off over the year compared to when it was first announced in 2015.

The table below provides estimates for the number and proportion of jobs in the UK and Yorkshire and the Humber on the NLW and NMW in 2019. The most recent available data for Barnsley, and South Yorkshire, shows that there were an estimated 5,500 workers and 47,200 workers respectively who were on the NLW or NMW.

■ **Postgraduate Education**

Gordon Marsden:

[\[262245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions has he had with (a) university groups and (b) UK Research and Innovation on the sustainability of current funding for PHD qualifications.

I regularly meet with universities, university groups and UKRI to discuss a number of issues. The government's target to reach a total of 2.4% of GDP invested in R&D by 2027 will mean increasing the numbers of highly trained people working in research and innovation, including PhD graduates. In 2017/18, UKRI's direct funding was supporting around 22,000 studentships, about 22% of the UK total. In addition, Research England's QR Research Degree Programme (RDP) supervision fund provides more than £250 million of annual funding contributing to the costs that universities face in supervising research degree programmes.

Given the large commitments partner universities make to these investments, we are mindful of the need to maintain sustainability. UKRI is currently developing a plan for the delivery of the government's 2.4% target with stakeholders to ensure that we not only achieve these ambitious targets but do so in a manner that is sustainable and ensure long-term impact.

Chris Ruane:

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much funding his Department has made available for renewable energy generation in each nation and region in the UK in each of the last seven years.

[Holding answer 11 June 2019]: The Department does not collect regional funding data. However, the Government has spent a total of £30.7 billion in renewable electricity technologies since 2010. The table below shows how much was invested in each year, through the Renewable Obligation (RO), Feed in Tariff (FITs) and Contracts for Difference (CfD) schemes:

	COST								TOTAL
(£M)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	OVER PERIOD
RO	1,285	1,458	1,991	2,599	3,114	3,743	4,511	5,371	
FiTs	14	151	506	691	866	1,110	1,284	1,375	
CfDs							92	544	

COST (£M)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	TOTAL OVER PERIOD
CfD (admin)							12	13	
Total	1,300	1,608	2,498	3,290	3,980	4,853	5,898	7,304	30,731

Renewables spending covered under the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme is published monthly and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rhi-mechanism-for-budget-management-estimated-commitments>.

■ Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

Dr David Drew:

[\[261466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans does the Government have for the (a) future and (b) funding of the renewable heat initiative.

Chris Skidmore:

[Holding answer 12 June 2019]: The budget for the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) has been set out to the end of March 2021. Decisions on the future funding for the RHI will be set out in the Spending Review.

As announced by the Chancellor in the Spring Statement, Government also intends to introduce a Future Homes Standard by 2025, for new build homes to be future-proofed with low carbon heating and world-leading levels of energy efficiency. We also intend to increase the proportion of green gas in the grid. Government will consult on the details and appropriate mechanisms to deliver these commitments later this year.

■ Technology: Postgraduate Education

Gordon Marsden:

[\[262246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect on the UK economy of the Government's Industrial Strategy proposals to increase the number of people undertaking a high-tech PhD.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government has made significant progress in delivering our Industrial Strategy commitments. Through the Industrial Strategy, the Government has committed to increasing overall investment in R&D to 2.4% of GDP by 2027 and 3% in the longer term.

In order to reach the 2.4% R&D target, we need to continue to attract, retain and develop research talent. This is why the government is investing in talent

programmes delivered by the National Academies and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

The Government has increased its investments in PhDs to support the delivery of this target and the Industrial Strategy Grand Challenges including:

- In 2017, we announced funding of £300m over four years to increase the number of PhDs and fellowship programmes which will develop research talent and attract the brightest minds to the UK.
- In April 2018, we announced a sector deal between government and industry that will put the UK at the forefront of the AI industry. As part of this, UKRI has invested £100m in 16 Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) to support 1000 new AI PhDs.

Alongside this, UKRI invests in CDTs more broadly, including the recent £446m investment in 75 CDTs across the engineering and physical sciences.

■ UK Research and Innovation: Grants

Chi Onwurah:

[\[262366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the diversity of UK Research and Innovation grant recipients by (a) gender, (b) ethnicity, (c) disability and (d) socio-economic group.

Chris Skidmore:

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) believes that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) – of people and ideas – is crucial for delivering excellence in research and innovation. It has made EDI a priority – as a national research and innovation funder, as an employer, and as an influential voice in wider research and innovation sectors.

The seven Research Councils have historically collected information on applicants for and recipients of funding regarding age, gender, ethnicity, and disability. The councils do not collect information on social-economic group. Neither Innovate UK nor Research England collect diversity data of applicants or those in receipt of funding or loans.

Successive UK Governments have supported the principle that funding for basic research should be awarded through competitive processes on the basis of excellence and likely impact - as assessed through peer review. This is widely considered to be a underpinning factor in the success of UK research, and a key enabler of value for money for tax payers money. Consequently, HM Government takes an arms length approach to research funding, in line with the Haldane Principle.

In addition, initial analysis of 2018-19 funding data from the seven research councils by gender shows that:

- 71% of funding from research council grants and fellowships in 18/19 were awarded to bids led by men and 27% of funds were allocated to bids led by women. The remainder are bids where gender is undisclosed or not known.

- 42% of the funding for Fellowships went to female Fellows, 52% of the funds went to male Fellows and 6% of the funds went to Fellows with undisclosed or unknown gender.
- 73% of the funding for research grants were awarded to projects led by male Principle Investigators (PIs), 25% of the funds were awarded to projects led by female PIs and 2% of the funds were awarded to projects with PIs of undisclosed or unknown gender.

UKRI has appointed Professor Jennifer Rubin, Executive Chair, Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) as the UKRI Champion for EDI, and established an External Advisory Group for EDI. The group is working with UKRI to identify and prioritise areas.

UKRI aims to publish a UKRI-wide EDI Strategic Framework in Autumn 2019, which will help UKRI to bring together and scrutinise evidence on what works, develop and prioritise actions, and ensure that EDI is considered and supported in all that UKRI does.

Work is currently underway to improve data collection and analysis capabilities about the people UKRI funds. A detailed cross-UKRI analysis of funding data will be published in Autumn 2019.

■ VJ Day: Anniversaries

Frank Field:

[\[262251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will make an assessment of the potential merits of allocating an additional bank holiday to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VJ Day.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Government regularly receives requests for additional bank and public holidays to commemorate a variety of occasions, for example, cultural, historical and military events. However, there are no current plans to create another bank holiday. The cost to the economy of additional bank holiday remains considerable. The estimated cost to the economy for a one-off bank holiday for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee was £1.2bn.

The Government recognises the importance of VJ Day, and celebrations will take place to celebrate the 75th Anniversary which falls on Saturday 15 August 2020.

CABINET OFFICE■ **Centenarians: Northern Ireland**

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[262265\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people in Northern Ireland have reached their hundredth year in the last 12 months.

Kevin Foster:

The Cabinet Office does not hold this information centrally.

■ **Distributed Ledger Technology**

Adam Afriyie: [\[261182\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of using distributed ledger technology across the public sector.

Oliver Dowden:

The Government Digital Service undertook a landscape review of technology innovation, including distributed ledger technology across government in August 2018. Additionally the recently launched Government Technology Innovation Strategy provides recent examples of distributed ledger technology within government and will provide a building block for departments to harness the opportunity presented by emerging technologies.

■ **Huawei: 5G**

Jo Platt: [\[261279\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2019 to Question 257533 on Huawei: 5G, what recent assessment he has made of the risks to the (a) security and (b) reliability of UK 5G networks from Huawei Cyber Security Evaluation Centre evaluating 5G equipment after deployment.

Mr David Lidington:

As detailed in the HCSEC Oversight Board report, the HCSEC work programme is determined by a risk-based prioritisation scheme and their plan of evaluation is driven by the commercial rollout of services by the UK operators that use Huawei equipment. The operators, NCSC and the HCSEC collaboratively prioritise the work of HCSEC. Providing further details on what equipment has, and has not, been subject to HCSEC evaluation is commercially sensitive.

Jo Platt: [\[261280\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June to Question 257533, when the Huawei Cyber Security Evaluation Centre plans to begin its assessment of 5G equipment.

Mr David Lidington:

As detailed in the HCSEC Oversight Board report, the HCSEC work programme is determined by a risk-based prioritisation scheme and their plan of evaluation is driven

by the commercial rollout of services by the UK operators that use Huawei equipment. The operators, NCSC and the HCSEC collaboratively prioritise the work of HCSEC. Providing further details on what equipment has, and has not, been subject to HCSEC evaluation is commercially sensitive.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

■ Affordable Housing: Construction

Frank Field:

[\[262248\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2019 to Question 259013, how many affordable homes have been built by the Church of England or its agents in each local authority area since 2015; and what the affordable housing requirement is in each of those local authority areas.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

There have been 295 new affordable homes created on land owned by the Church Commissioners since 2015.

Details for each Local Authority area are shown in the following table.

LOCAL AUTHORITY	NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSES PROVIDED	POLICY REQUIREMENT FOR NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSES
Durham	34	50
West Lindsey	15	30
East Cambridgeshire	30	60
Carlisle	42	42
Mendip	60	60
Sunderland	23	23
Arun	15	15
Ashford	77	77
Total	295	356

■ Archbishops Council: Grants

Fiona Bruce:

[\[262341\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, whether the Church Commissioners have the authority to make grants to the Archbishop's Council.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

The powers conferred by the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2018 enable the Church Commissioners to make grants to the Archbishops' Council which the Council may spend in accordance with its own functions. Such funding should support proposals designed to make a significant contribution to the growth of the Church and proposals should only be funded if they are within the priorities identified by the Council and in accordance with a clearly defined policy framework. The Commissioners' approved policy is set out in full in the document attached at annex A. In addition to the power under the 2018 Measure, the Church Commissioners have a number of other miscellaneous powers to make grants to the Council in support of work with the Council supports, such as grants given for diocesan ministry support.

Attachments:

1. Annex A [annex A.pdf]

■ Church of England: EU Grants and Loans

Deidre Brock:

[\[262404\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what EU funding the Church of England has received in each of the last ten years.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

[Holding answer 12 June 2019]: The table shows grant aid received from the UK Government by the Church Commissioners in association with operations in Scotland from 2012 onwards. It is not possible to separate what proportion of these grants comes from the UK Government and what originates from the EU.

DATE (YEAR)	TOTAL FOR SCOTLAND
2012	£170,748.72
2013	£143,838.87
2014	£537,843.27
2015	£140,542.04
2016	£20,491.35
2017	£448,926.37

DATE (YEAR)	TOTAL FOR SCOTLAND
2018	£213,472.78
2019	£12,249.00
Grand Total	£1,688,112.40

■ Church of England: Scotland

Deidre Brock:

[\[262402\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what the Church of England's landholdings are in Scotland.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

[Holding answer 12 June 2019]: The Church Commissioners hold 12,333.67 hectares of land in Scotland.

Deidre Brock:

[\[262403\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what estimate the Church of England has made of the profits from its operations in Scotland in the last 12 months for which information is available.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

[Holding answer 12 June 2019]: The Church Commissioners received a total net income of £8,858,429 from forestry and windfarms between 1st January 2018 to the 31st December 2018.

We are unable to provide a figure for profit in the equivalent period as liabilities, including for restocking, will be borne over a number of years and the cost of purchasing the asset should be taken into consideration.

■ Churches: Coal

Philip Davies:

[\[263116\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what assessment she made of the economic effect on churches and vicarages of the ban on house coal.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

The economic effect on churches and vicarages of the ban on the use of house coal has been negligible.

Bishops' see houses and vicarages have not used house coal for many years and the Church Commissioners are not aware of any churches that still use coal as a form of heating.

The Church of England supports the aim of the Government to improve air quality and public health; the Church has launched several initiatives to support this policy,

which include planting more trees on its properties and encouraging churches to increase the biodiversity of their churchyards and green spaces.

DEFENCE

■ Centre of Excellence for Human Security

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[261160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, where the planned centre of excellence for human security will be based, on what date it will start; and if she will make a statement.

Mark Lancaster:

The Centre of Excellence is currently the subject of a feasibility study which will provide Ministers with options on timings, scope and costs. At this stage, no decision has been made on when the Centre of Excellence will begin operation.

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[261161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what funding her Department plans to allocate to the centre of excellence for human security; what the (a) priorities and (b) objectives of that centre will be; how many staff will be employed in that centre; and of those staff how many will be gender advisers; what training her Department plans to provide; and if she will make a statement.

Mark Lancaster:

The Centre of Excellence will work to help the UK military and its international partners better integrate UN Security Council Resolutions linked to human security into military planning and conduct of operations. The Centre is currently the subject of a feasibility study which will provide Ministers with options on timings, scope and costs. At this stage, no decision has been made on when the Centre of Excellence will begin operation.

■ Intelligence Services: Detainees

Nia Griffith:

[\[262306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether there is a pre-approved list under section 22 of his Department's November 2018 policy on the passing or receipt of intelligence relating to detained or captured persons of people on whom intelligence can be shared.

Nia Griffith:

[\[262307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the criteria are for pre-approving sharing intelligence on an individual under section 22 of his Department's November 2018 policy on the passing or receipt of intelligence relating to detained or captured persons.

Mark Lancaster:

There are no set criteria for pre-approving sharing of intelligence on individuals. Any criteria would be specific to the operational circumstances and environment

encountered at the time that intelligence sharing was considered. This section of the policy has never been used and no such lists have ever existed. This section will be removed from our policy later this year when it is revised following the Government's consideration of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's recommendations.

■ Royal Military Academy

Nia Griffith:

[262308]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many people from (a) state and (b) independent schools were accepted to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in the last five years.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The number of Officer Cadets who attended either independent or state schools, on the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) Direct Entry (DE) Regular Commissioning (Reg C) Course in the last five years can be found in the attached table.

Officer selection focusses on leadership potential rather than the school attended. Such data is only recorded for the DE Reg C course. As at 1 April 2019 around 9% of officers were professionally qualified and around 22% were Late Entry, neither of which commission through the DE Reg C course.

Attachments:

1. Royal Military Academy Sandhurst [262308 - Nia Griffith.docx]

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ 5G: Electromagnetic Fields

Dr David Drew:

[261099]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans the Government has to introduce electromagnetic white zones in relation to 5G technology.

Margot James:

Mobile Network Operators will lead the rollout of 5G in the UK and provide the vast majority of commercial investment in 5G networks. The Government is setting the policy and regulatory environment needed to ensure the right conditions for investment in the development of 5G networks.

5G spectrum frequencies that have been granted licenses have similar properties to those which are currently used in mobile communications technologies. A considerable amount of research has been carried out on radio waves and Public Health England (PHE) have concluded that exposures of radio waves to the public are well within the international health-related guideline levels that are used in the UK. All 5G technology will also have to adhere to the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) exposure guidelines.

■ Alcoholic Drinks: Marketing**Fiona Bruce:** [\[262344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to help ensure that alcohol is marketed responsibly.

Fiona Bruce: [\[262345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps is he taking to protect children and young people from the potential adverse effects of alcohol marketing.

Margot James:

Advertising in the United Kingdom is regulated by the Advertising Standards Authority, the industry's independent regulator, who enforce the Advertising Codes through a system of self-regulation and co-regulation with Ofcom. The Codes apply to all media, including broadcast and online, and set standards for accuracy and honesty to which advertisers must adhere, including specific conditions on advertising to children, causing offence and social responsibility. The Codes include rules which require that alcohol advertising is socially responsible and is not targeted at under 18s. The Codes are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they remain effective.

Separately to this, the Portman Group provides a Code of Practice to the alcohol industry on the Naming, Packaging and Promotion of Alcoholic Drinks, which seeks to ensure that non-paid for alcohol marketing in the UK is also socially responsible, and does not target young people.

■ Television: Concessions**Chris Ruane:** [\[262261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions the Government held with pensioner groups prior to his Department's decision to transfer responsibility for funding TV licences for people aged over 75 to the BBC.

Margot James:

The Government agreed with the BBC at the 2015 funding settlement that responsibility for the concession will transfer to the BBC in 2020. The future of the concession was a decision for the BBC. Following a public consultation, including with pensioner groups, it has decided to maintain the concession for the poorest pensioners.

■ Television: Licensing**Chris Ruane:** [\[262262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate he has made of the number of pensioners who will be affected by the BBC's decision to charge people aged over 75 for tv licences.

Margot James:

The BBC is responsible for the collection and enforcement of the licence fee. It estimates that 4.5 million pensioner households are eligible for the existing over 75 licence fee concession. It estimates that 900,000 households will continue to receive a free TV licence from 2020/21, rising to 1.5 million households if all pensioners eligible take up Pension Credit.

EDUCATION■ **Academies****Mary Creagh:**[\[262318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many multi-academy trusts have collapsed since the introduction of such trusts.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The department's latest records show that no academy trust has collapsed. Where there is a risk to public funds, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) will intervene in a proportionate manner to avoid financial issues affecting school provision.

The ESFA has a robust intervention strategy to support an academy trust, which is a company limited by guarantee and subject to company law, to reach a stronger financial position. Intervention actions range from supporting and building trust capacity through to issuing a Financial Notice to Improve, or in the most serious cases, terminating a funding agreement after schools have been transferred to another trust.

■ **Adult Education****Chuka Umunna:**[\[261227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of adult education providers in each of the last five years.

Anne Milton:

The tables below show the number of providers that we allocated funds to in each of the funding years.

Note that in 2014/15 and 2015/16, the Adult Skills budget was part of the Apprenticeship budget and allocated as such. The Adult Education Budget was created in 2016/17, separate from apprenticeships. For the years 2014/15 and 2015/16 therefore, the number of providers includes those with Adult Skills and Adult Apprenticeship allocations.

ADULT SKILLS BUDGET AND ADULT APPRENTICESHIP ALLOCATIONS

Funding Year	Providers
2014/15	923
2015/16	947

ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

Funding Year	Providers
2016/17	737
2017/18	831
2018/19	646

■ **Apprentices****Robert Halfon:****[261188]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made an assessment of the effect on the impartiality of Ofsted of that organisation being responsible for the inspection of the quality of apprenticeships.

Anne Milton:

Ofsted is a non-ministerial department, which reports directly to Parliament. It inspects services providing education and skills for learners of all ages and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people. Its role is to make sure that organisations providing education, training and care services in England for children and students do so to a high standard. Ofsted inspects a range of provider types and different types of provision, including apprenticeships. It does so impartially, as an independent body.

For more information on how Ofsted inspects apprenticeships, please see the current Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-and-skills-inspection-handbook> An updated version of the Handbook, released under the new Education Inspection Framework, is due to take effect from September 2019 and can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-and-skills-inspection-handbook-eif>

■ Breakfast Clubs

Siobhain McDonagh: [\[261078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) schools and (b) children are participating in the National School Breakfast Programme each day.

Siobhain McDonagh: [\[261079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children the National School Breakfast Programme (a) was projected to reach and (b) has reached.

Siobhain McDonagh: [\[261080\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has plans to maintain funding for the National School Breakfast Programme.

Siobhain McDonagh: [\[261081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the timeframe is for his Department's decision on funding for the National School Breakfast Programme in 2020-2022.

Siobhain McDonagh: [\[261082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the National School Breakfast Programme on social mobility.

Siobhain McDonagh: [\[261083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of effectiveness of the National School Breakfast Programme.

Siobhain McDonagh: [\[261084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking in response to the finding of the National Association of Head Teachers Report that four out of five school leaders have seen a rise in the number of pupils arriving at school hungry in the last five years.

Siobhain McDonagh: [\[261086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Treasury new story of 5 April 2018, Soft Drinks Industry Levy comes into effect, what assessment he has made of the effect of the Soft Drinks Industry Levy on the number of children starting the day with a healthy breakfast.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The department is investing up to £26 million in a breakfast club programme, using funds from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy revenues. This money will kick-start or improve breakfast clubs in over 1,700 schools. The focus of these clubs has been to target the most disadvantaged areas of the country – including the Department for Education's Opportunity Areas – to help make sure every child gets the best start in life.

A contract was awarded to Family Action in March 2018 and will run until March 2020. Family Action, in partnership with Magic Breakfast, have both been named as

the leading charities responsible for running the Breakfast Club programme. Family Action are distributing the appropriate funding to participating schools who meet the eligibility criteria.

We monitor management information from the programme on an ongoing basis and will also review the effectiveness of the programme fully once the programme concludes including the number of children attending.

In March 2019, Family Action indicated that by the start of the summer term over 250,000 children would be benefiting from the programme. The contract for the National Schools Breakfast Programme required the contractor Family Action to provide breakfast provision to at least 1,500 schools across England. This has now been surpassed by Family Action and Magic Breakfast by who have recruited more than 1,700 schools.

Decisions about any funding beyond March 2020 will be taken as part of the upcoming Spending Review.

Alex Cunningham: [261506]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the value for money of the national school breakfast programme.

Alex Cunningham: [261507]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to extend the national school breakfast programme.

Alex Cunningham: [261508]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to lower the number of children at risk of starting the school day hungry.

Nadhim Zahawi:

I refer the hon. Member for Stockton North to the answer I gave on 10 June 2019 to Question [259855](#).

Decisions about any further funding will be taken as part of the upcoming Spending Review.

■ **Bright Tribe Multi-academy Trust and Adventure Learning Academy Trust**

Angela Rayner: [R] [261232]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has made an assessment of the implications for its policies of the September 2018 Panorama programme on Bright Tribe Trust and Adventure Learning Academies Trust; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The department has taken significant steps to further strengthen academies' accountability. This is reflected in the year on year updates to the Academies Financial Handbook which strengthen accountability and transparency in the sector.

The department introduced new rules in April 2019 for the declaration or approval of related party transactions. Our requirements are the most robust processes for related party transactions in any sector in the country.

The level of transparency for academies is higher than for local authority schools. The vast majority of trusts operate with a cumulative surplus and at the same time, over half a million pupils now study in 'good' or 'outstanding' sponsored academies that typically replaced underperforming local authority maintained schools.

■ Children in Care: Housing

Angela Rayner:

[\[261235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his policy is on (a) inspection and (b) regulation of semi-independent accommodation for looked-after 16 and 17 year-olds.

Angela Rayner:

[\[261236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of ensuring that the receiving authority has shared responsibility with the home authority for looked after children and young people who are placed out of area.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Ofsted is responsible for regulating and inspecting settings that provide both care and accommodation, such as children's homes (including secure children's homes) and fostering services, in which the majority of children in care are accommodated.

Where it is judged to be in the child's best interests, local authorities are also permitted to accommodate children in care and care leavers aged 16 or 17 in 'other accommodation'. This includes a range of settings such as semi-independent units, supported accommodation, hostels, foyers and supported lodgings. These settings provide accommodation with either on-site or floating support. 'Other accommodation' settings can provide a useful stepping-stone for young people who are increasingly able to make decisions for themselves but are not fully ready for the challenges of maintaining an independent tenancy. As these settings provide support, rather than care, Ofsted does not regulate them.

Where a local authority places a young person in unregulated provision, it must ensure that the accommodation is 'suitable'. Suitable accommodation is defined in regulations, which state that, with regard to settings used to accommodate children in care the responsible authority should ensure that:

- the accommodation is suitable for the child in light of their needs, including their health needs;
- it has satisfied itself as to the character and suitability of the landlord or other provider;
- the accommodation complies with health and safety requirements relating to rented accommodation; and

- it has taken into account the child's wishes, feelings and education, training or employment needs in respect of the responsible authority, so far as reasonably practicable.

Further advice on suitable accommodation is provided in the Children Act Volume 2 statutory guidance, a copy of which is available at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441643/Children_Act_Guidance_2015.pdf.

Where a local authority places a young person out of area in unregulated provision there are additional safeguards in place. These require the placing authority to inform the host authority of their intention to place a young person with a provider in the host authority's area, before confirming the placement. This provides an opportunity to check whether the host authority is aware of any concerns about the setting. This requirement is designed to ensure that poor quality providers are identified and exporting local authorities stop placing children in them.

It is a long-standing principle that the local authority that took the child into care is responsible for supporting them, whether they are placed in that authority or outside the area. This enables the local authority to take into account the full range of needs of the young person and to ensure that it meets all of those needs. Moving to a system of shared accountability could create confusion about who is responsible for providing which services and runs the risk that young people placed out of area are not properly supported by either local authority.

■ Educational Exchanges

Chi Onwurah:

[262364]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support his Department provides to EU universities wanting to send non-EU students to UK universities on exchange programmes.

Chris Skidmore:

The terms of international exchanges are the responsibility of individual higher education institutions. The main exchange programme supported through public funding in the UK is Erasmus+, a European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport, which provides funding for both EU and non-EU students to come to UK universities.

■ GCE A-level and GCSE

Chi Onwurah:

[262365]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number schools teaching GCSEs over three years; and what assessment he has made of the effect of this practice on A level subject choices.

Nick Gibb:

In the Department's Winter 2017 School Snapshot Survey, responses from secondary schools that teach Year 9 pupils were as follows: 35% of respondents

stated that all their Year 9 pupils would start studying for Key Stage 4 for all subjects, 28% stated that all their Year 9 pupils would start studying for Key Stage 4 for some subjects, 9% stated that some of their Year 9 pupils would start studying for Key Stage 4 for some subjects, 27% stated that none of their Year 9 pupils would start studying for Key Stage 4.

The snapshot survey report can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-snapshot-survey-winter-2017>.

The information requested is not held centrally regarding administrative data of when individual schools start teaching Key Stage 4. The Department has made no assessment of the effect of this practice on A level choices.

■ Home Education

Sir Edward Leigh:

[259857]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether (a) weekday evenings, (b) Saturdays and (c) Sundays are classified as normal school hours for the purposes of the Government's consultation entitled Children not in school: proposed legislation, launched on 2 April 2019.

Sir Edward Leigh:

[259858]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether (a) morning prayer meetings, (b) afternoon bible studies and (c) evening youth group meetings are included in the scope of education settings for the purposes of the Government's consultation entitled Children not in school: proposed legislation, launched on 2 April 2019.

Sir Edward Leigh:

[259859]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether (a) museums, (b) art galleries, (c) sports clubs, (d) National Trust and English Heritage properties, (e) leisure centres and (f) Parliament are included in the scope of education settings for the purposes of the Government's consultation entitled Children not in school: proposed legislation, launched on 2 April 2019.

Anne Milton:

[Holding answer 12 June 2019]: The purpose of the proposed register is to enable local authorities to track the main daytime weekday educational settings for children in scope, and to take action if it appears that a suitable education is not being received in usual school hours. This purpose would not be served by bringing into coverage the register activities carried on in places or at times not relevant to determining suitability, or by including places which are simply hosting educational visits rather than providing tuition and it is not our intention to do so.

Issues such as the definition of usual school hours, and what is a relevant setting for the purposes of providing local authorities with information about children on the proposed register of children not in school, will be considered based on responses received to the consultation, which closes on 24 June. Implementation issues such as

these are an important part of the consultation, information for which is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/children-not-in-school>.

■ Literacy

Chuka Umunna: [261226]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what comparative assessment his Department's has made of adult literacy levels in each of the last five years.

Anne Milton:

The department has not conducted an assessment of adult literacy levels within the past 5 years.

We participate in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Survey of Adult Skills to assess our performance in literacy, which was last conducted in England and 24 other countries in 2011-12. Findings from the survey can be found at: <http://www.oecd.org/skills/>.

The next Survey of Adult Skills will take place in 2021/22, with results available in 2023.

■ Music: Education

Conor McGinn: [262411]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to consult on a new National Plan for Music Education; and what the timetable is for the publication of that plan.

Nick Gibb:

The National Plan for Music Education sets out the Government's commitment to music and its desire that young musicians should have every opportunity to progress as far as their talents allow. The Department is reviewing the plan for 2020, and will be consulting widely as part of that refresh, working with music experts and teachers. Further details will be announced in due course.

Conor McGinn: [262412]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding has been allocated from the public purse to Music Education Hubs in local authority areas in (a) Merseyside, (b) the North West and (c) England and Wales since 2011.

Conor McGinn: [262462]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number and proportion of children in (a) primary and (b) post-primary schools in (i) St Helens, (ii) Merseyside, (iii) the North West and (iv) England and Wales that play musical instruments.

Nick Gibb:

The Government's music hub programme, which has been in place in England since 2012/13, is intended to ensure all children have access to a high-quality music education, including learning to play musical instruments and having the opportunity to play and sing in ensembles.

A breakdown of core funding allocations for the areas requested is provided in the tables below.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
St Helens Music Hub	£152,637	£196,771	£198,850	£258,548
Merseyside (excluding Wirral)	£1,155,039	£1,409,227	£1,186,226	£1,534,658
North West	£7,160,329	£8,970,650	£8,069,841	£10,402,339
England	£50,014,480	£62,628,293	£58,187,226	£75,000,000
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
St Helens Music Hub	£255,889	£252,312	£254,068	£255,072
Merseyside (excluding Wirral)	£1,520,913	£1,510,038	£1,517,280	£1,526,954
North West	£10,405,255	£10,395,497	£10,474,949	£10,560,167
England	£75,000,000	£75,000,000	£75,490,000	£75,840,004

The information requested is not held centrally regarding the total number or proportion of children who learn to play musical instruments at school. However, music is compulsory in the national curriculum for 5-14 year old pupils, and the national curriculum programmes of study say that children should have the opportunity to learn an instrument in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

The music education hubs do record the number of pupils receiving individual or group lessons through the hub lead organisation or hub partners. Figures for the areas requested, based on the Department's latest published music education hub data report in 2016/17 and broken down by level of study rather than age group, are included below.

	ENTRY	FOUNDATION	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	TOTAL
St Helens Music Hub	3,154	881	122	55	4,212
Merseyside (excl. Wirral)	28,143	3,892	816	337	33,188
North West	118,537	26,958	3,933	1,407	150,835
England	885,798	210,898	43,882	19,840	1,160,108

The music hubs programme is only funded by the Department for Education in England. The figures provided for Merseyside do not include the Wirral because the area is covered by the Musical Routes Hub, which also covers Cheshire West and Chester.

Conor McGinn:

[\[262461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on which dates the National Plan for Music Education monitoring board met since 2011; and if he will publish the minutes of those meetings.

Nick Gibb:

The National Plan for Music Education, published in 2011, sets out the Government's commitment to music and our desire that young musicians should have every opportunity to progress as far as their talents allow.

According to the Department's records, the National Plan monitoring board met on the following dates: Monday 23 January 2012; Monday 14 May 2012; Wednesday 17 October 2012, and Wednesday 28 February 2013.

Since then, officials from the Department have continued to meet regularly with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and Arts Council England, to monitor delivery of the Plan and its related programmes.

The Department has no plans to publish minutes of monitoring board meetings.

■ Post-18 Education and Funding Review

Wes Streeting:

[\[262443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will publish the analysis of graduates that will be net beneficiaries from the proposed changes under the post-18 education and funding review by income decile.

Chris Skidmore:

The independent panel report to the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding was published on 30 May 2019. The panel published a number of analytical annexes with their report, including the estimated impacts of some of their recommendations. The report and annexes can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-18-review-of-education-and-funding-independent-panel-report>.

The government has not yet taken decisions with regards to the recommendations put forward by the independent panel. The government will consider the panel's recommendations carefully and will conclude the review at the Spending Review.

■ Pupil Premium: Oxford

Anneliese Dodds:

[262434]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 15 March 2019 to Question 231556, what assessment he has made of changes in the level of take-up of pupil premium in Oxford in each year since 2015.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The department publishes information annually at national, local authority and parliamentary constituency levels on the number of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium in the current financial year, as a result of their having been registered for benefits-based free school meals at any point in the last six years. Figures for the financial years between 2015 and 2019 are available on GOV.UK via the following links:

2015-16: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-2015-to-2016-allocations>.

2016-17: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-conditions-of-grant-2016-to-2017>.

2017-18: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-conditions-of-grant-2017-to-2018>.

2018-19: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-conditions-of-grant-2018-to-2019>.

Statistics for Oxford East constituency show that between 2015-16 and 2018-19, the proportion of primary school pupils eligible for the pupil premium fell from 27.9% to 24.9%; and the proportion of eligible secondary school pupils fell from 40.3% to 36.7%.

Statistics for Oxford West and Abingdon constituency show the same pattern over this period: the proportion of primary school pupils eligible for the pupil premium fell from 14% to 12.5%, and the proportion of eligible secondary school pupils fell from 18.3% to 16.8%.

Statistics for Oxfordshire local authority show that between 2015-16 and 2018-19, the proportion of primary school pupils eligible for the pupil premium fell from 16.2% to 14.4%; and the proportion of eligible secondary school pupils fell from 19.5% to 18.1%.

Schools: Admissions**Chuka Umunna:****[261221]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many school-age children whose parents or guardians have requested a school place have been out of school for more than a term in the (a) UK and (b) London Borough of Lambeth in the (i) 2017-18 and (ii) 2018-19 academic years.

Nick Gibb:

The information requested is not held centrally. The Department does not hold data on the number of in-year admission applications made and the length of time a child has been out of school prior to their parents or guardians submitting an application.

Parents can apply for a place at any school, at any time. When parents apply for a school place outside of the normal admissions round, this is classed as an in-year admission. This process is managed at a local level by either the local authority, where it coordinates the in-year admissions for schools in their area, or directly by the admission authority of the school.

Schools: Uniforms**David T. C. Davies:****[260599]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to issue guidance to schools about the application of school uniform and other potentially gender distinctive policies.

Nick Gibb:

The Department publishes guidance to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the Act. This includes a duty on schools not to discriminate unlawfully due to the protected characteristics of sex and gender reassignment. As part of the Government's LGBT Action Plan, the Department has committed to updating this guidance and this will be published in due course. The LGBT Action Plan contains a commitment that the Government Equalities Office will work with the Equality and Human Rights Commission to publish comprehensive guidance for schools on how to support transgender pupils. The Equality Act guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>.

The Department already publishes guidance for schools on setting school uniform policies. The guidance sets out that a school should ensure that their school uniform policy is fair and reasonable for all its students and that policies should be flexible enough to accommodate the different needs of pupils.

In making decisions about school uniform policy, and all other school policies, a school must have regard to its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. The school uniform guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-uniform>.

■ Soft Drinks: Taxation

Siobhain McDonagh:

[\[261085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how the revenue from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy was spent in 2018-2019.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The revenue raised from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy has been allocated to the Department for Education by HM Treasury. Over 2018/19 the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund has spent £100 million. The PE and Sport Premium has spent £160 million. The Essential Life Skills programme has spent £13.85 million. Up to £26 million has been allocated to the National Schools Breakfast Programme over 2018-20.

■ Students: Disadvantaged

Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:

[\[262303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will change the measure of disadvantage used in the Student Premium to capture individual-level socio-economic disadvantage as recommended in the May 2019 Post-18 education and funding review: independent panel report.

Chris Skidmore:

The government will consider the Post-18 Education and Funding Review recommendations carefully and will conclude the review at the Spending Review. The government has not yet taken decisions with regards to the recommendations put forward. Access and successful participation remain a priority for this government and is enshrined in the Higher Education (HE) and Research Act (2017). Everyone with the ability to succeed in HE should have the opportunity, regardless of their background or where they grew up.

■ Students: Housing

Paul Girvan:

[\[262432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to make it mandatory for universities to provide 365-day access to accommodation for estranged students with independent status.

Chris Skidmore:

Everyone with the talent and potential to succeed in higher education (HE) should be able to access it, regardless of their background. The government is absolutely committed to widening access for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. We recognise that the barriers to access and success can be particularly high for some groups including students estranged from their families.

However, government plays no direct role in the provision of student residential accommodation, nor does it specifically fund universities to provide such

accommodation. As such, it is for HE providers to consider how they can best support all their students with their accommodation needs, including estranged students.

The Office for Students (OfS), the regulator for HE in England, encourages HE providers to sign the 'Stand Alone Pledge' and to consider a range of options around accommodation, including offering 365 day options to estranged students, or developing a summer accommodation bursary to act as a buffer for estranged students during the summer months. The government supports the OfS on this approach.

■ **Wakefield City Academies Trust: Deloitte and Touche**

Mary Creagh: [\[262315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much Wakefield City Academies Trust spent on services provided by Deloitte from 1 September 2017 to 31 May 2019.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Wakefield City Academies Trust (WCAT) has not paid Deloitte for services. From 1 September 2017 to 31 May 2019, the Education and Skills Funding Agency has paid £183,121 (excluding VAT) to Deloitte LLP under their contract for services in respect of WCAT's closure.

■ **Wakefield City Academies Trust: Staff**

Mary Creagh: [\[262316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) part-time and (b) full-time staff were employed by Wakefield City Academies Trust; and what the cost was of those staff, in each financial year from 1 September 2017 to 31 May 2019.

Mary Creagh: [\[262317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the value is of Wakefield City Academies Trust pension deficit.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The information requested is not held centrally. The number of part-time and full-time staff employed by Wakefield City Academies Trust (WCAT) and the cost of those staff are a matter for the Trust. Financial statements from the Trust are in the public domain.

The value of the WCAT pension deficit is also a matter for the Trust.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Living Wage**

Justin Madders: [\[261247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of organisations that hold contracts with his Department pay the National Living Wage.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The information requested is not held centrally and to obtain it would incur disproportionate costs.

■ Horse Racing: Animal Welfare**Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[260544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the Government has plans to bring forward legislation to ban the racing of pregnant mares.

Mr Roger Godsiff:[\[260545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with the British Horseracing Authority on the death of a pregnant mare on 21 May at Hexham racecourse; and if he will request a report from the course vet on the decision to allow the mare to race.

Mr Roger Godsiff:[\[260546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will ask the British Horseracing Authority to publish data on the number of pregnant mares that have raced in this country in (a) 2019 and (b) 2018.

David Rutley:

The Government is keen that the welfare needs of all racehorses are well met, both during their racing lives and afterwards. The British Horseracing Authority (BHA) is responsible for the safety of all racehorses and already have rules in place to regulate the welfare of all racehorses including that of pregnant mares.

Under these rules, the BHA must be notified within 25 days of a mare being found in foal. A mare that is in foal is permitted to run until 120 days of pregnancy. No evidence has been found to suggest that there is any detriment to the health and welfare of either the mares or foetuses during this period. According to BHA, in 2018 there were 91 runs by 33 pregnant mares on British racecourses, and there have been 38 runs by 18 pregnant mares to date in 2019. The Government understands that the recent fatality at Hexham racecourse is the only fatality from all pregnant mares notified to the BHA as having run within the last five years.

As such, the Government is satisfied that the BHA rules provide adequate protection for the welfare of pregnant mares in British horseracing and we do not plan to bring forward legislation to ban the racing of pregnant mares. However, both I and the BHA consider that more can be done to make horseracing safer which is why I have been holding regular discussions with the BHA about this. Most recently on the 14 May, I met with the BHA and stressed the need for the BHA to develop a robust action plan that will deliver tangible results. I intend to stay in regular contact with the industry to continue to press for improvements in racehorse welfare for all racehorses including pregnant mares.

■ Livestock Industry: Ammonia

Paul Farrelly:

[\[262269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to manage ammonia emissions from dairy and beef farming.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Clean Air Strategy was published in January 2019 and sets out the actions the Government will take to reduce ammonia emissions from farming in line with our clean air targets. Those that are relevant to dairy and beef farming include:

- Regulating to reduce emissions from urea based fertilisers.
- Introducing legislation requiring use of low emissions spreading techniques by 2025.
- Extending environmental permitting to the dairy and intensive beef sectors by 2025.
- Regulation to require slurry and digestate stores to be covered by 2027.

In addition to these regulatory measures, the Government is providing technical and financial support for farmers to change management practices and invest in equipment to reduce ammonia emissions. For example:

- The Government is delivering a £3 million programme of support to farmers over three years showcasing low emission spreading equipment and providing advice on practical ammonia mitigation methods.
- Last year we published a code of good agricultural practice which provides guidance to farmers on how to reduce ammonia emissions.
- We have supported farmers to invest in low emissions slurry spreading equipment and slurry store covers through grant schemes such as the Farming Ammonia Reduction Grant, the Countryside Stewardship scheme and the Countryside Productivity scheme. A second round of the Rural Development Programme for England's Countryside Productivity small grant scheme is expected to be launched very shortly.

■ Tree Planting: Urban Areas

Mary Creagh:

[\[262320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what body is responsible for monitoring progress against the 2017 Conservative manifesto commitment to plant 1 million trees in towns and cities; and (a) what progress his Department has made towards and (b) what his timescale is for achieving that commitment.

David Rutley:

DEFRA will track progress towards its 1 Million urban tree commitment, including by drawing on the Forestry Commission's wider monitoring of trees planted with central government support. An initial assessment of progress will be made in the spring of

2020, when the first Urban Tree Challenge Fund projects are up and running. The timescale for meeting the commitment is the end of the current Parliament in 2022.

■ **UK Wild Camp: Finance**

Mary Creagh:

[\[262319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much Government funding was provided to UK Wild Camp.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Defra provided £4,999 to the Lake District National Park Authority. Defra has not paid any money to UK Wild Camp.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ **British Indian Ocean Territory**

Patrick Grady:

[\[262406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the merits of the statement by the Prime Minister of Mauritius at the UN general Assembly on 22 May 2019 that the eviction of the population of the Chagos Islands by the UK Government was akin to a crime against humanity.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The UK does not accept this characterisation of events. Mauritius has not previously described matters in this way. Nor has this description been used by either the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in its Advisory Opinion, or the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) Tribunal members in the Award in respect of the circumstances of the removal of Chagossians.

The UK has expressed sincere regret about the manner in which Chagossians were removed from British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) in the 1960s and 1970s.

The Government has committed £40 million for Chagossians who are now living elsewhere – to provide employment support, English language training and projects to help preserve their heritage.

■ **China: Human Rights**

Jim Shannon:

[\[261229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Chinese counterpart on the protection of civil society groups and human rights in that country.

Mark Field:

We remain concerned about the lack of protection of civil society groups and the failure to respect civil and political rights in China. We currently have particular concerns relating to the persecution of certain ethnic minorities, including Uyghur

Muslims in Xinjiang; the use of the death penalty; and reductions in freedom of expression, association and assembly; and limits on freedom of religion or belief.

While I have not made recent representations to my Chinese counterpart on the protection of civil society groups and human rights in China, the British Government remains committed to raising these issues with the Chinese authorities, and will continue to do so. The Prime Minister spoke about human rights during her most recent visit to China. Additionally, the Foreign Secretary highlighted his concerns about human rights in China with State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi during his last visit to China in July 2018; I also did the same with my counterpart earlier that month.

Moreover, we highlight our human rights concerns publicly in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy – the 2019 report was published earlier this month. The United Kingdom has also taken regular action bilaterally and multilaterally, including in the March 2019 session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, to support civil society groups in the country. During China's last Universal Periodic Review, we asked China publically what steps it is taking to ensure these groups are protected from detention and harassment. The Foreign Secretary has also raised the cases of detained human rights lawyers, including Wang Quanzheng and Yu Wensheng, with Chinese Government Ministers.

Jim Shannon:

[261230]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the human rights situation in China in (a) 2019 comparative to (b) 1989.

Mark Field:

Over the past 30 years China has ratified a number of United Nations instruments relating to human rights. However we have serious concerns about the continued lack of respect for civil and political human rights in China, particularly relating to the rights of ethnic minorities; the death penalty; freedom of expression, association and assembly; and freedom of religion or belief.

The advent of advanced surveillance technologies has facilitated increased restrictions on the rights of citizens in China. This has been particularly noticeable in Xinjiang, where there are credible reports of over a million Uyghurs and other minorities being detained in so called "re-education camps". Reliable reporting suggests the region is subject to widespread surveillance, overt discriminatory profiling of members of ethnic minorities, and an omnipresent security apparatus. British diplomats most recently visited Xinjiang in May 2019 and their observations supported much of the recent open source reporting about the situation in the province.

We urge the Chinese authorities to safeguard their citizens' rights as enshrined in China's constitution and in international law.

■ Colombia: Embassies**Helen Goodman:**[\[262294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how much the UK embassy in Colombia spent on each of its projects and programmes in that country in 2018.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Colombia project and programme spend during 2018 is set out in the following table. The International Climate Fund and Newton Fund are owned by BEIS, who have contributed to this response.

PROGRAMME/FUND	2018 SPEND	NOTES
Conflict Security and Stability Fund	£11.5M	Two CSSF programmes active in Colombia in 2018.
Prosperity Fund	£8.75M	Two Prosperity Fund programmes active in Colombia in 2018.
Newton Fund	£4.0M	This is the 2018 country envelope budget figure, as full year spend figures are not yet available. For reference, 2017 spend was £4.6M. Newton Fund works in partnership with

PROGRAMME/FUND	2018 SPEND	NOTES
		Colombia on science and innovation projects.
International Climate Fund	£0.258M	Includes only spend directly attributable to Colombia. excludes ICF spent through multilateral funds and other global programmes. This is not directly attributable to individual countries, as money is pooled with other donor finance.
FCO Departmental Policy Programme (International Programme)	£0.82M	

■ Cyprus: Turkey

Shabana Mahmood:

[262337]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the Government's policy is on recent diplomatic relations between Turkey and Cyprus.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The UK is a strong supporter of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus issue. We have therefore been following recent developments in the Eastern Mediterranean with concern and would like to see the situation de-escalated. The UK has made it clear to Turkey, both privately and publicly, that we oppose their plans to

drill. We continue to recognise the sovereign right of the Republic of Cyprus to exploit the oil and gas in its internationally agreed Exclusive Economic Zone. We believe it is critical for stability in the Mediterranean, and for the integrity of the Rules-Based International System, that disputes such as this are resolved through dialogue and in accordance with international law. We will continue to work with the Republic of Cyprus, Turkey and the wider region to that end. We also continue to support a just and lasting settlement in Cyprus as the best means of resolving the difficulties caused by the division of the island.

■ Embassies

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[262276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will publish the political parties that UK Embassies and High Commissions overseas have a policy not to engage with.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The information is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Living Wage

Justin Madders:

[\[261246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what proportion of organisations that hold contracts with his Department pay the National Living Wage.

Sir Alan Duncan:

We oblige all of our Contractors to ensure they are compliant with the National Living Wage legislation for staff employed in the UK.

■ Honduras: Diplomatic Relations

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[261126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to enhance diplomatic relations between the UK and Honduras.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Bilateral relations between the UK and Honduras are positive. We engage regularly with the Honduran Government through our non-resident Embassy in Guatemala City, and with the Honduran Embassy in London. We are members of the G16 donors' group in Honduras. In Financial Year 2019/20 the Embassy will support projects in Honduras under the themes of promoting freedom of press, business and human rights. The UK has also recently agreed funding via the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to help combat the Illegal Wildlife Trade in the country.

■ Indonesia: Armed Forces**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[261140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he plans to make representations to his Indonesian counterpart on ending virginity tests for women applying to the Indonesian military.

Mark Field:

We are aware that the Indonesia military continues to conduct virginity tests on women recruits and have raised our concerns at senior levels with the Indonesian Government. This test is against our values and we will work closely with international partners to bring this practice to an end.

■ Kashmir: Riot Control Weapons**Holly Lynch:** [\[260686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Indian counterpart on the use of pellet guns in Indian Administered Kashmir.

Mark Field:

We welcome the reduction in the use of pellet guns since 2017 but are aware of, and concerned by, continued reports of their use and related injuries. We have raised this issue with the Indian Government. I discussed the situation in Kashmir with the Indian Foreign Secretary on my visit to India in March this year. The Permanent Under Secretary to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Sir Simon McDonald) also raised the situation in Kashmir with the Foreign Secretary during bilateral talks last month (May).

■ Lebanon: Refugees**Tommy Sheppard:** [\[262409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the Government of Lebanon on the proposed destruction of Syrian refugees' shelters in Aarsal, Lebanon.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

We support refugees remaining in host countries in the region, and support host countries to accommodate them. As part of this, we are working in partnership with host countries to help them to expand job and education opportunities for refugees in a way that will enable them to better support themselves and give them skills for the future. We are also helping host countries to cope with the impact of refugees on local services.

■ Mozambique: Diplomatic Relations

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[261139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he has taken to improve diplomatic relations with Mozambique.

Harriett Baldwin:

Bilateral relations between the UK and Mozambique are positive. I visited Mozambique from 1-3 February. The visit reinforced the UK and Mozambique's shared commitment to prosperity, Commonwealth and security. During the visit I announced the creation of three honorary prosperity consuls to help promote stronger business links. On security, the UK and Mozambique signed a Defence Cooperation memorandum of understanding (MOU) on 13 May, allowing us to work more closely on security matters. The UK was also a major contributor to international efforts in response to the two recent cyclones.

■ Pakistan: Christianity

Luke Hall:

[\[261522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to support Christians on death row in Pakistan on charges of blasphemy.

Mark Field:

It is the British Government's longstanding policy to oppose the death penalty in all circumstances and in all countries. In Pakistan, we remain deeply concerned by the misuse of blasphemy laws, and that religious minorities, including Christians, are disproportionately affected. The harsh penalties for blasphemy, including the death penalty, add to these concerns.

We regularly raise our human rights concerns with the Government of Pakistan at a senior level. My colleague, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, raised our concerns about Freedom of Religion or Belief and the protection of minority religious communities with Pakistan's Human Rights Minister in February 2019.

To ensure the United Kingdom is providing the right levels of support to persecuted Christians overseas, the Foreign Secretary asked the Bishop of Truro, Rt Revd. Philip Mounstephen, to carry out an independent review. The Bishop has submitted his interim report; with the full report due later this year.

■ Sudan: Politics and Government

Dr David Drew:

[\[262221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he plans to make to his Sudanese counterpart on the cases of (a) Mohamed Esmat, (b) Ismael Jalab and (c) Mubarak Ardol.

Harriett Baldwin:

The British Government condemns the arrest and detention of Mohamed Esmat, Ismael Jalab and Mubarak Ardol by the Sudanese security forces. We understand all have now been released. Violence must not be used, including against opponents. Sudanese people should not be faced with the threat of arbitrary detention or deportation. We consistently made clear to the former Government of Sudan our expectation that all detainees should be treated in accordance with international standards; we continue to call upon the Sudanese authorities to do so. On 6 June, I summoned the Sudanese Ambassador to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to express the grave concerns of the United Kingdom at the use of violence against civilians by the Sudanese authorities. Our Embassy in Khartoum continues to publicly and directly call on members of the Transitional Military Council to take the steps needed to improve the situation in Sudan, including the release of all political prisoners. We also engage regularly with civil society groups on the issue of detainee treatment.

Dame Louise Ellman:[\[262254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the Sudanese authorities on its response to pro-democracy protesters in that country; and if he will make a statement.

Harriett Baldwin:

As we made clear alongside Troika partners (US and Norway) on 4 June, we condemn the violent attacks by Sudanese security forces against peaceful protestors in Sudan last week, which left many civilians dead or injured. The Foreign Secretary reiterated this in his statement on 6 June, which also called for the full restoration of the internet and freedom of the media. The UK has called for the human rights of all Sudanese people to be respected and for the resumption of the political process with the protestors and the opposition, and an agreed transfer of power to a civilian-led government, as demanded by the Sudanese people, in a swift, orderly and peaceful manner. On 6 June, I summoned the Sudanese Ambassador to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to express the grave concerns of the United Kingdom at the use of violence against civilians by the Sudanese authorities.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Community Health Services****Jonathan Ashworth:**[\[260635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Planning Guidance commitments for 2019-20, what progress his Department has made on ensuring that (a) NHS England introduces more accurate assessment of needs for community health and mental health services and (b) the allocations formulae for those services are more responsive to areas of greatest health inequalities and unmet need; and if he will make a statement.

Stephen Hammond:

NHS England is responsible for decisions on the weighted capitation formula used to allocate resources between clinical commissioning groups. This process is independent of Government. NHS England takes advice from the Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation (ACRA), a group of academics and other experts.

As referenced in the National Health Service planning guidance, for the latest round of allocations covering the period 2019-20 to 2023-24, ACRA has made a number of recommendations that have been implemented.

Over the next five years, NHS England will use the health inequalities adjustments to the national funding formula to target additional funds at areas with high health inequalities.

As set out in the NHS Long Term Plan, an Implementation Framework will be published shortly which will set out the next steps the NHS will take to deliver the commitments and the national activity and support available to systems. The Implementation Framework will assist local health systems, who will build on the engagement already taking place across the country, in developing their strategic Long Term Plan implementation plan over the summer. NHS England and Improvement will then publish a national implementation plan in the autumn.

■ Dementia**Steve McCabe:**[\[262230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what comparative estimate his Department has made of the average cost of (a) caring for a dementia patient at home with care provided by family and (b) care provided in an in-patient setting.

Caroline Dineneage:

The Department has made no such comparative estimate.

The average cost of caring for a dementia patient at home by family is not collected or reported centrally.

Data on the average cost of care provided in an in-patient setting is not available in the format requested.

■ Doctors: Parental Leave**Paul Farrelly:**[\[260569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 30 May 2019 to Question 256964, what assessment he has made of the effect of NHS Employers' decision to make a contractual offer to (a) consultants and (b) associate specialist (SAS) doctors on (i) enhanced occupational rates of pay for shared parental leave contingent on contractual terms and (ii) redundancy terms and conditions.

Paul Farrelly:

[\[260570\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 30 May 2019 to Question 256964, what assessment he has made of whether there is an anomaly in the terms and conditions relating to NHS redundancy payments that fall within the non-pay schedules in the NHS Staff Handbook which govern equalities entitlements such as shared parental leave.

Paul Farrelly:

[\[260571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 30 May 2019 to Question 256964, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on (a) consultants and (b) associate doctors (SAS) doctors if contractual terms from the Agenda for Change staff handbook relating to redundancy payments were automatically applied to those doctors as a requirement to access the enhanced shared parental leave NHS entitlement implemented in April 2019.

Paul Farrelly:

[\[260572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 30 May 2019 to Question 256964, what the normal protocol is for proposing provisions agreed under the non-pay schedules in the NHS Handbook to (a) consultants and (b) associate doctors (SAS); and whether that protocol has been followed in relation to the enhanced shared parental leave NHS entitlement implemented in April 2019.

Stephen Hammond:

NHS Employers have proposed to medical trades unions the adoption of a set of common provisions set out in the NHS Handbook. These terms and conditions include, but are not limited to, shared parental leave and redundancy. Medical trades unions have been invited to discuss the proposed changes in partnership through the established negotiation forums for the consultant and specialty and associate specialists (SAS) doctor contracts.

This is the same protocol as has previously been followed for proposing provisions agreed under the non-pay schedules in the NHS Handbook to consultants and SAS doctors.

In 2015, the NHS Staff Council agreed new redundancy provisions for the NHS Terms and Conditions of Service. The British Medical Association (BMA), who are part of the Staff Council, did not agree to amend the national terms and conditions which their members are employed upon. This resulted in redundancy terms being different for doctors compared with other National Health Service staff. In 2016 the new contract for doctors and dentists in training introduced schedules which brought them in line with the shared provisions for other NHS staff, including redundancy. However, as it stands, other grades of doctors still have anomalous redundancy arrangements compared with the rest of the NHS workforce.

The effect of the proposal to accept a set of common provisions on consultants and SAS doctors will be that these non-pay elements of their terms and conditions will be

brought into line with doctors and dentists in training and Agenda for Change staff, bringing equity across staff groups.

The BMA have responded that whilst they are keen to incorporate the new provisions on shared parental leave, they do not wish to accept the set of common provisions from the NHS Handbook as they wish to maintain distinct terms and conditions of service for the groups they represent. The Government see no basis for maintaining separate terms and conditions for these groups of doctors in relation to the shared schedules.

■ Food: Allergies

Dr David Drew:

[\[259847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress his Department has made on the provision of detailed information to businesses, schools and other public institutions on food allergen advice.

Seema Kennedy:

As a non-Ministerial Government Department responsible for food safety and authenticity, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has worked extensively on the provision of food allergy advice for food businesses.

The FSA has worked with industry on best practice guidance and is updating the allergen section in Safer Food Better Business packs to ensure all information is consistent with the most up-to-date knowledge. Additionally, as part of the Easy to Ask campaign, the FSA worked very closely with a wide range of food businesses.

After a joint public consultation with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the FSA has recently recommended to Ministers full ingredient listing for food offered prepacked for direct sale. Any changes will necessitate working on guidance with industry so that businesses are clear on their responsibilities. Further work on allergy awareness is also planned.

■ General Practitioners

Dr David Drew:

[\[262222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many GP practices consist of (a) one, (b) two, (c) three to five, (d) six to ten, (d) 11-15, (e) 16 - 20 and (f) more than 20 GPs in each Clinical Commissioning Group area.

Seema Kennedy:

The data requested is available in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. All GPs at a GP practice in each CCG, March 2019 [262222 table.docx]

Dr David Drew:

[\[262223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many GPs have been (a) permanently employed and (b) employed as locums for a continuous period of more than six months in each Clinical Commissioning Group area.

Seema Kennedy:

The data requested is available in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. GPs employed by a practice for 6+month, March 2019 [262223 Length of Employment for Permanent and Locum GPs TABLE.docx]

■ **Health Services: Standards**

Barbara Keeley:

[\[262331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many placements NHS England has commissioned at St Andrew's in-patient Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service in Northampton in the latest period for which figures are available.

Barbara Keeley:

[\[262332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what NHS England's policy is on moving patients in NHS commissioned placements when the setting they are in receives a rating of Inadequate from the Care Quality Commission.

Barbara Keeley:

[\[262333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance NHS England has given to (a) clinical commissioning groups and (b) other NHS bodies on moving patients in NHS commissioned placements when the setting they are in receives a rating of Inadequate from the Care Quality Commission.

Barbara Keeley:

[\[262334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many placements in Assessment and Treatment Units NHS England have commissioned for patients under the age of 18 in each of the past 3 years.

Barbara Keeley:

[\[262335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many placements in in-patient mental health hospitals for children and young people under the age of 18 with (a) autism, (b) a learning disability and (c) a mental health condition NHS England has commissioned in each of the past 3 years.

Caroline Dinanage:

In 2018/19, NHS England commissioned 57 placements at St Andrew's in-patient Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in Northampton. This is the total number of admissions during the period. Patients may have been admitted more than once during the same period, each admission will be counted separately.

The information requested on placements in different inpatient settings is either not available in the format requested or not held centrally.

The total number of placements in CAMHS Tier 4 in-patient units commissioned by NHS England in each of the past three years is set out in the following table. These figures represent admissions for patients under the age of 18.

YEAR	COMMISSIONED PLACEMENTS
2016/17	4,530
2017/18	4,604
2018/19	4,635

Whilst the Assuring Transformation data set records the number of people with learning disabilities and/or autism who are inpatient settings, we are unable to provide the information requested as such information can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

There are a number of steps that NHS England may take following any Care Quality Commission (CQC) visit if an inadequate rating is received. A cross stakeholder quality risk profile (QRP) assessment will be undertaken where relevant parties, including the CQC, NHS England and NHS Improvement, the provider and clinical commissioning group (CCG) would meet to discuss the risks via an assessment tool and discuss them to identify any required action as a consequence.

As part of that process, there would be clear discussion regarding the areas that led to inadequate ratings and how they relate to patients in the care of that specific facility. A decision would then be taken as to whether there is enough assurance that current actions will address the concerns or whether the level of assurance is such that escalation to a single item quality surveillance group (QSG) or a risk summit with the provider is required.

As part of this process, there would be discussions around actions required and whether it would be appropriate to provide additional support to facilities in terms of additional staff and specialist staff. An individual assessment would be undertaken of patients including their capacity and ability to consent to any continuation of their care or movement of care.

If it is determined that the appropriate action is to close the inpatient facility and any patient is to be moved, there would be whole system coordination by NHS England, CCGs, the CQC and the provider, whereby information from the individual risk assessment would inform prioritisation for the move. In terms of guidance given to other stakeholders on these processes there is a Standard Operating Procedure along with guidance on risk summits and QSGs. These are available at the following links:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/risk-summit-guidance-july-2017.pdf>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/quality-surveillance-groups-guidance-july-2017.pdf>

■ Health: Disadvantaged

Jonathan Ashworth:

[260636]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Planning Guidance commitments for 2019-20, what progress his Department has made on ensuring that local health systems set out how they will reduce health inequalities by (a) 2023-24 and (b) 2028-29; and if he will make a statement.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

As set out in the NHS Long Term Plan, an Implementation Framework will be published shortly which will set out the next steps the National Health Service will take to deliver the commitments and the national activity and support available to systems. The Implementation Framework will assist local health systems, who will build on the engagement already taking place across the country, in developing their strategic Long Term Plan implementation plan over the summer. NHS England and Improvement will then publish a national implementation plan in the autumn.

The Department wants everyone to have the same opportunity for a long, healthy life. The Ageing Society Grand Challenge sets out an ambition to ensure that people can enjoy five extra healthy, independent years of life by 2035 while narrowing the gap between the richest and poorest. This underpins the Department's vision for putting prevention at the heart of the nation's health.

■ Integrated Care Systems

Karin Smyth:

[260678]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure operational changes in his Department support the approach of integrated care systems.

Stephen Hammond:

The Department will continue to work with NHS England and NHS Improvement to support their vision of integrated care systems covering the whole of England by April 2021, as set out in the NHS Long Term Plan.

■ Maternity Services

Jonathan Ashworth:

[260638]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Planning Guidance commitments for 2019-20, what progress his Department has made on rolling out the Saving Babies Lives Care Bundle across every maternity unit in England in 2019; and if he will make a statement.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The first version of the Saving Babies' Lives Care Bundle has been rolled out and every maternity trust in England has implemented one or more of its four elements. At least 45% of trusts are fully implementing all requirements.

Jonathan Ashworth:[\[260640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Planning Guidance commitments for 2019-20, what progress his Department has made on ensuring that every NHS trust with a maternity service takes part in the National Maternal and Neonatal Health Safety Collaborative; and if he will make a statement.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Maternal and Neonatal Health Safety Collaborative is a three-year programme. NHS England and NHS Improvement advise that every trust in England with a maternity unit has been or is currently taking part in the programme.

■ Maternity Services: Medical Records**Jonathan Ashworth:**[\[260644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Planning Guidance commitments for 2019-20, what progress his Department has made on offering maternity digital care records to 20,000 eligible women in 20 accelerator sites across England rising to 100,000 eligible women by the end of 2019-20; and if he will make a statement.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

So far, 73,000 women have been offered access to digital maternity care records across 15 live pilot sites. The National Health Service is on track to meet the commitment of 100,000 women by the end of 2019-20.

■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People**Mr Virendra Sharma:**[\[262336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase the availability of support for children and young people with mental health needs who are not receiving statutory mental health treatment.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Our Green Paper 'Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: a green paper' sets out how we plan to increase the availability of support for children and young people, by reaching them through school or college. There are three key proposals:

- incentivising every school or college to identify and train a senior mental health lead;
- creating new mental health support teams in and near schools and colleges; and

- piloting a four-week waiting time to ensure swifter access to specialist NHS mental health services for those who need it.

In December 2018 we announced the first 25 'trailblazer' sites that will implement the proposals to provide the new schools/college-based service, 12 of which will also pilot a four-week waiting time. This first wave of mental health support teams will be fully operational by the end of 2019, reaching over 1,000 schools and colleges. We are currently in the process of selecting sites for the 2019/20 wave of trailblazers.

Through the NHS Long Term Plan the National Health Service has set a goal of an extra 345,000 children and young people, aged 0-25, receiving support via NHS-funded mental health services by 2023/24.

■ Midwives

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[260643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Planning Guidance commitments for 2019-20, what progress his Department has made on developing and launching continuity of carer teams with the aim that 20 per cent of pregnant women will be offered the opportunity to have the same midwife caring for them throughout their pregnancy, during birth and postnatally in 2019; and if he will make a statement.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

NHS England and NHS Improvement provided a range of support for Local Maternity Systems in 2018-19 to help them establish continuity of carer models of maternity care across England. In response, in March 2019 all Local Maternity Systems reported offering continuity of carer to pregnant women. Teams and models of care vary, with some targeting medical and social complexity, others specific deprived areas, and others specific birth settings.

■ Multiple Sclerosis: Nurses

Lyn Brown:

[\[260607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, (a) how many and (b) what proportion of NHS Trusts in (i) London and (ii) the rest of England employ at least one dedicated specialist MS nurse.

Stephen Hammond:

The Department does not hold the information requested as to how many specialist multiple sclerosis nurses are employed in the National Health Service.

NHS Digital provides information on the number of nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff employed in the NHS in England but it does not separately identify specialist nurses such as multiple sclerosis nurses.

■ NHS: Risk Assessment

Karin Smyth:

[260672]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the risk register for the NHS Ten Year Plan.

Stephen Hammond:

Any risks associated with implementation of the NHS Long Term Plan will be captured, agreed and managed as part of NHS England and NHS Improvement's normal business operations and overarching risk register. Therefore, we do not have, or plan to create, a specific risk register for the Long Term Plan.

■ Nurses: Training

Dr David Drew:

[262214]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment his Department has made of the effect of the removal of bursaries for undergraduate nurses on the level of nursing places filled in each institution that provides such places.

Stephen Hammond:

The education funding reforms, which came into force in 2017, unlocked the cap which constrained the number of pre-registration nursing, midwifery and allied health profession training places allowing more students to gain access to nurse degree training courses.

Health Education Institutes (HEIs) are autonomous private institutions and are responsible for setting the number of training places they offer. It is for HEIs to work as part of their local health economy to secure training places.

The Department does not hold information on the level of pre-registration undergraduate nursing places filled at individual HEIs, compared with the number of places they made available in the given period.

The Office for Students publishes annual data on the number of entrants onto pre-registration nursing undergraduate nursing courses broken down by individual HEIs. Higher Education Students Early Statistics have published the 2018/19 data, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-collection/get-the-heses-and-heifes-data/>

The Department monitors student recruitment at a national level. The latest published data from the University and Colleges Admissions Service from February 2019 shows that there has been a 4.5% increase in applicants to nursing or midwifery courses at English universities when compared to this time last year in 2018. However, we know that there is further work to do with the education and healthcare sector to ensure that students continue to apply for these places.

The NHS Long Term Plan set out the next step in our mission to make the National Health Service a world class employer and deliver the nursing workforce the NHS

needs. To deliver on these commitments the NHS has published on 3 June 2019 an interim People Plan that sets out the action we will take now and over the long term to meet the challenges of nursing supply, including nursing undergraduate supply.

We recognise, however, that there is more to do which is why the NHS will publish a final People Plan soon after the conclusion of the Spending Review.

■ Social Services: Sick Leave

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[262235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of days taken as sick leave by care workers who were attacked by patients in 2017-18.

Caroline Dineneage:

Skills for Care estimate that care workers took 5.2 days off sick on average in 2017/18. The Department does not hold the reasons for days being taken off sick.

Adult social care employers have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for service users and employees and to protect people, as far as is reasonable, from violence and aggression at work. No member of staff should be expected to endure abuse or suffer fear from physical attack or threat as part of their job.

The Department's delivery partner, Skills for Care, has worked with adult social care employers to ensure they are able to minimise the risk to their workforce by effectively training and developing their staff to be able to support people through positive behaviour support. In addition, Skills for Care has published a range of guidance and resources to support social care organisations in managing the risks arising from violence and aggression.

HOME OFFICE

■ Alcoholic Drinks: Crime

Fiona Bruce:

[\[262342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps he is taking to reduce alcohol-related crime.

Victoria Atkins:

Since 2009/10, the annual number of alcohol-related violent incidents has significantly declined – it is now down by 44%. We have seen declines in the number of Penalty Notices for Disorder issued for being drunk and disorderly, and fewer adults perceive people being drunk or rowdy in their area as a problem than ten years ago.

We continue to take action to improve local intelligence, establish effective local partnerships and equip police and local authorities with the right powers to take effective action against alcohol-related crime and harms in the night time economy. Current action to tackle alcohol-related harms includes building on our Local Alcohol

Action Area programme, considering how to tackle drunk and disorderly passengers at airports, and identifying new work to address alcohol related domestic abuse and sexual violence.

■ Antisocial Behaviour

Frank Field:

[\[262249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 6 June 2019 to Question 259015, if he will centrally collate the data on anti-social behaviour case review requests.

Frank Field:

[\[262250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 6 June 2019 to Question 259015, Antisocial Behaviour, what recent assessment he has made of the importance of anti-social behaviour case reviews to reducing levels of anti-social behaviour.

Victoria Atkins:

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ("the 2014 Act") introduced the anti-social behaviour (ASB) Case Review, also referred to as the 'Community Trigger', in order to enhance local accountability. This is an important measure which gives victims of persistent ASB the ability to request a formal case review by the relevant bodies where a locally defined threshold is met.

The 2014 Act requires the relevant bodies in a local government area to publish data on the ASB Case Review. Requiring local areas to provide this information to central Government would place additional burdens on the police, local authorities and other local agencies.

Use of the ASB Case Review and other ASB powers is kept under review through the Home Office's Anti-social Behaviour Strategic Board which brings together a range of partners and representatives from key agencies and Government departments.

■ Asylum: Translation Services

Chris Stephens:

[\[262414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what criteria his Department uses when assessing asylum applications in cases where a substantive interview with an applicant has not been able to take place due to the unavailability of a translator for that interview.

Caroline Nokes:

Where a translator is unavailable to carry out a substantive asylum interview, the Home Office will look to rebook the interview when a translator for the preferred language is next available.

On the rare occasion where we are unable to source a translator to carry out the substantive asylum interview, we would seek to use a detailed witness statement provided by the applicant, to decide the asylum claim.

The Home Office will continue to explore and act upon potential interpreter recruitment avenues, both regionally and nationally, for all languages. Alongside the ongoing recruitment campaign, we will continue to work with stakeholders in assessing demand and have in place contingencies to ensure the available national resource is utilised as effectively as possible.

■ **Deportation: Democratic Republic of Congo**

Paul Blomfield: [\[262356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of whether it is safe to deport nationals of the Democratic Republic of Congo to that country.

Paul Blomfield: [\[262357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the safety of nationals of the Democratic Republic of Congo who are returned to that country.

Paul Blomfield: [\[262358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions his officials have had with officials in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on issuing advice on the safety of returning nationals of the Democratic Republic of Congo to that country.

Caroline Nokes:

We only return those who are without a legal right to remain in the UK, including foreign national offenders, when we and, where the individual has exercised a right of appeal, the courts deem it is safe to do so, on a case by case basis.

We are currently reviewing our assessment of risk faced by rejected asylum seekers and foreign national offenders on return to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). An updated country policy and information note setting out our position will be published in due course. The Home Office has regular discussions with the Foreign Office on a range of issues and has on a number of occasions discussed the subject of returns to the DRC to establish as full an assessment of the situation as possible.

■ **Domestic Abuse: Alcoholic Drinks**

Fiona Bruce: [\[262343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps he is taking to tackle domestic abuse of (a) adults and (b) children that is linked to excessive alcohol consumption.

Victoria Atkins:

We will deliver the commitments we made to tackle alcohol in relation to domestic abuse in our response to the Domestic Abuse Consultation published in January 2019.

We have already taken action to tackle alcohol as a contributory risk factor in some cases of domestic abuse by developing training for frontline professionals and will roll this out over the summer. We will take action on alcohol and sexual violence, and trial a third phase of our successful Local Alcohol Action Areas programme to continue our targeted support for local areas.

The Department of Health and Social Care is investing £6million in a three year programme to improve outcomes for children with alcohol dependent parents.

■ Hate Crime

Chris Ruane:

[262259]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate he has made of the number of recorded hate crimes by each protected characteristic defined in the Equality Act 2010 in each year since 2010.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales since 2011/12 in Table 2 of the Hate Crime data tables available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2017-to-2018>. Such data was not collected prior to 2011/12 and data for 2018/19 are due to be published later this year.

■ Home Office Response to the Mandating of DNA Evidence for Immigration Purposes Independent Review

Afzal Khan:

[262455]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he plans to publish on his Department's website (a) the Darra Singh review of the Home Office response to the mandating of DNA for immigration purposes and (b) his Department's response to that review.

Caroline Nokes:

The Darra Singh Review and the Home Office Response to his review are published on: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-dna-evidence-in-immigration-applications>

■ Immigrants: Domestic Abuse

Dawn Butler:

[262299]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that adequate safeguards will be included in the Domestic Abuse Bill to protect migrant survivors of domestic abuse.

Caroline Nokes:

This Government is committed to tackling domestic abuse against all women, regardless of their background or nationality and that is why we published a draft

Domestic Abuse Bill. This draft Bill is currently undergoing scrutiny by a Joint Parliamentary Committee.

For victims of domestic abuse who are married, or are partners of, British or settled sponsors, there is the option of applying for immediate crisis support under the Destitute Domestic Violence Concession (DDVC).

In the Government's response to its consultation on Domestic Abuse we committed to a number of further non-legislative measures in respect of migrant victims of domestic abuse. This included a commitment to consider widening the cohort of individuals eligible under the DDVC. The response is accessible via the following link: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/772202/CCS1218158068-Web_Accessible.pdf

We will carefully consider recommendations from the Joint Committee in respect of migrant women and look forward to seeing the report.

■ Immigration: Biometrics

John Spellar:

[262238]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 4 June 2017 to Question 257442 on Biometrics: Applications, what the timeframe is for (a) reviewing SSL's performance against its key performance indicators and (b) reporting that performance.

Caroline Nokes:

UKVI regularly monitor Sopra Steria Limited's (SSL) performance against set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Sopra Steria are required, under the contract, to report on their performance on a monthly basis. These performance reports are reviewed by UKVI and form the basis of monthly performance conversations between the two parties. The information within the reports is used to drive improvements to service standards in line with contractual requirements. . SSL's performance against these KPIs is commercially sensitive and therefore we are unable to disclose any detailed information.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals

Paul Blomfield:

[261211]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 20 May 2019 to Question 254186 and with reference to page 9 of the Memorandum of Understanding between his Department and the Department for Work and Pensions and to pages 12-13 of the Memorandum of Understanding between his Department and HMRC, for what reasons automated residency checks will not check applicants' records on working tax credit and child tax credit.

Caroline Nokes:

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs advice indicated that receipt of working tax credit and child tax credit are not currently available as a data set that we can interrogate through the automated checks.

■ Marriage Certificates

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:

[\[260089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the timeframe is for the implementation of the Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc) Act 2019 and the provision in that Act that allows for the names of both parents of a couple to be included on marriage certificates.

Caroline Nokes:

The Home Office is currently working on implementation plans to introduce the provisions in the Act. This will facilitate an update of the marriage entry to include the names of both parents of a couple.

The Act also provides for civil partnership to be extended to opposite-sex couples which must be implemented no later than 31 December 2019. An implementation date for each of these provisions will be announced in due course.

■ Offences: South Yorkshire

Angela Smith:

[\[261169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps he is taking to reduce the length of time it takes to charge a person after an offence has taken place within the constabulary area of South Yorkshire.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The effective management of investigations, including the prompt communication of their outcomes, is an operational matter for the police.

After an arrest, the police need to carry out further investigations before a charge is brought then the police may release a suspect on pre-charge bail or release them under investigation (RUI).

The National Police Chief's Council has recently published guidance on the use of pre-charge bail and RUI. The guidance sets out the steps the police should take to make sure the prompt completion of their investigations, whether suspects are released with or without pre-charge bail. The Home Office will continue to support the police in their efforts to prevent and investigate crimes, including by providing the biggest increase in police funding since 2010.

■ Police: Finance

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[261192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the opportunities for the police to seek financial redress when police officers are called to attend civil matters.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Government believes in local policing, accountable to local communities. Decisions on financial redress for police forces and police staff are a matter for individual police forces for which the Home Office do not hold information.

■ Police: Spit Guards**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[261190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance has been published for police services on the use of spit guards for arrested persons.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The use of spit and bite guards, as with any other use of restraint or force, is an operational policing matter. The Home Office does not, therefore, issue guidance on the use of the equipment.

However, the Home Secretary has been clear that being spat at is a totally unacceptable form of assault and police officers should have the equipment necessary to ensure they are protected as they perform their duties.

■ Refugees: Children**Stella Creasy:**[\[262362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the accuracy of statements reportedly made by the French authorities that the nine unaccompanied children who are being processed under the Dubs scheme will be the last children to be processed before the allocation for the Dubs scheme is reached.

Caroline Nokes:

We continue to work closely with participating States – France, Greece and Italy - to fulfil our commitments under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016. Over 220 children were transferred to the UK under section 67 when the Calais camp was cleared in late 2016.

The UK asked France to refer a further 100 unaccompanied children to the UK for transfer under section 67. Since then we have been making further progress with participating States to refer and transfer more eligible children to move closer to fulfilling the commitment to transfer 480 children.

We will publish further data on the transfers once we have fulfilled our commitments.

■ UK Border Force: Northern Ireland**Mr Gregory Campbell:**[\[262266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people are employed (a) full-time and (b) part-time by Border Force in Northern Ireland.

Caroline Nokes:

Border Force does not release location specific statistics on the deployment of its resources as doing so could compromise border security.

The latest published staffing figures for Border Force can be found in the Home Office Annual Report for 2018– 19 on page 85 at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-office-annual-report-and-accounts-2018-to-2019>

■ Visas

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[262234]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many academics have been refused visas to travel to the UK for work-related purposes by his Department in each of the last five years.

Caroline Nokes:

UKVI does not publish statistics categorised by an applicant's profession or in this level of detail with regard to the purpose of visit.

The available statistics on grants and refusals by entry clearance visa category, including work and visitor visa routes, are published in the quarterly Immigration Statistics Visas volume 1 table vi_01_q, latest edition at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2019/list-of-tables#visas>

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

■ Parliamentary Estate: Poultry Meat

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[263055]

To ask the right hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington, representing the House of Commons Commission, whether all chicken served on the Parliamentary estate is free range.

Tom Brake:

None of our chicken is free range. Unless especially requested for an event, all standard poultry for cafeterias and restaurants is British Red Tractor farm assured but not free range.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Buildings: Insulation

Mr Steve Reed:

[262394]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether ThermoWood class D cladding is permitted on buildings below 18 metres in height.

Kit Malthouse:

The Building Regulations guidance indicates that timber cladding at least 9mm thick may be used in certain circumstances. But this must be considered in the context of

Requirement B4 of Schedule 1 of the Regulations , which applies to all buildings regardless of height, that the external walls of buildings must adequately resist the spread of fire over the walls.

Mr Steve Reed:

[262395]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department commissioned the Building Research Establishment to carry out any tests on High Pressure Laminate cladding prior to June 2017.

Kit Malthouse:

The Department did not commission the Building Research Establishment to carry out any tests on High Pressure Laminate cladding prior to June 2017.

■ **Council Tax: Arrears**

Yvonne Fovargue:

[263136]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the increase in council tax arrears since 2014.

Rishi Sunak:

Council tax arrears reported by local authorities in England for 2014-15 to 2017-18 can be found in Table 7 of the 'Collection rates for Council Tax and non-domestic rates in England' statistical release. The link to the latest table is

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/743738/Table_7_2017-18_revised.xlsx.

■ **Council Tax: Debt Collection**

Bambos Charalambous:

[261538]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has plans to widen his Department's review into council tax collection to include how local authorities collect council tax debt under The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992.

Bambos Charalambous:

[261539]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has plans to amend The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 to prevent people becoming liable for their full annual council tax bill after missing one payment.

Rishi Sunak:

My Department is engaging with local authorities and the debt advice sector to improve council tax collection, and to ensure council tax debt collection practices are fair, efficient and compassionate to those in genuine hardship. Following those discussions, we intend to publish updated guidance on good collection practices, before considering the scope for further reforms.

■ Grenfell Tower: Fires

Catherine West:

[261282]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent discussions he has had with community groups affected by the Grenfell Tower fire on the potential reform of fire safety legislation.

Kit Malthouse:

The Minister of State for Housing has regular meetings with Grenfell United and met with them to seek the group's views on the proposals set out in our consultation *Building a safer future: proposals for reform of the building safety regulatory system*, which was published on 6 June.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/building-a-safer-future-proposals-for-reform-of-the-building-safety-regulatory-system>

There will be further engagement with Grenfell United during the consultation period.

More generally, the Government is committed to putting residents at the heart of the new, stronger system of building safety for high-rise residential buildings.

We want residents to:

- Be empowered to hold their buildings' owners to account;
- Have a strong voice in decision-making about the safety of their building;
- Be listened to straight away when they have safety concerns.

To bring about this culture change, we are consulting on proposals to give residents:

- more access to safety information about their buildings;
- more involvement in decisions about safety in their buildings through engagement with their building safety managers; and
- a quick, clear route to escalate safety concerns.

These proposals have been shaped by our Residents' Reference Panel members, who are residents of high-rise buildings, and our call for evidence, which has helped us to identify best practice in how residents and their landlords, or their building managers, can work together to make sure that their buildings are safe.

We want to hear residents' views on these proposals, and we will be engaging with people who live in high-rise residential buildings over the summer to gather feedback as part of the consultation.

Catherine West:

[261283]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many survivors of the Grenfell Tower fire are waiting for permanent housing.

Kit Malthouse:

According to the latest data from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council (RBKC), as of 6 June 2019, of the 201 households from Grenfell Tower and

Walk that require rehousing, there are currently 14 households in temporary accommodation, and 3 households in emergency accommodation that have not yet moved into permanent accommodation. Of these 17 households, 7 have not yet accepted an offer of permanent accommodation. RBKC reports that a suitable property has been reserved for each household. We continue to provide support and challenge to RBKC to ensure every survivor of the Grenfell fire is able to find a home that meets their long-term needs as soon as possible.

■ **Help to Buy Scheme: Wolverhampton North East**

Emma Reynolds:

[262361]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of homes purchased using the Help to Buy equity loan scheme in Wolverhampton North East constituency in each year since that policy was introduced.

Kit Malthouse:

Data on Help to Buy: Equity Loan is not available by constituency but is published by local authority.

For Wolverhampton, total completions from April 2013 to December 2018 were 1,116.

Further detail is in Table 1 of the official quarterly statistics to end December 2018 (Wolverhampton is at line 138):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/help-to-buy-equity-loan-scheme-statistics-april-2013-to-31-december-2018>

Totals by year for Wolverhampton were:

2013 - 99

2014 - 196

2015 - 188

2016 - 218

2017 - 203

2018 - 212

■ **Housing: Fire Extinguishers**

Catherine West:

[261284]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent steps his Department is taking to encourage the retro-fitting of sprinklers in housing developments.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government has been clear that building owners must ensure that their buildings are safe. We are consulting on proposals to introduce a safety case approach for

multi-occupied residential buildings of 18 metres or more. A safety case approach will require that the person responsible for the building will need to demonstrate to a regulator that they understand and are managing the fire and structural risks in their building adequately. Installing a sprinkler system may be one way of managing fire risks.

We also specifically asked for views on the provision of sprinklers in new buildings when we undertook our recent call for evidence ahead of a technical review of the Building Regulations' fire safety guidance. The call for evidence closed on 15 March and we are currently analysing the responses.

■ Local Government Finance

Stephen McPartland:

[\[261216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what progress he has made on encouraging local authorities to invest more of their reserves in local communities.

Rishi Sunak:

Councils are free to determine the level of reserves they hold and are accountable to their electorate for the decisions they make. No powers exist to redistribute/reclaim this resource. All local authorities are required to hold sufficient unallocated reserves to meet unforecastable financial risks. Many council's reserves are earmarked for particular purposes. Earmarked reserves are funds that are spent at the discretion of the local authority.

■ Multiple Occupation: Licensing

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

[\[261293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what fees are being charged for HMO Licences by each Council.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

The Department does not hold information on HMO licence fees being charged by each local authority in England. We would expect details of licence fees to be readily available on local authority websites or upon request.

■ Sleeping Rough

Chuka Umunna:

[\[261220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what comparative estimate he has made of the number of people sleeping rough in the (a) UK and (b) London Borough of Lambeth in (i) the most recent period for which figures are available and (ii) 2010; and what information his Department holds on which area of the UK has the highest number of people sleeping rough.

Mrs Heather Wheeler:

MHCLG does not provide an estimate of the number of people sleeping rough across the whole of the UK.

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

These annual single night snapshots of the number of people sleeping rough are provided by all local authority areas in England from 2010 onwards. In Lambeth, there were 50 people sleeping rough on a single night in autumn 2018. This was up 37 people or 285 per cent from the 2010 total of 13 people. The area with the highest number of people sleeping rough on a single night in Autumn 2018 was Westminster with 306 people sleeping rough.

These statistics are available at the following link:

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

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

■ UK Shared Prosperity Fund**Chris Ruane:****[262260]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of implications for his policies on the design of the Shared Prosperity Fund of the report entitled, Communities in Charge, published by Locality.

Jake Berry:

Following our departure from the European Union, the Government will create the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support those parts of our country whose economies are furthest behind.

Decisions on the quantum of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund are due to be taken following Spending Review.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Benin: Animal Products

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[261136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether he plans to support the International Fund for Animal Welfare's initiative to provide detection dogs in Benin which can sniff out shipments of animal parts, in order to disrupt trafficking networks.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Government is committed to tackling the illegal wildlife trade (IWT) and helping to conserve nature and wildlife. Strengthening law enforcement is a key strand of our work. It is one of the topics on which organisations, such as the International Fund for Animal Welfare, can bid for funding from the Government's Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund. Currently through the IWT Fund and with some additional funding from Defra, the UK is funding Interpol and the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime, which is an international initiative to help countries strengthen their criminal justice systems and enhance enforcement. The UK has committed up to £4 million to this initiative.

■ Department for International Development: Living Wage

Justin Madders:

[\[261249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what proportion of organisations that hold contracts with his Department pay the National Living Wage.

Harriett Baldwin:

DFID does not have any employees who are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. Nor does DFID have any workers in agencies that report to DFID who are paid less than the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

DFID encourages outsource partners to pay the Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. None of DFID's contracted workers are paid less than the National Living Wage.

■ Developing Countries: Tuberculosis

Nic Dakin:

[\[261205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of strengthening TB prevention, diagnosis and treatment on (a) rates of antimicrobial resistance and (b) health systems around the world.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK Government recognises that strengthening TB prevention, diagnosis and treatment contributes to preventing antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and strengthening health systems.

Drug-resistant TB currently accounts for one-third of all deaths from AMR. The UK is leading work on development of new antibiotics and treatment combinations and new ways to rapidly test for drug resistance. DFID's support to the Global Fund helps to ensure rapid rollout of new tools. For example, UK funding has helped to roll out a new multi-drug-resistant TB treatment regimen in 30 countries where the Global Fund operates.

Strengthening TB prevention, diagnosis and treatment also contributes to strengthening broader health systems. The UK's investment in the Global Fund is building national capability to deliver quality health services and contributing to Universal Health Coverage and to ensuring that no country and no person is left behind.

■ Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Nic Dakin:

[\[261203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment he has made of whether the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria has adequate resources to successfully treat 40 million people with TB by 2022, as set out in the commitments of the UN High-Level Meeting on TB; and what progress has been made toward meeting those commitments.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The commitments of the UN High-Level Meeting on TB included ambitious targets for TB control, prevention and treatment. As the largest international funder of tuberculosis programmes, the Global Fund has a key role in meeting these commitments, and a full replenishment in October will be essential. The Global Fund's work will necessarily complement that of national governments, which retain primary responsibility for protecting their citizens from tuberculosis. Since the High-Level Meeting, the UK has worked with others to develop an accountability framework for delivering on the commitments, which has now been finalised.

Nic Dakin:

[\[261204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps he is taking with international counterparts to promote the allocation of additional funding for the sixth replenishment of the Global Fund.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The Global Fund has a key role to play in ending the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria and achieving universal health coverage. To reach its ambitious \$14 billion target for the Sixth Replenishment, it will be necessary for donors to step up from both public and private sectors. As part of the G7 Health Ministers' Declaration in May 2019, the UK affirmed its commitment to support the success of the Sixth Replenishment and to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the Global Fund's programmes. Since then we have remained in close contact with our international counterparts to encourage them to ensure the replenishment is a success.

■ Indonesia: Overseas Aid

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[261153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether he plans to make aid to Indonesia conditional on the removal of virginity tests for women applying to the Indonesian military.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Department for International Development does not have a traditional bilateral aid programme with poverty reduction as the main objective in Indonesia. Instead, the UK Climate Change Unit (UKCCU)'s work in Indonesia is focused on making a difference to a critical global public good – the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

So-called 'virginity testing' is cruel and degrading to women forced to undergo it.

There is no justification for it. UK government officials have raised this issue with their counterparts in the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

■ Overseas Aid

Paul Farrelly:

[\[262268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Official Development Assistance is allocated to (a) ethical, (b) sustainable and (c) environmentally-sound projects.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Department for International Development's approach to design and implementation of development projects is governed by a set of rules and standards that reflect good development practice.

These rules and standards emphasise the principle of doing no harm. This ensures that interventions do not reinforce social exclusion and predatory institutions; exacerbate conflict; contribute to human rights or safeguarding risks. The rules also emphasise the importance of sustainability and resilience to generate lasting benefits for poor people. This includes ensuring that our interventions do not create or exacerbate resource scarcity, climate change and/or environmental damage.

JUSTICE

■ **Courts: Attendance****Yasmin Qureshi:**[\[261185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Failure to Appear warrants were issued (a) in each year between 2014 and 2018 and (b) from 1 January to 30 April 2019.

Paul Maynard:

Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) published its response to the consultation Fit for the future: transforming the Court and Tribunal Estate on 10 May 2019.

Figures on Failure To Attend warrants for the period 2011 to 2017 appear on page 16 of that response: -

Magistrates Courts – Failure to Attend Warrants (FTA)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
National	115,490	109,521	95,234	94,540	92,983	92,862	93,317

Note: Figures are for warrants issued in Criminal Proceedings for failing to attend Court, as well as those issued for failing to comply with the requirements of a Community Order. Figures are based on cases rather than defendants which means that where a defendant has more than one case for which a warrant is issued, each instance will be counted. Data is based on the most serious offence type on a case when it is registered on the HMCTS Libra Case Management system, and where a warrant is issued at different hearings for the same case, each issuance will be counted.

The full document can be found on GOV.UK at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/800874/hmcts-fit-for-the-future-consultation-response.pdf

The number of Failure to Attend warrants for 2018, and those between January and April 2019, will be published later this year.

The Ministry of Justice and HMCTS are developing a consistent statistical measure of Failure to Appear warrants and will be publishing a time series of these figures alongside MoJ court statistics later this year.

■ **Family Courts: Domestic Abuse****Louise Haigh:**[\[262456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Ministry of Justice press release of 21 May 2019 entitled Spotlight on child protection in family courts (a) if he will list the panel of experts assembled and (b) whether any survivors or victims of domestic abuse will sit on the panel.

Paul Maynard:

On 21 May 2019 we announced a public call for evidence led by a panel of experts to gather evidence on how the family courts protect children and parents in cases of domestic abuse and other serious offences.

The inaugural panel meeting is due to take place Friday 14 June 2019, after which we will publicly announce the panel members and agreed objectives for the call for evidence.

The panel members represent key parties to the issue and will provide expertise from across the Family Justice System. Included are representatives from the Judiciary, academia, social care, policy officials and third sector organisations which represent and advocate for victims of domestic abuse.

It is vital that this call for evidence can contribute to real improvements to the Family Justice System to protect victims and their families. For this reason, the experiences of victims will be central to the evidence gathered by the panel.

■ Holloway Prison: Sales**Kate Green:**[\[260626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will allocate the proceeds of the sale of HMP Holloway to support the female offender strategy.

Robert Buckland:

The sale of the former HMP & YOI Holloway to Peabody Estates was announced on 8 March 2019. The proceeds from the sale have been reinvested into the general custodial estate budget for the 2019/20 financial year, which will benefit both the male and female custodial estates.

The purchasers intend to include a Women's Centre as part of their development of the Holloway site. Sustainable community provision for women is essential to delivering the vision of the female offender strategy, which was published in June 2018. Women's centres can play an important role in helping female offenders to address their often-complex needs, and they are often at the heart of the holistic, multi-agency, whole system approach models. The Government has already invested £1 million in these models between 2016 and 2020. In addition to this, we are investing a further £5m grant funding through our female offender strategy in 2018-20, to support community provision for female offenders and women at risk of offending.

■ Julian Assange**Catherine West:**[\[262427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the accuracy of reports on the health of Julian Assange while in custody in the UK.

Robert Buckland:

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service is responsible for ensuring access to NHS services for people detained in prison. We must protect the medical confidentiality of all NHS patients in prison and therefore cannot comment on the health of individual prisoners. Prison Governors work closely with NHS healthcare commissioners and the providers of healthcare services to support the health and welfare of people in custody.

■ **Prison Service: Stress****Liz Saville Roberts:**[\[260704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, which prisons have adopted the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards approach to tackling staff stress; and if he will make a statement.

Liz Saville Roberts:[\[260705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the frequency of prison inspections by the Health and Safety Executive; and if he will make a statement.

Robert Buckland:

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service has implemented the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards in all prisons. We have been working with the HSE to ensure that the policy is embedded in tackling stress among staff.

The HSE has inspected four establishments, as part of the HSE's Sector Plan 2017. There are a number of prisons to inspect in the coming months.

I have no plans on making a statement about this.

■ **Prisoners' Release: Education****Richard Burgon:**[\[262419\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the availability of courses for prisoners to demonstrate safety for release.

Richard Burgon:[\[262421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what data his Department holds on the (a) number and (b) type of parole board recommendations for courses to be undertaken by prisoners.

Robert Buckland:

A wide range of accredited programmes are available for prisoners to attend where they are identified as suitable. Referrals for courses and volumes delivered are kept under review and suitability for any accredited programmes will be considered as part of a prisoner's wider sentence plan. We always try to ensure that courses are available to prisoners at a suitable time in their sentence. In particular, we prioritise indeterminate sentence prisoners for courses to ensure that Parole Board recommendations can be implemented as soon as practicable. However, the

completion of accredited programmes is not a mandatory requirement to secure release.

It is for the independent Parole Board to review the detention of parole eligible prisoners. The Board will direct the release of these prisoners only if it is satisfied that the levels of risk posed to the general public are reduced enough that the National Probation Service and its partner agencies can safely manage them in the community under supervision. Prisoners are managed using a sentence plan which contains interventions that have been identified to help them to address the risks that they pose. Management of the sentence plan is a matter for HMPPS and not the Parole Board. The Parole Board will consider how interventions identified by HMPPS, and undertaken by prisoners, have impacted on the levels of risk posed by individuals.

Information relating to Parole Board recommendations is not held centrally and could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate costs.

While HMPPS is focused on giving all prisoners opportunities to progress towards release, public protection must remain our priority.

■ **Prisoners' Release: Homelessness**

Richard Burgon:

[\[262417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2019 to Question 257595, what the estimated cost is of establishing how many women were released from prison into homelessness in each year from 2010-11 to 2016-17.

Edward Argar:

Pursuant to the answer to Question 257595, the cost of establishing how many women were released from prison into homelessness in each year from 2010-11 to 2016-2017 is estimated as £62,500.

■ **Prisoners: Education**

Richard Burgon:

[\[262424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what criteria his Department uses to assess the suitability for courses for prisoners.

Robert Buckland:

Every prisoner is subject to rigorous assessment on reception which informs a Personal Learning Plan. This plan is linked to prisoners' sentence plans and helps ensure provision is suitable to address needs. Prison Governors will then be held to account for the progress of each prisoners' in their establishment against that Personal Learning Plan as they progress through their sentence including transition to support through the gate and on release.

Responsibility for education provision in prisons is held by Governors. They control the budget, decide the curriculum, and have helped to choose the main providers. In addition, our prison education Dynamic Purchasing System allows governors to commission specific, short-term education provision to meet specialised learning

needs. Governors will also need to be aware of the development needs of their population and commission suitable provision that is linked to local employment needs. This will help prisoners to take full advantage of employment opportunities on release.

■ Prisons: Drugs

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[260706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department has commissioned research into the effects of second-hand intoxication of prison staff by new psychoactive substances; and if he will make a statement.

Robert Buckland:

Her Majesty's Prison & Probation Service has commenced research into the effects of second-hand exposure of prison staff to psychoactive substances. Initial research is focused on post-exposure testing of staff across ten prisons and it has been agreed that the testing programme will be expanded to include a further 10 prisons.

■ Prisons: Occupational Health

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[260703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many occupational health assessments have been carried out in each prison in the last year; and if he will make a statement.

Robert Buckland:

The information requested could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

■ Rehabilitation: Offenders

Richard Burgon: [\[262418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, for what reason all accredited programmes run by (a) prisons and (b) the Probation Service have not been subject to an impact and outcome evaluation.

Richard Burgon: [\[262422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether it is his policy that future programmes authorised by his Department be subject to an impact evaluation.

Robert Buckland:

The Department has undertaken several outcome evaluations of accredited offending behaviour programmes, and further evaluations are currently underway. In 2018 we invested in new resources to address the backlog in evaluations. Impact evaluations may not be suitable for all accredited programmes due to the low volume of

participants. In these circumstances other types of evaluations are undertaken, for example studies to assess whether delivery is in line with the evidence.

All accredited programmes are assessed against a set of principles which are drawn from the evidence base about what works and considered against the latest thinking internationally. All programmes are subject to evaluation, but this can take many years due to the sample sizes required to meet academic standards.

It is the Secretary of State's policy to make accredited offending behaviour programmes available to people convicted of crime. An evaluation plan must be submitted in order to achieve initial accreditation and the evaluation results must be provided to achieve reaccréditation (usually after 5 years). Accreditation also requires that the programme is designed based on the best available evidence, and that robust monitoring of practice is in place.

Research has shown that HMPPS programmes, when properly targeted, can reduce reoffending by 8 percentage points, and up to 17 percentage points for violent offenders.

SCOTLAND

■ Scotland Office: Living Wage

Justin Madders:

[\[261515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what proportion of organisations that hold contracts with his Department pay the National Living Wage.

David Mundell:

All organisations holding contracts with the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland provide assurances on their full compliance with the requirements of the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage.

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE INDEPENDENT PARLIAMENTARY STANDARDS AUTHORITY

■ Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority: ICT

John Spellar:

[\[258986\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Broxbourne, representing the Speaker's Committee for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, pursuant to the Answer of 20 May 2019 to Question 253492 on Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority: ICT, what the evidential basis is for the assertion that the new system will save time for Members and their staff.

Mr Charles Walker:

[Holding answer 10 June 2019]: I have asked IPSA to reply.

As the system is new, IPSA continue to work closely with MPs and their staff to help them understand how IPSA Online works, and how to realise the full benefits. We are continuing to hold group and one-to-one training in Parliament and have staff available on the phone to answer queries. IPSA are conducting a survey to gather more feedback about the new system, with plans for further improvements in due course. IPSA will report to the Speaker's Committee for the IPSA later in the year on the overall costs and benefits of IPSA Online.

During the development of the new system, IPSA Online, IPSA carried out usability testing to look at how long a range of tasks and functions would take, compared with the old claims system. Based on this testing, IPSA found that improvements in the new system would take MPs and their staff about 30 per cent less time, due to the simplification of processes and forms. Feedback collected at training sessions also indicated that MPs' staff expected IPSA Online to be easier and quicker to use than the old system.

MPs and their staff members will also benefit from the following time-saving changes:

- 'Single sign-on' capability enables MPs and their staff to access IPSA Online directly through their secure parliamentary account without an additional login.
- The new system allows claims from different budgets to be submitted on the same form, rather than having to submit multiple forms.
- Because MPs and staff no longer need to send paper receipts and invoices to IPSA, but can scan or photograph them and upload them digitally onto the system, we can process and reimburse claims more quickly.
- Staff members can now be reimbursed directly by IPSA for their own expenses, so that MPs no longer need to wait to pay staff once they themselves have been reimbursed.
- Additional information is available to them directly, for example on the amounts left in budgets and the status of any repayments or amounts owed, so MPs and their staff no longer need to wait for a monthly financial statement or contact IPSA staff to ask about these issues.
- MPs and their staff are now able to amend their personal details, including any change of name or address, on the new system themselves, without needing to submit a form to IPSA

TRANSPORT**■ Department for Transport: Living Wage**

Justin Madders: [\[261248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of organisations that hold contracts with his Department pay the National Living Wage.

Michael Ellis:

The information requested could only be provided at a disproportionate cost to the Department.

■ Driving: Licensing

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[262430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many anonymous fitness to drive complaints were received in 2018; and how many of those complaints were investigated.

Michael Ellis:

The information requested can only be provided at disproportionate cost. It would require the interrogation of all driving licence medical case records initiated in 2018 to determine whether a notification was made anonymously about a driver's fitness to drive and how many of those complaints were investigated.

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[262431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many drivers were sent for assessment following anonymous fitness to drive complaints, and what the outcomes of those assessments were in 2018.

Michael Ellis:

The information requested can only be provided at a disproportionate cost. It would require the interrogation of all driving licence medical case records initiated in 2018 to determine which drivers were sent for an assessment following an anonymous complaint, and what the outcome of those assessments were.

■ Motor Vehicles: Tax Evasion

Kerry McCarthy: [\[260583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the average time it takes from the reporting of untaxed and unlicensed vehicles to their removal by the DVLA from the highway.

Michael Ellis:

There is no specific timescale within which the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) must respond or take action after receiving a report of a potentially unlicensed vehicle and no assessment has been made of the average time taken.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) provides an online service for members of the public to notify vehicles that may be unlicensed. A report of

notifications received via this service is sent to the DVLA's national wheel clamping contractor. The licensing status of vehicles listed in the report will be checked and appropriate action taken if they are seen on the public road.

■ **P and O Ferries: Irish Sea**

Peter Dowd: [\[260662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the effect on British seafarers' jobs in the Irish sea of P&O Ferries' sale of the roll-on roll-off passenger ferry M/V European Endeavour.

Peter Dowd: [\[260663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he is taking steps to ensure that P&O Ferries' sale of the M/V European Endeavour does not result in a reduction in the employment of British ratings on Irish sea ferry routes; and if he will make a statement.

Peter Dowd: [\[260664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department last met with representatives of P&O Ferries to discuss seafarer employment.

Peter Dowd: [\[260665\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the potential effect on seafarer employment standards in the Irish sea of P&O Ferries' offer of voluntary redundancy to British seafarers employed on the M/V European Endeavour; and if he will make a statement.

Peter Dowd: [\[260666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which crewing agencies are contracted to provide seafarer ratings to ferry companies operating in the Irish Sea; and when those labour supply contracts were last inspected for compliance with Regulation (a) 1.4 and (b) 5.3 of the Maritime Labour Convention.

Peter Dowd: [\[260667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made a recent assessment of the effect of the low-cost crewing model on the number of British ratings directly employed on (a) passenger and (b) freight ferry services in the Irish sea.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The MV European Endeavour has been sold to Eckero Line and will operate on the Helsinki/Tallinn route. P&O have confirmed that another vessel, the Mistral, that operated the Liverpool-Dublin route while the MV European Endeavour was undergoing a refit will continue to operate the route after the sale of the MV European Endeavor.

P&O have made a commercial decision to replace a passenger ro-ro ferry with a ro-ro cargo vessel to meet the changing demands of the freight market and particularly a rising demand for unaccompanied freight. Seafarers are required to meet the

minimum standards of training as set out in the STCW Convention and no assessment is proposed to be made on the standards of seafarers operating in the Irish Sea.

The choice of which crewing agency to employ seafarers from is a commercial decision and a matter of choice for any shipping company to make for itself. The Government does not hold data relating to which crewing agencies shipping companies use.

There have been no recent meetings with P&O where employment was discussed.

■ **Passenger Ships: Pollution**

Andrew Rosindell:

[261131]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with cruise lines on pollution.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

I have regular meetings with key stakeholders in the maritime sector to discuss their concerns on a range of important topics, including pollution.

Officials have regular contact with the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA). They have also engaged with individual cruise lines on the development of the Clean Maritime Plan, how the sector will comply with the global sulphur cap and on the decarbonisation of shipping via the UK Chamber of Shipping's Carbon Working Group.

■ **Railways: Freight**

Andrew Rosindell:

[261135]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing the rail freight capacity for the economy.

Andrew Jones:

Rail freight offers benefits for the environment, helps reduce road congestion and is extremely important to UK businesses. Industry estimates that rail freight delivers economic benefits, including, cost savings to industry, environmental benefits and road congestion relief of around £1.7 billion per year.

The Government published a Rail Freight Strategy to provide a stable policy framework to enable rail freight to grow and achieve its potential. The Government is committed to working with the rail freight industry to support its continued success.

The Strategy can be found at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/552492/rail-freight-strategy.pdf

To support future growth of the rail freight industry the Secretary of State also confirmed that Government intends to continue investment in improving the rail freight network in Control Period 6 (2019-2024) as part of the regulatory funding settlement.

The Department is working with Network Rail and the freight industry to identify options for future funding, including capacity improvements.

TREASURY

■ Alcoholic Drinks: Excise Duties

Fiona Bruce:

[262346]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent estimate the Government has of the effect of the alcohol duty freeze on (a) public health and (b) alcohol-related deaths.

Robert Jenrick:

HM Treasury keeps all taxes, including alcohol duties, under review.

The Government has assessed that the increase in alcohol duty rates in line with inflation at the last budget is likely to lead to a minor decrease in overall alcohol consumption in the UK.

Further information on the impact of the alcohol duty changes can be found on the associated Tax Information and Impact Note, published in October 2018:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/increase-in-alcohol-duty-rates/alcohol-duty-uprating>

■ Bank Services

Catherine West:

[261294]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that people without internet access can continue to receive paper bills and statements from their banks.

John Glen:

The Government takes the firm view that consumers must be able to easily access clear and transparent information about their accounts with banks and other financial service companies.

UK banks' and building societies' treatment of their customers is governed by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) in its Principles for Businesses. This includes a general requirement for firms to provide a prompt, efficient and fair service to all of their customers. The FCA's Handbook requires firms to identify particularly vulnerable customers, and to deal with such customers appropriately. This includes older people, the disabled, and those who do not have access to the internet. If a customer does not have access to the internet, then the FCA would expect the customer's bank to provide or make available paper statements to them instead.

Under changes to the Payment Services Regulations (PSRs) which came into force 13 January 2018 and govern the rules around payment accounts, banks are required to provide their customers with certain information, including a monthly statement (so long as there has been a transaction on the account). However, a customer's terms and conditions must also include a condition that they can require their monthly

statement to simply be ‘made available’ on a durable medium, for example through a secure website, rather than in the form of a physical statement.

■ Bank Services: Standards

Adam Afriye:

[261179]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what key performance indicators his Department uses to assess the performance of Open Banking; and what recent assessment he has made of the performance of Open Banking.

John Glen:

The independent Open Banking Implementation Entity (OBIE) is responsible for assessing the performance of Open Banking, and HM Treasury’s view is informed by their assessment.

The OBIE’s latest published assessment of Open Banking performance, made in March 2019, shows that in that month the average availability of Open Banking APIs was 97%, the average response time was 798 milliseconds, and that 38.2 million successful API calls had been made, representing over 97% of the total number of calls made to APIs.

■ Child Benefit

Shabana Mahmood:

[262339]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what processes his Department uses with further education institutions to verify a child’s full-time attendance in education in relation to the eligibility for child benefit payments.

Elizabeth Truss:

HMRC does not approach education institutions to verify information regarding eligibility for child benefit payments. The claimant is required to provide all the information necessary to support their claim. Details on how to claim can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

■ Cryptocurrencies

Adam Afriye:

[261180]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of cryptocurrencies as a means of payment.

John Glen:

The Government established the Cryptoassets Taskforce – comprised of HM Treasury, the Financial Conduct Authority and the Bank of England – in 2018 to explore the risks and potential benefits of cryptoassets and the underlying distributed ledger technology (DLT). The Taskforce’s final report^[1] concluded that benefits associated with the use of cryptoassets may arise in the future, but that the most immediate priorities for the authorities are to mitigate the risks posed by cryptoassets to consumers and markets, and to prevent the use of cryptoassets for illicit activity.

As part of this, the Government will consult on its approach to cryptoassets this year. In addition, the authorities continue to encourage the responsible development of legitimate DLT and cryptoasset-related activity in the UK.

[1] Full version of the report is available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/752070/cryptoassets_taskforce_final_report_final_web.pdf

■ Ford Motor Company: Bridgend

Mrs Madeleine Moon: [262300]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to issue a waiver for the tax due on redundancy payments to be received by Ford Bridgend workers.

Mrs Madeleine Moon: [262302]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the value of reducing tax deductions from redundancy payments to workers at Ford Bridgend; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

The Government confirmed in Finance (No. 2) Act 2017 that the first £30,000 of all termination payments remain exempt from income tax. The UK has one of the most generous tax exemptions for termination payments in the OECD, and around 80% of the termination awards made each year will remain completely free from income tax.

HM Revenue and Customs does not have the data available to make an estimate on the cost of reducing tax from redundancy payments for Ford, Bridgend.

■ Insurance

Hannah Bardell: [262447]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that insurance companies do not unfairly discriminate against consumers with (a) historical and (b) current mental health conditions.

John Glen:

The Government is determined that all insurers should treat customers fairly and firms are required to do so under the Financial Conduct Authority's (FCA) rules.

The FCA has placed access and vulnerability at the core of its Mission and Business Plan. For example, it is currently exploring options for signposting consumers with pre-existing and historic medical conditions, such as mental health conditions, to specialist travel insurance providers so that these consumers are better able to access suitable insurance.

■ Local Government Finance

Stella Creasy:

[\[262363\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of the No Recourse to Public Funds condition on local authority budgets by local authority area.

Elizabeth Truss:

I have regular discussions with the Home Secretary and the Communities Secretary about their budgets, including the impact of any government policy that may affect local authority finances.

We need to make sure our immigration system is fair, while also protecting the taxpayer. There are already exemptions to the 'no recourse to public funds' condition for those in genuine need, such as those facing destitution or to protect the welfare of a child. I would expect the relevant departments to raise any issues at the Spending Review, where we can consider how we fund our priorities across government.

Local Government Core Spending Power is increasing in real terms this year. We have provided an additional £650m for social care in 2019-20.

■ Occupational Pensions

Ms Angela Eagle:

[\[262255\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that (a) investment choices available to workplace pension customers are regularly reviewed by Independent Governance Committees and (b) those investment choices are aligned with the interests of customers.

Ms Angela Eagle:

[\[262256\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy that Independent Governance Committees attached to contract-based workplace pensions have a duty to monitor the suitability of the retail fund choices available to scheme members.

Ms Angela Eagle:

[\[262257\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of scrutiny by Independent Governance Committees of the retail funds offered within workplace pensions products.

John Glen:

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) introduced rules in 2015 to require contract-based pension providers to set up independent governance committees (IGCs) to address poor consumer outcomes.

IGCs have a duty to scrutinise the value for money of the provider's workplace personal pension schemes, taking into account transaction costs, raising concerns and making recommendations to the provider's board as appropriate. IGCs have a duty to assess whether all the investment choices available, including default options, are suitable for the interests of consumers.

In 2016, the FCA reviewed IGCs and found that they were “generally effective” in influencing and advancing cost reductions for members. The review also found that the Independent Project Board’s work in auditing high legacy charges and implementing IGCs had been successful. As a result, a substantial majority of consumers received improved outcomes regarding costs and charges, with 1m consumers receiving reduced costs and charges.

The FCA has announced that it will undertake a further review of IGCs in 2019/20.

Ms Angela Eagle:

[262258]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential conflict of interests in the business model of vertically integrated companies offering retail investment platforms, asset management and workplace pensions products.

John Glen:

This is a matter for the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), which is operationally independent from Government. The question has been passed on to the FCA. The FCA will reply directly to the Member by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

■ Pension Funds: Consumer Information

Paul Farrelly:

[262271]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of advice given to retirees accessing their pension funds for the first time.

John Glen:

The Government works closely with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), the independent financial services regulator, to ensure that the market for pensions advice works well, competitively and fairly, especially as consumers now have a wider variety of choice, with the onset of pension freedoms.

In 2017, the FCA published the results from its Assessing Suitability Review (ASR I) which looked at pension and investment advice delivered during 2015. The review showed that generally financial advice was suitable in 93.1% of cases, across a statistically representative sample of the entire market. The FCA are undertaking further work looking at the market for pensions transfer advice.

In August 2015 HM Treasury and the FCA launched the Financial Advice Market Review (FAMR) and have since then implemented its recommendations to ensure the financial advice market works better for consumers. The government and FCA are conducting a review of FAMR throughout 2019.

The Government is also committed to ensuring that people have access to free-to-access financial guidance and information on the options available to them when accessing their Defined Contribution pension, which is why PensionWise, now part of the Money and Pensions Service (MAPS), was set up in 2015.

■ Personal Income: Kingston upon Hull North

Diana Johnson:

[\[262305\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people in Hull North have annual incomes of £80,000 or more.

Jesse Norman:

The information requested is not available from HMRC's statistical source (Survey of Personal Incomes) due to an insufficient sample size for this group of taxpayers, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost from administrative databases.

■ Personation: Credit Rating

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[261141\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to help ensure the credit ratings of victims of identity fraud are protected.

John Glen:

In 2014, the Government transferred regulatory responsibility for consumer credit from the Office of Fair Trading to the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), including regulatory responsibility for Credit Reference agencies (CRAs). CRAs are a key part of the credit market and enable lenders to assess whether an individual has the ability to repay any credit that is offered.

CRAs can advise consumers to add a Notice of correction (of up to 200 words) to their credit report explaining any special circumstances. The content of the Notice should be taken into account alongside the information on the consumer's report.

Furthermore, the Credit Industry Fraud Avoidance System (CIFAS) is an independent fraud prevention service which has developed a system used by the credit industry and other organisations to prevent fraud. If a lender believes it may have detected a fraud or attempted fraud, a CIFAS marker may be put on an individual's credit reference file. No one should be refused credit just because of a CIFAS marker, and these markers are not included in a credit score. It is intended to warn lenders and to protect innocent consumers.

■ Taxation**Conor McGinn:****[262410]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people in (a) St Helens borough, (b) Liverpool City Region, (c) the North West and (d) the UK paid tax in the tax bands (i) up to £8,632, (ii) £8,632 to £12,500, (iii) £12,500 to £50,000, (iii) £50,000 to £100,000 and (iv) above £100,000 in the most recent period for which information is available.

Jesse Norman:

Estimates of the number of tax paying individuals in the areas requested are provided in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. Table relating to PQ UIN 262410 [Table attachment for Conor McGinn PQ.docx]

■ Treasury: Living Wage**Justin Madders:****[261261]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what proportion of organisations that hold contracts with his Department pay the National Living Wage.

Robert Jenrick:

The information is not held centrally.

The law is clear that any individual performing work is entitled to receive the National Minimum or National Living Wage. The Government is committed to enforcing this right.

Crown Commercial Service (CCS), who act as HM Treasury's commercial arm, require suppliers to comply with all applicable human rights and employment laws in the jurisdictions in which they work. Suppliers must also have robust means of ensuring compliance through their supply chain.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Agriculture: Waste Disposal****Dr David Drew:****[262227]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans he has to provide advice to farmers on the potential dangers of mixing slurry.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has responsibility for the regulation of health and safety standards on Great Britain's farms and has published guidance to farmers on the risks associated with managing slurry on farms at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais9.pdf. HSE has also worked with the farming industry's Farm Safety Partnership to highlight how the dangers of mixing slurry can be managed. Information is available on the National Farmers Union website at <https://www.nfuonline.com/farm-safety-think-slurry-v10/>.

Research has been carried out by HSE to inform practical control strategies. The findings will inform future revisions of the guidance and will be shared with the farming industry through the Farm Safety Partnerships.

■ Children: Maintenance

Shabana Mahmood: [\[262338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the process is through which eligibility for child maintenance payments is verified.

Shabana Mahmood: [\[262340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what safeguards her Department have put in place to ensure that the system for child maintenance payments is not open to abuse by people who have left full time education.

Will Quince:

In order to make a child maintenance assessment the Child Maintenance Service must identify a receiving parent, a paying parent and at least one qualifying child.

It is not necessary for a person to be receiving Child Benefit for them to be treated as a receiving parent. However, entitlement to Child Benefit is based on an overall care test which is broadly similar to the Child Maintenance policy on day to day care.

Payment of Child Benefit is therefore a very good indicator of who should be treated as the receiving parent. Where Child Benefit is not in payment, the Service will request additional evidence from both parents.

For child maintenance purposes, a child must be under 20 years of age and in full time non-advanced education or approved training, and eligible for Child Benefit. They also need to be habitually resident in the UK and usually living in the same household as the receiving parent.

Child Benefit may stay in payment for a period after a child under 20 ceases education or training until a 'terminal date' is reached. Child Benefit will remain payable from the date education or training ceased up to and including the week that includes the first terminal date.

Both paying and receiving parents have a responsibility to inform the Child Maintenance Service of any change in circumstances. If parents inform the Service that a qualifying child has left education, the Child Maintenance Service will seek to verify this and update the maintenance calculation accordingly.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Ministerial Policy Advisers

Tulip Siddiq: [\[262446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2019 to Question 260085 on Department for Work and Pensions: Ministerial Policy Advisers, for what reason her Department does not routinely publish the number of alleged breaches of the Special Advisers' Code of Conduct by her Department's Special Advisers.

Will Quince:

In line with standard departmental practice, we are mindful of our data protection obligations when considering what information should be part of our publication scheme.

■ Employment Schemes: Young People**Cat Smith:****[262407]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to sections five and six of the evaluation of the Young and Successful programme, published by Groundwork Greater Nottingham in 2018, if she will take steps to ensure that young people furthest from the labour market are not adversely affected by payment by results requirements of employability programmes.

Alok Sharma:

The department offers a whole range of support of employment provision, of which contracted provision is one element. There is insufficient evidence from previous programmes, to show young people furthest from the labour market are adversely affected by payment by results requirements of employment programmes. For example, the extensive independently run Work Programme evaluation (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425081/rr892.pdf) suggested that there was not a significant amount of variation in the level of support received and in general most participants were happy with the support they received. Published statistics suggest that job outcome rates were similar by age, indicating diverse groups of people can benefit from this provision.

Helping young people who are furthest from the labour market is a priority and the department has a variety of support to which we refer young people. 18 to 21 year olds who are in the all work requirements group take part in the Youth Obligation Support Programme which is now in every Jobcentre in Great Britain. Working with young people the Jobcentre can assess the particular need of the young person and then refer them to the most appropriate place. For example, sector-based work academies last for up to 6 weeks and have elements of work experience, short training and a guaranteed interview for a real apprenticeship or other job. Those further from the labour market may benefit from a traineeship which can last for up to 6 months and includes a focus on helping the young person reach level 2 in English and Maths.

The department continues to gain learning from previous programmes and evaluations to ensure it designs tailored provision, such as the new Work and Health Programme, that has minimum support levels for all customers and deliver improved outcomes to the customer and the department.

■ Employment Support Allowance: Cancer

Helen Jones:

[262244]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average time taken is for an award of employment support allowance to be made to an applicant suffering from cancer.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Pension Credit

Chris Stephens:

[262460]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to promote the uptake of Pension Credits; and if she will make a statement.

Guy Opperman:

The Government is committed to ensuring that older people receive the support they are entitled to and the DWP targets activity on engaging with people who may be eligible to benefits at pivotal stages, such as when they claim State Pension or report a change in their circumstances. The DWP uses a wide range of channels to communicate information about benefits to potential customers; including information on <https://gov.uk/>, in leaflets and by telephone. DWP staff in Pension Centres and Jobcentres including visiting officers are able to provide help and advice about entitlement to benefits, as are staff in Local Authorities who administer Housing Benefit.

Potential customers can use the Pension Credit <https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator> to check if they are likely to be eligible and get an estimate of what they may receive. People wishing to claim Pension Credit can do so by calling 0800 99 1234.

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One of the best ways to reach eligible customers is through trusted stakeholder working in the community and we have developed the Pension Credit toolkit, as an on-line tool for agencies and welfare rights organisations to use in order to encourage Pension Credit take-up. It can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit>

The toolkit contains resources for anyone working with pensioners and includes guides to Pension Credit. It also contains publicity material and guidance designed to help older people understand how they could get Pension Credit and help organisations support someone applying for Pension Credit as well as ideas for encouraging take-up. The toolkit also provides links to information about disability and carers benefits.

Most recently we have provided to relevant stakeholders a fact sheet about Pension Credit and the changes introduced on 15 May for mixed age couples to ensure that

accurate information is available in the places where people are most likely to seek information.

■ Pension Credit: Glasgow South West

Chris Stephens: [262459]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many residents in Glasgow South West constituency (a) applied for and (b) received pension credits in the last 12 months for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement.

Guy Opperman:

Information on the number of applicants for Pension Credit in Glasgow South West constituency is not available.

Information on the number of recipients of Pension Credit in Glasgow South West constituency in each of the latest four quarters available is set out below:

Pension Credit recipients in Glasgow South West constituency

QUARTER	FEB '18	MAY '18	AUG '18	NOV '18
	4,223	4,112	4,055	4,009

Source: DWP Stat-Xplore

This information is published and available at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

■ Pensions

Kerry McCarthy: [259913]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent discussions she has had with representatives from the pensions industry about (a) the divestment of pensions funds from carbon-intensive industries and from fossil fuels and (b) incorporating climate-related risk into their investment decision-making.

Kerry McCarthy: [259914]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps the Government is taking to encourage the pension industry to (a) divest pension funds from carbon-intensive industries and fossil fuel and (b) adopt the recommendations of the task force on climate-related financial disclosures on reporting structures.

Guy Opperman:

The Government wants to support trustees in making responsible investment decisions. However, it does not seek to direct pension schemes to invest or divest in any particular way.

We recognise that climate change is a key national and international issue and we have made sure that pension schemes understand their role responding to its effects. In September 2018, following extensive consultation with the pensions industry, this Government laid regulations to clarify that trustees should be taking account of the financial risks of climate change when developing their investment strategies. The regulations come into force from October this year. The FCA are consulting on corresponding provisions for workplace personal pension schemes.

As the Minister for Pensions and Financial Inclusion I have spoken extensively about the new requirements and the Government expectations of pension schemes, including during the Westminster Hall debate regarding Pension Funds: Financial and Ethical Investments on the 22 May 2019:

“For too long there has been a perception by too many trustees -I am happy to clarify this as a Government Minister- that the environmental practices of the firms they invest in are purely ethical concerns, which they do not need to worry about: that is utterly wrong. Aside from the ethical considerations, there are real financial risks resulting from climate change. With the long-term horizons of pension investing, trustees must now consider that when they set out their investment strategies. Trustees who do not consider those matters will be breaching their statutory and potentially their fiduciary duties not only to current but future members.”

The full debate can be viewed here:

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-05-22/debates/D3194408-7581-4635-AEDC-6D22AD6F0EBC/PensionFundsFinancialAndEthicalInvestments>

Kerry McCarthy:

[259915]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on encouraging local government pensions funds to divest from carbon-intensive industries and fossil fuels.

Guy Opperman:

The DWP has regular discussions with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. However, much like with trustees of occupational pension schemes, the local pension committees of the individual Local Government Pension Funds are responsible for their own investment decisions.

As I said during the Westminster Hall debate regarding Pension Funds: Financial and Ethical Investments on the 22 May 2019:

“For too long there has been a perception by too many trustees -I am happy to clarify this as a Government Minister- that the environmental practices of the firms they invest in are purely ethical concerns, which they do not need to worry about: that is utterly wrong. Aside from the ethical considerations, there are real financial risks resulting from climate change. With the long-term horizons of pension investing, trustees must now consider that when they set out their investment strategies.

Trustees who do not consider those matters will be breaching their statutory and potentially their fiduciary duties not only to current but future members.”

The full debate can be viewed here:

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-05-22/debates/D3194408-7581-4635-AEDC-6D22AD6F0EBC/PensionFundsFinancialAndEthicalInvestments>

■ Pensions: Consumer Information

Paul Farrelly:

[262270]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Association of British Insurer's report: Principles for tailoring retirement risk warnings, published in May 2019, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of ensuring that age-appropriate warnings are provided when information is given on (a) pension scams, (b) employer contributions in relation to pensions, (c) tax matters in relation to pensions, (c) life expectancy in relation to financial planning and (d) lasting power of attorney in relation to financial and health matters.

Guy Opperman:

The Department for Work and Pensions has engaged with the Financial Conduct Authority on their proposals to improve the information received by pension scheme members. The department is working with the Pension Regulator as to how best to introduce equivalent measures for occupational pension schemes and will also seek to involve industry stakeholders such as the Association of British Insurers in this work.

The Government considers that providing people with the right information at the right time can be key in helping them make more effective decisions about their pension savings. It is sensible to tailor communications to people's circumstances. There will be some differences in the information someone in work would find more helpful than someone aged 75 or over who is already retired. It is important, however, that all savers are alerted to the risks posed by pension scams and we welcome the inclusion of that messaging in the approach proposed by the Association of British Insurers.

■ Personal Independence Payment

Ruth George:

[262439]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people whose personal independence payment has (a) increased, (b) decreased, (c) reduced to zero and (d) stayed the same as a result of an appeal decision in each of the last five years.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Medical Examinations

Frank Field:

[\[262247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Written Statement of 5 June 2018, on Personal Independence Payments, HCWS733, if she will provide an update on the progress of the pilot to introduce video recordings of personal independence payment assessments.

Justin Tomlinson:

I refer the Rt Hon. Member to the answer provided for Question [259304](#).

■ Social Security Benefits: Bulgaria

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[259864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is discussing reciprocal social security agreements with her Bulgarian counterpart.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[259865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is discussing reciprocal social security agreements with her Czechian counterpart.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[259866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is discussing reciprocal social security agreements with her Estonian counterpart.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[259867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is discussing reciprocal social security agreements with her Greek counterpart in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[259868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is discussing reciprocal social security agreements with her Hungarian counterpart in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[259869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is discussing reciprocal social security agreements with her Latvian counterpart in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[259870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions she has had with her Lithuanian counterpart on potential reciprocal social security agreements in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[259871]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is discussing reciprocal social security agreements with her Polish counterpart in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[259872]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is discussing reciprocal social security agreements with her Romanian counterpart in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Mr Nigel Evans:

[259873]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is discussing reciprocal social security agreements with her Slovakian counterpart in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Alok Sharma:

The United Kingdom is seeking to protect the social security coordination and reciprocal healthcare rights of UK nationals in the EU by reaching reciprocal arrangements with the EU or Member States to maintain existing rights for a transitional period until 31 December 2020 in a no deal scenario.

■ Social Security Benefits: Republic of Ireland

Mr Nigel Evans:

[259874]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she is discussing reciprocal social security agreements with her Irish counterpart in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Alok Sharma:

The UK and Ireland have signed a reciprocal agreement which will protect the social security rights of UK and Irish nationals living and/or working in each other's state when the UK leaves the EU. The agreement can be viewed at:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/622/pdfs/ukxi_20190622_en.pdf

■ Universal Credit

Frank Field:

[259875]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of claims under universal credit for the (a) standard allowance, (b) carer element, (c) child element, (d) childcare element, (e) disabled child element, (f) housing element and (g) limited capability for work element were not paid (i) on time and (ii) in full in each for the last six months for which information is available.

Alok Sharma:

The information requested is available in the attached document for both new claims and existing claims. The Limited Capability for Work (LCW) addition is no longer payable on new claims to Universal Credit (UC) since 3rd April 2017.

Figures for the proportion of claims paid in full on time is subject to fluctuation. This particularly effects the figures for LCW in the first assessment period which are subject to change.

Claimants in the Limited Capability for Work and Work Related Activity (LCWRA) group may not receive their additional element within the first assessment period due to the additional element being calculated based on the outcome of their Work Capability Assessment (WCA) which, due to the need for medical evidence and assessment, may not be complete by the end of the first assessment period.

Claimants who naturally migrate to UC from Employment and Support Allowance, and are currently receiving the LCW / LCWRA addition, will continue to receive it on their UC claim from day 1 as long as there has been no break in their claim and they have declared the same health condition when they moved across to UC.

UC payment timeliness has continued to improve during its rollout, we are also continually introducing improvements to its design, for example most recently, by making childcare and housing verification easier. These improvements are not yet fully reflected in the data supplied.

Attachments:

1. PQ259875 data tables [PQ259875 data tables.xlsx]

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Industrial Strategy Update

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Greg Clark):
[\[HCWS1616\]](#)

Our modern Industrial Strategy is a long-term plan to boost productivity and earning power for people throughout the country.

Since 2010, local leaders, working in partnership with government, have delivered historic City Deals with Greater Manchester. There have been multiple devolution agreements resulting in devolved new powers including bus reform, the adult education budget and Growth deal funding of £633 million.

Building on these strong foundations, we set out in the modern Industrial Strategy to work in partnership with places to develop Local Industrial Strategies. Local Industrial Strategies are central to our aim of creating prosperous communities across the country. They are being developed locally and agreed with government. They are long-term, based on clear evidence and aligned to the modern Industrial Strategy.

On 16 May we launched the first of these strategies – the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy. Today we are launching the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy. This has been developed locally by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, led by Mayor Andy Burnham, Sir Richard Leese, Leader of Manchester City Council, supported by the Local Enterprise Partnership and Greater Manchester partners; and agreed with government.

This ambitious strategy sets out how Greater Manchester will work in partnership with government to:

- Set Greater Manchester up to be a global leader on health and care innovation – creating new industries and jobs, improving population health and extending healthy life expectancy; working to identify a home for a prospective International Centre for Healthy Ageing;
- Position Greater Manchester as a world leading region for innovative firms to experiment with, develop and adopt advanced materials in manufacturing; including University of Manchester work to establish ‘Graphene City’ in the centre;
- Build on Greater Manchester’s position as a leading European digital city-region, to maximise growing assets in cyber security;
- Enable the digitalisation of all sectors; and capitalise on the links between digital and creative industries that feed internationally significant clusters in broadcasting, content creation and media;
- Launch the UK’s first city-region Clean Growth Mission to achieve carbon neutral living in Greater Manchester by 2038; and

- Ensure that the education, skills and employment system allow everyone to reach their potential and employers have access to the skills required to deliver the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy.

Greater Manchester is a growing economy with a growing population of 2.8m. Our shared national and local ambition is for the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy to boost productivity and people's earning power through our collaborative national, regional and local leadership, recognising the economic strengths and potential of Greater Manchester.

A copy of the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Appointments to the Boundary Commission for England

Minister for the Constitution (Kevin Foster):

[\[HCWS1625\]](#)

I should like to inform the House that my right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office has made the following appointments under Schedule 1 to the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 following a competition run in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments:

- Colin Byrne, appointed as a Member of the Boundary Commission for England, effective from 1 July 2019 until 30 June 2024; and
- Sarah Hamilton, appointed as a Member of the Boundary Commission for England, effective from 1 July 2019 until 30 June 2024.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Media Matters

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Jeremy Wright):

[\[HCWS1624\]](#)

My Department has today written to Lebedev Holdings Limited (LHL) and Independent Digital News and Media Limited (IDNM), the owners of the Evening Standard and the Independent, to inform them that I am 'minded to' issue an Intervention Notice. This relates to concerns I have that there may be public interest considerations - as set out in section 58 of Enterprise Act 2002 - that are relevant to the recent acquisition of a 30% stake by the International Media Company (IMC) in LHL and the linked transaction involving the acquisition of a 30% stake by Scalable LP in IDNM and that these concerns warrant further investigation.

A 'minded to' letter has therefore been issued to the parties on one public interest ground specified in section 58 of the Enterprise Act 2002:

(2A) The need for (a) accurate presentation of news; and (b) free expression of opinion.

It is important to note that I have not taken a final decision on intervention at this stage. In line with the statutory guidance on media mergers, the 'minded to' letter invites further representations in writing from the parties and gives them until 5pm on Monday 17 June to respond. I plan to make my final decision, which needs to be made on a quasi judicial basis, on whether to issue an Intervention Notice no later than week commencing 24 June.

If I decide to issue an Intervention Notice, the next stage would be for Ofcom to assess and report to me on the public interest concerns and for the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to assess and report to me on whether a relevant merger situation has been created and any impact this may have on competition. Following these reports, I would need to decide whether to refer the matter for a more detailed investigation by the CMA under section 45 of the Enterprise Act 2002.

In view of the time it has taken to obtain sufficient information to reach this point I have asked the parties to agree to extend the statutory time limit to allow Ofcom and the Competitions and Markets Authority to report to me on the public interest issues raised by the transaction.

I will keep Parliament updated on progress with this media merger case.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ June Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Mr Robert Goodwill):
[\[HCWS1619\]](#)

Agriculture and Fisheries Council takes place in Luxembourg on 18 June.

As the provisional agenda stands, the primary focus for fisheries policy will be on the Regulation on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for which a preliminary agreement on the proposal, a partial general approach (PGA), is sought in Council. It will constitute the Council's mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament.

The European Commission will also present its Communication on the state of play of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and consultation on the Fishing Opportunities for 2020, after which Ministers will exchange views.

In the field of agriculture the main focus will be on the Post 2020 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform package for which the Romanian Presidency has provided a progress report on the negotiations during their Presidency. The progress report will be discussed at Council. The reform package covers the three legislative proposals: Regulation on CAP Strategic Plans, Regulation on financing, management and monitoring of the CAP, and Regulation on common market organisation (CMO) of agricultural products.

There are currently no items scheduled for discussion under 'any other business'.

■ **Update: General Licences for Controlling Wild Birds**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment (Dr Thérèse Coffey):
[\[HCWS1615\]](#)

On 4th May, Defra took on decision-making for the purposes covered by the general licences that had been revoked by Natural England on 25th April. An evidence-gathering exercise was then initiated in order to determine next steps which closed on 13th May.

4378 responses were received, some of which were general opinions. 3952 responses were more specific and have provided a useful set of evidence and views. The majority of responses came from individuals or smaller businesses and organisations. 36 local and national organisations also responded, including conservation, animal welfare, pest control, farming, game keeping and land management organisations.

The responses demonstrated a range of impacts that individuals and groups experienced as a result of Natural England's revocation of licences GL04, 05 and 06. These include crow attacks on lambs and ewes during lambing, the risk of predation for eggs and fledglings of birds of conservation concern, and public health issues caused by pigeons in urban areas.

We recognise the unintended consequences of Natural England's decision on 23rd April and completely acknowledge the need to address this situation quickly. This is why we issued an urgent call for evidence so that we could assess the situation carefully.

Next steps will be confirmed imminently following engagement with users and other interested stakeholders. A summary of the evidence and the government response will also be published shortly.

We remain determined to ensure that we have a robust and effective licensing system in place.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ **Foreign Affairs Council – 17 June 2019**

Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan):
[\[HCWS1620\]](#)

The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) will take place in Luxembourg on 17 June. It will be chaired by the High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP), Federica Mogherini.

The FAC will discuss Current Affairs, the effectiveness of the EU Common Foreign and Security Partnership (CFSP) as well as the EU's Global Strategy, Sudan, and over lunch with the Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi, the Middle-East Peace Process.

Current Affairs

We expect HRVP Mogherini to debrief Ministers on her trip to the Horn of Africa and the developing political situation in the region. HRVP Mogherini will also provide an update on recent developments in Venezuela, including on the International Contact Group and

Lima Group Ministerial meeting held in New York on 3 June. We expect Iran to be raised following Iran's announcement to partially cease meeting commitments under the Iran nuclear deal and given the upcoming 60-day deadline. We expect HRVP Mogherini and Ministers to consider next steps as we seek to avoid further escalation.

CFSP effectiveness and the EU Global Strategy

Foreign Ministers will consider how the EU can improve its approach to foreign and security policy. Defense Ministers will join Foreign Ministers for a strategic debate on the EU's Global Strategy and how it works internationally. They will consider the EU's role on security, burden sharing and coherence among defense initiatives

Sudan

Following the UK's request, Ministers will discuss the situation in Sudan, taking stock of recent political events, including the Sudanese security forces' use of violence on civilians, and consider how the EU should respond to support the African Union in ensuring a transition to civilian rule.

Lunch on MEPP with the Jordanian Foreign Minister

The Jordanian Foreign Minister is expected to join EU Ministers to discuss the Middle East Peace Process, prior to the EU-Jordan Association Council. Ahead of the publication of the Kushner Plan, the UK will reiterate its support for a two state solution and encourage all parties to keep an open mind once the Plan is published. The UK will note the importance of HRH King Abdullah II's role as custodian of the Christian and Muslim holy sites, and reiterate our long-standing position on Jerusalem.

Council Conclusions

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on Effective Multilateralism; Security and Defence; Central Asia Strategy; the EU's Engagement in the Black Sea Region; Strengthening the ban on anti-personnel mines; and Human Rights guidelines on safe drinking water and sanitation.

Rt Hon Sir Alan Duncan MP

Minister for Europe and the Americas

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ **Consultation: fortification of flour with folic acid**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health and Primary Care (Seema Kennedy): [\[HCWS1618\]](#)

Further to the Government's announcement on 23 October 2018 of the intention to consult on the issue of mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid to help prevent neural tube defects in foetuses, I wish to inform the House that the consultation will launch today and will run for 12 weeks.

Neural tube defects are birth defects of the brain, spine, or spinal cord. They happen in the first few weeks of pregnancy, often before a woman even knows that she is pregnant. The two most common neural tube defects are spina bifida and anencephaly. These can be devastating conditions and the Government is fully aware of the effect these have on the individuals themselves and their families.

There is strong evidence that many neural tube defects can be prevented by increasing women's intake of folic acid

Unless you are pregnant or thinking of having a baby, you should be able to get all the folate (the natural form of folic acid) you need by eating a varied and balanced diet. Existing pregnancy advice to women who are trying to conceive or who are likely to become pregnant is that they are advised to take a daily supplement of 400 micrograms of folic acid until the 12th week of pregnancy. They are also advised to increase their daily intake of folate by eating more folate-rich foods, for example spinach and broccoli, and foods voluntarily fortified with folic acid such a wide range of breakfast cereals.

However, we know that in the UK around half of pregnancies are unplanned. In those which are planned, it has been estimated that only half of all mothers took folic acid supplements or modified their diet to increase folate intake. This has led to calls for mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid, so women can get it from dietary sources other than foods that naturally contain it.

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) has recommended mandatory folic acid fortification of flour to improve the folate status of women most at risk of neural tube defect-affected pregnancies. Further detail on this is in the consultation document.

We are now opening a consultation to seek views on this proposed change and we hope that members of the public as well as industry and the scientific community respond so we can accurately consider this proposal.

I have agreed with the Governments of Scotland and Wales, and the Permanent Secretary of Northern Ireland that this will be a joint consultation between the Devolved Administrations and England. This is because any resulting decisions would need to be taken on a whole-UK basis to minimise impact on trade and for industry to comply. Similarly, the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has been closely involved as flour falls within their remit.

JUSTICE

■ Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Mr David Gauke):
[\[HCWS1621\]](#)

I am pleased to announce that the Government is today introducing in the House of Commons the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill. This legislation follows the Government's response to the consultation on reform of the legal requirements for divorce in England and Wales. I previously laid this response before Parliament [*Official Report*, 9 April 2019 vol 658 c8WS].

Marriage and family have long been vitally important to our functioning as a society. Where a marriage or civil partnership regrettably breaks down and is beyond repair, the law must deal with that reality with the minimum of acrimony by creating the conditions for people to move forward and agree arrangements for the future in an orderly and constructive way. Above all, the legal process should not exacerbate conflict between parents, as this is especially damaging for children. The process must better support and encourage parents to cooperate in bringing up their children.

The evidence is clear that the current legal requirements can needlessly rake up the past to justify the legal ending of a relationship that is no longer a beneficial and functioning one. The requirement for one person to blame the other – if it is not practical for them to have separated for at least two years – can introduce or worsen conflict at the outset of the process, conflict that may continue long after the legal process has concluded. Allegations about a spouse's conduct may bear no relation to the real cause of the breakdown. Such allegations do not serve the interests of society or help family relationships to heal. Instead, they can be damaging to any prospects for couples to reconcile or to agree practical arrangements for the future. In the extremely difficult circumstances of divorce, the law should allow couples, where reconciliation is not possible, to move on constructively.

The Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill will change or remove conflict flashpoints. It will align the law with the non-confrontational approach that Parliament has enacted in other areas of family law. Among its measures, the Bill will replace the requirement to prove spousal conduct or that the couple have been separated for at least two years with the requirement to file a statement of irretrievable breakdown of the marriage or civil partnership. It will introduce a new minimum period of twenty weeks between the start of proceedings and confirmation to the court that the conditional order should be made. This will make the period before the conditional order is granted longer for most people, and so allow better opportunity for reflecting on the decision to divorce and, where this is inevitable, agreeing practical arrangements for the future.

This is an important piece of legislation that will bring long overdue reform. It is not about making the decision to divorce or to dissolve a civil partnership easier. That will remain one of the hardest decisions anyone can take. It is about reforming those elements of the current legal process that can exacerbate conflict and cause unnecessary distress at an

already difficult time, and better supporting agreement about arrangements for the future. I know that Honourable and Right Honourable Members will take great interest in this opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of the many families who sadly find themselves affected by breakdown. My Ministerial colleagues and I look forward to working with them through the passage of the Bill.

■ **Justice and Home Affairs post-Council statement**

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Mr David Gauke):

[\[HCWS1626\]](#)

The final Justice and Home Affairs Council of the Romanian EU Presidency recently took place in Luxembourg. I attended on 6th June for Justice Day, and Sir Tim Barrow, Permanent Representative of the UK to the EU, and Chris Jones, Director of the Europe Directorate at the Home Office, attended on Interior Day on 7th June.

Justice Day began with a discussion on the Regulation on the Assignment of Claims, which has far-reaching implications for financial markets, including the ability of small businesses to access credit. It was agreed that work in this area will need to continue under the Finnish Presidency. The Council then discussed digitalisation of judicial cooperation, where the Presidency considered the UK's position that a thorough cost benefit analysis was needed before proceeding, along with plenty of time for Member States to implement this measure effectively. In general, however, Member States supported a mandatory and de-centralised approach to digitalisation in the interests of speed and efficiency of justice systems.

Ministers then discussed the future direction of substantive criminal law co-operation. Member States were clear that implementation of existing criminal law measures should be prioritised before considering new legislation and a thorough analysis of the benefits of these measures would be needed before further harmonisation. Nonetheless, momentum began to form around the harmonisation of criminal law on environmental crime, identity theft, and manipulation of elections.

After a working lunch discussing the use of judicial training to foster mutual trust, there was a policy debate on mutual recognition in criminal matters. Discussions focused on facilitating the practical application of existing legal instruments, including by means of judicial training, rather than on new legislative proposals. The Commission stressed the importance of fundamental rights, and an independent judiciary to enable mutual recognition tools, like the European Arrest Warrant (EAW), to operate. The UK underlined our commitment to continued co-operation in this field and several Member States supported the idea of common guidelines on this. Some advocated EU legislation on the transfer of criminal proceedings to close loopholes, particularly where suspected criminals cannot (for whatever reason) be surrendered under the EAW.

The Council then adopted mandates for negotiations with the United States, and in the Council of Europe (Budapest Convention), on cross-border access to e-evidence. The Commission noted its intention to insist that the United States agree to an EU wide approach which would apply to all Member States without discrimination, including at the

EU-US Ministerial meeting in Bucharest later this month. Formal negotiations will not begin until finalisation of internal EU legislation on e-evidence. The UK has not opted into either the internal EU legislation on e-evidence, or the mandates for negotiations with the US, and in the Council of Europe, and will not be bound by those mandates.

Council adopted Conclusions which encourage Eurojust and the networks established in the area of judicial cooperation in criminal matters to further develop the coordination and synergies between them. The UK supported these Conclusions as we support the work of Eurojust, and agrees that better coordination between networks hosted by Eurojust would be helpful for criminal justice cooperation.

The Council also adopted Conclusions on the retention of data for the purpose of fighting crime, which proposed further exploration of options for lawful regimes in Member States. The UK believes the appropriate retention of telecommunications data for law enforcement purposes is an important element of an effective law enforcement system and supported these Conclusions. The Commission provided an update on the planned preparatory steps to make the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) operational by the end of 2020. The UK has not opted into EPPO.

The Council adopted an Implementing Decision confirming that the UK could connect to the Prüm automated system for exchanging DNA data between law enforcement authorities in EU Member States.

Interior Day began with a discussion on the future of EU law enforcement. Ministers agreed that further co-operation on approaches to law enforcement would make for more effective cross-border law enforcement. The Council supported effective implementation of existing legislation, especially interoperability of databases, and recognised the need to address the impacts of technological advancements on law enforcement, supporting Europol's role in pooling expertise and providing technological and analytical support. The UK Permanent Representative to the EU intervened to support this work and welcome the intent to work together, co-ordinate methods and approaches and support the proposal for a Europol innovation hub. In this context, the UK intervention additionally highlighted UK work to tackle online harms through the UK White Paper.

Under AOB, the Council CT Co-ordinator (Gilles de Kerchove) presented on the implications on law enforcement of the move to 5G. The CT Co-ordinator focused on the need for the EU to influence 5G standards, to ensure a dialogue with service providers on this issue, and to consider EU legislation to avoid fragmentation of Member State approaches. The Commissioner for the Security Union (Sir Julian King) noted the Commission's intent to develop an EU risk assessment and toolbox of options to mitigate risks by the end of 2019.

The Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Group, a non-EU grouping of European States intelligence agencies, attended to update the JHA Council on the general terrorist threat and the challenges and opportunities from new tools and technologies. The CTG Chair also updated on discussions on co-operation with Europol on strategic and technical issues, noting that operational intelligence work remained the sole responsibility of Member States.

Over lunch and in the afternoon session, Ministers discussed migration, with a focus on issues of solidarity and redistribution of migrants. Member States remain split on the EU's approach to these issues. The UK intervention focused on our extensive support upstream which ranges from tackling organised immigration crime and the use of strategic communications to building partnerships and capability with source and transit countries to jointly address the drivers of migration.

The Council agreed a partial General Approach on the draft Directive on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals (recast), with the exception of Article 22 on the Border procedure and the related recitals. The UK has not opted into this measure.

The Council also agreed partial General Approaches on draft regulations establishing the Integrated Border Management fund, establishing the Asylum and Migration Fund, and establishing the Internal Security Fund. These are subject to wider negotiations on the overall Multi-Annual Financial Framework. The UK will not participate in any of these funds.

TRANSPORT

■ EU Transport Council

Secretary of State for Transport (Chris Grayling):

[\[HCWS1617\]](#)

The Transport Council took place in Luxembourg on Thursday 6th June. This was the only Transport Council under the Romanian Presidency (the Presidency). The UK was represented by the UK's Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU, Katrina Williams.

The Council reached General Approach on the third tranche of the '**Mobility Package**' for a legal framework for the **electronic communication of freight transport information**. The UK welcomed the work that the Presidency had done to achieve compromises on this text, as did a number of other Member States.

The Presidency gave a Progress Report on the proposal from the third tranche of the '**Mobility Package**' to **streamline planning and approval processes for projects on the trans-European transport network (TEN-T)**. Some delegations took the opportunity to flag outstanding concerns including scope, the role of the Single Competent Authority and the duration of the permit granting process.

There was also a Progress Report on the proposal from the first tranche of the '**Mobility Package**' **Hired Vehicles Directive**, although discussion illustrated that there are still outstanding issues to be resolved.

The Council was also given a Progress Report on the proposal from the first tranche of the '**Mobility Package**' to revise the current directive on **Eurovignette (Road Charging)**. The UK intervened to highlight the need for flexibility in determining national charging schemes, a view shared by a number of other Member States.

Over lunch, Ministers from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and the Ukraine along with representatives from the World Bank, the European Investment Bank

and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development participated in a joint discussion with the Council and Commissioners Bulc and Hahn on the progress made by the **Eastern Area Partnership (EaP)** in developing the external dimension of the TEN-T policy. Welcoming the progress made in relation to **road safety, TEN-T connectivity and planning for future investment in transport infrastructure**, the Council endorsed the joint EU-EaP Declaration as a road map for future cooperation.

Later, the Council was given a further Progress Report on negotiations on the proposals to revise the **Regulation on rail passengers' rights and obligations**.

Finally, there were several information points from Member States, the Presidency and Commissioner Bulc under **Any Other Business**. Several Member States supported Luxembourg's call for consideration of aviation taxation as an additional means to tackle emissions reduction. The Presidency gave information on discussions in other Councils on "**A clean planet for all**", the Commission's long-term climate strategy. On addressing airspace capacity, Commissioner Bulc noted the recent publications of the **Airspace Architecture Study** and the **Wise Person's Report on the future of air traffic management**. The Commission noted the first findings of its study on **sustainable transport infrastructure charging and the internalisation of transport externalities**, which was published on the day of the Council, and updated the Council on the connectivity outcomes of the **EU-China summit**. The Presidency provided an update on current legislative proposals and the Polish delegation provided information on the **Conference on "Benefits for regions resulting from the implementation of the route Via Carpatia"**. Finally, Finland presented transport plans for its **forthcoming Presidency** of the Council of the European Union.

TREASURY

■ Business Plan of the United Kingdom Debt Management Office

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Glen): [\[HCWS1622\]](#)

The United Kingdom Debt Management Office (DMO) has today published its business plan for the financial year 2019-20. Copies have been deposited in the Libraries of both houses and are available on the DMO's website, www.dmo.gov.uk.

■ ECOFIN: 14 June 2019

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Philip Hammond): [\[HCWS1623\]](#)

A meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) will be held in Luxembourg on 14 June 2019.

ECOFIN will be preceded by a morning meeting of the European Investment Bank (EIB) Board of Governors:

Annual EIB Board of Governors meeting

The meeting of the EIB Board of Governors will include: statements from the Chairman, President and Chairman of the Audit Committee; a Governors discussion; a presentation

on the annual report of the Audit Committee; and a vote for partial renewal of the Audit Committee. The UK will be represented by Mark Bowman (Director General, International Finance, HM Treasury).

Following this, EU Finance Ministers will discuss the following at ECOFIN:

Early Morning Session

The Eurogroup President will brief the Council on the outcomes of the 13 June meeting of the Eurogroup, and the European Commission will provide an update on the current economic situation in the EU.

Banking Union

The Council will be invited to endorse a progress report on the Banking Union.

Financial Transaction Tax

Ministers will receive a progress update in relation to the enhanced co-operation in the area of financial transaction tax.

G20 follow-up

The Council Presidency and Commission will present the main outcomes of the G20 meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, which took place on 8-9 June in Fukuoka, Japan.

European Semester

Ministers will discuss the draft 2019 Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) and progress towards the Europe 2020 targets.

Stability and Growth Pact

Ministers will be invited to adopt Council decisions and recommendations on the implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact.

Clean Planet

Ministers will exchange views on a strategic long-term vision for a climate-neutral economy.

Non-performing loans

Under any other business, the Commission will provide an update on the implementation of the Action Plan to tackle non-performing loans in Europe.